



**Order of Worship
December 19, 2021
The Fourth Sunday in Advent
10:00 AM**

*10:00 Online Worship
YouTube Channel "Harmony UMCVA"*

GATHERING AND PRAISE

Welcome

Prelude

Gesu Bambino

Yon

The prelude signals the beginning of our sacred time together. During the prelude, you are invited to prepare your heart for worship by focusing your attention upon God.

Call to Worship

Ruth Smale

We are waiting on you, God. We are still waiting.

The darkness is deeper, but look! The star is beginning to shine.

The everlasting light is creeping closer.

Hope is in the air. Peace is promised. Joy is on the tips of our tongues.

Love is coming. Love divine, all loves excelling.

We are waiting on love. And Love is waiting on us.

Opening Prayer

Ruth Smale

Holy Father, thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, your greatest gift of love to your people. Fill our hearts with his love, open our hearts to accept your great love for us. Overflow our hearts with your love, so we may pour it out into the world. Help us to love others as you've loved us – even those who aren't so easy to love. For following you means loving others as you love us. Lord, thank you for your great gift of Jesus as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. May we ever walk in your love and show the world we are your disciples by the love we show to others, keeping Jesus, your Son, close in our heart. Amen.

Hymn (See last page)

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

UMH 198

Lighting the Advent Candles: The Candle of Love

Carolyn Quatraro, Tina Wilmoth

Sung Response (See last page)

Advent Song, Verse Four

FWS 2090

Children's Message

Shelly Ballard

Morning Prayer

Ruth Smale

The Lord's Prayer

Ruth Smale

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Ministry of Music

Send Us Emmanuel

Choir

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Prayer for Illumination

Ruth Smale

Speak to us, Lord. Speak to us in the waiting, the watching, the hoping, the longing, the sorrow, the sighing, the rejoicing. Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days, and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Ruth Smale

Micah 5:2-5a

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times."

³Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

⁴He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

⁵And he will be our peace.

New Testament Reading

Ruth Smale

Luke 1:39-45

Mary Visits Elizabeth

³⁹ At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³ But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

Sermon

Steve Evick

Call to Confession

Ruth Smale

Every moment of living is an opportunity to do something differently, to face the truth of our lives, to turn toward God in hope. Every confession of those things which lie in hearts is an opportunity to come closer to God. Trusting in God's grace and assured of God's love, let us make our confession, first in silent prayer.

Prayer of Confession

Ruth Smale

Holy God, we aspire to love and trust you, but so often we get in the way of ourselves. We see only the deep sadness of the world, and we do not notice your love in action as your people work amid the sorrow. We assume that things will never get better, and do not see all that is good right now. We close our eyes and complain about the darkness, rather than see the light that shines all around us, the light that is your love. Help us, Holy One. Help us to grow in love and trust, in compassion and hope, so that as the Christ Child comes to us once again, we will see him, and know him, and rejoice. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Ruth Smale

The prophets of old have declared, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God. For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robes of righteousness." Friends, believe the good news: in Jesus Christ we are the forgiven.

Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings

Ruth Smale

God is with us in amazing and powerful ways, bringing shining new hope into the world. Like Mary and Elizabeth so long ago, the ministry of our church is radiant with that great hope. And like Mary and Elizabeth, our congregation and the whole United Church of Christ also trusts in the promises of God. In our giving this morning, our joy overflows in generosity. Let us receive the morning offering.

Offertory

**Doxology*

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose
power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Prayer of Dedication*

Ruth Smale

Holy one, this Advent season we wait with love, and we give with love. Love for you, our God; love for your people. Receive these generous offerings, and use them for your works of love in our world. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE

Closing Hymn (See last page) *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*

UMH 218

Benediction

Steve Evick

Be people of love.

Let love live in your heart and share the love of Christ with all you meet.

Share love by loving those you see regularly. Start by loving your community.

Share love by loving those you do not know. How do your actions affect the rest of God's creation?

Share love by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share love.

As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share love, joy, peace, and hope with those you meet. Amen.

Sung Benediction

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;

Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Postlude

All Glory to the Son

Tchaikovsky

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

*My soul gives glory to my God.
My heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness
in many marvelous ways.*

*My God has done great things for me:
Yes, holy is this name.
All people will declare me blessed,
And blessings they shall claim.*

*From age to age, yo all who fear,
Such mercy love imparts,
Dispensing justice far and near,
Dismissing selfish hearts.*

*Love casts the mighty from their thrones,
Promotes the insecure,
Leaves hungry spirits satisfied,
The rich seem suddenly poor.*

*Praise God, whose loving covenant
Supports those in distress,
Remembering past promises
With present faithfulness.*

Advent Song, Verse Four

*Light the Advent candle, four:
Think of joy for evermore;
Christ Child in a stable born,
Gift of love that Christmas morn.*

*Candle, candle burning bright,
Shining in the cold winter night;
Candle, candle, burning bright,
Fill our hearts with Christmas light.*

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

*It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.*

*Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains,
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.*

*And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
and hear the angels sing!*

*For lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.*