



*The Remembrance of Christmas Past: Hope from Heartbreak*

**Order of Worship  
December 4, 2022**

**Second Sunday of Advent  
The Sacrament of Holy Communion**

**GATHERING AND PRAISE**

**Welcome**

**Prelude**

*Joy to the World*

Bell Choir

**\*Opening Prayer**

Damon Moore

Holy Living God, Blessed Jesus, Guiding Spirit, as we embark on a journey of remembering the past, we look to you, the redeemer of all of life and thank you that, through you, no past hurt, disappointment or grief is outside of your care and forgiveness.

Open us to your miracle just begun and in this season transform us into those whose presence brings peace to those held captive to inner turmoil or outer strife, to those scarred by acts of violence or hate, to our fragile earth, to each gathered here today for worship.

Open us to you, to each other, and to the voices no one hears so that your reign of mercy, justice and love can be made known to all.

**\*Hymn**

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

UMH 196

See last page for words

**Passing the Peace of Christ**

Damon Moore

**Lighting the Candle of Peace**

The Ensor Family

Reader One: "They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious" (Isaiah 11:9-10 NRSV).

Reader Two: We are the followers of that root of Jesse Isaiah spoke of. We are the ones who are now called to live as a signal to the world, to all of creation, that peace is the will of the one who created us. Peace is the knowledge of the Lord that we proclaim from sea to shining sea.

Reader One: "In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea proclaiming. "Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near." And "bear fruit worthy of repentance" (Matthew 3:1,2, 8 NRSV).

Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of joyful hope and the candle of proclaimed peace, in part to remind ourselves that we are a people rising toward God's promise. But we also light them as a sign to the world, an announcement there are some who hold on to hope and there are some who work the ways of peace. We live as a sign that Emmanuel is still our fervent prayer.

**Sung Response**

*Light the Advent Candle*  
Verse 2

FWS 2090

**Ministry of Music**

*Carol of the Bells*

Bell Choir

**PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE**

**Old Testament Reading**

*Isaiah 9:2, 6 (NIV)*

Damon Moore

The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned.

For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**Gospel Reading**

*Luke 2:8-14 (NIV)*

Damon Moore

<sup>8</sup>And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup>An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. <sup>11</sup>Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

This is a Word of God for the people of God.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**      *The Remembrance of Christmas Past: Hope from Heartbreak*      Pastor Debra

**Preparation for Prayer**      *Emmanuel, Emmanuel*      UMH 204  
See words on last page

**Morning Prayer**      Pastor Debra  
**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Offertory Invitation**      Damon Moore  
In this busy season, our most important preparations will happen here in our hearts when we make a way for God to come into our lives, when we “prepare the way of the Lord.” In the midst of our preparations, we bring gifts to share so that God’s love will shine brightly through the ministry of this church and in our own lives as well. Let us gather gifts together and present them as an offering to God.

**Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings**

*Offertory*      *Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella*      Bell Choir  
*\*Doxology*

***Praise God who blesses everyone!  
Praise Jesus Christ, who is to come!  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise Spirit, making Three-in-One!  
All praise the miracle begun!  
Alleluia! Alleluia!***

*\*Prayer of Dedication*      Damon Moore  
Generous God,  
**we give you thanks for all you have given us**  
and we offer our gifts  
**for the sake of being your hands and feet as the Body of Christ.**  
Open us to even more ways to give  
**so that we can offer peace to a weary world. Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

### Invitation to Holy Communion

Pastor Debra

The story is told that during the Blitz in World War II Britain, when the city was relentlessly bombed, Operation Pied Piper evacuated many children to the country, but some remained in London and many of those were orphans. Some were sheltered in a Jesuit order of brothers, who noticed the children had trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, night after night. When the children were being put to bed one night, one of the brothers guessed the children's problem was that they were anxious because of uncertainty in their lives, and gave each child a small piece of bread, saying something like this –

“Hold on to your piece of bread while you are sleeping. Remember when you woke up this morning, we fed you and took care of you. When you wake up tomorrow, we will be here for you. Let the bread remind you of this. Good night, children.” The children slept.

The name Bethlehem means “House of Bread.”

Come, to be comforted  
in the story of Bethlehem,  
and in this the House of Bread.  
Come to be comforted at this table  
by a handful of bread  
and a cup of love,  
that will stay with you always.

We remember God's promises of Emmanuel, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God. Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. The Key to eternal life, and the Dawn of every morning.

And we remember the sacred story, that happened in the House of Bread for a new mother and a fostering father, sheep and shepherds, wise travelers with gifts and many, many angels.

And we remember that the baby named Jesus, grew up to heal people, and teach them with intriguing parables, that made some people angry. At Passover he broke unleavened bread and poured wine and love freely.

On the night in which...

Emmanuel, God with us, in our lonely nights, under our guiding stars, with the hopes and fears of all our years, we come for comfort, for peace of mind and peace on earth, for a blessing on our hands and the bread in them, on our lips and the cup of salvation.

May this bread and cup be your holy Life, that we may ponder in our hearts, and pray as one in community...the Lord's Prayer.

## **Sharing of the Elements**

Leader: The Holy Child of Bethlehem descends to us,

**Unison: and is born in us in these days.**

Leader: Let us share the bread.

**Unison: We hear the Christmas angels their great glad tidings tell.**

Leader: Let us drink deeply, Christ abides with us.

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving after Holy Communion**

Damon Moore

### **GOING FORTH TO SERVE**

Who would have imagined that the Civil War would have been a backdrop for one of the most beautiful and beloved Christmas carols of our time?

Phillips Brooks, the author of the “*O Little Town of Bethlehem*,” was an Episcopal priest, a powerful preacher and committed American patriot in the mid-late 19th century. He was a vocal advocate of the abolitionist cause and believed the gospel should infiltrate and saturate the practical world, bringing forth equity and justice for all.

At the end of the Civil war, after observing years of carnage, division and hate, Phillips Brooks went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem which concluded in a Christmas Eve service at Constantine’s ancient basilica (326 A.D.) built over the traditional site of the Nativity, a cave. During a horseback ride one evening between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, Brooks was moved at the thought of the Messiah coming to such an isolated and seemingly insignificant place. His experiences during the Civil War contrasted with his trip to Jerusalem provided the context for the song he would later write.

When you sing the words of this carol, you can hear hope in the midst of despair and light slicing through the darkness. Though the Civil war had brought out the worst in men and had carved deep divides into a nation, “The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.” Brooks knew that the balm of true healing for such national pain could only come as people looked back in time to the Savior born in the humble town of Bethlehem.

## **Closing Hymn**

*O, Little Town of Bethlehem*

UMH 230

## **Benediction**

Pastor Debra

May you be blessed by our God who loves you deeply;  
by Jesus, the true gift of God to each of us—this season and in all our days;  
and by the Spirit who with you all the time!

**Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus**

*Come, thou long expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us,  
let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.*

*2. Born thy people to deliver,  
born a child and yet a King,  
born to reign in us forever,  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all sufficient merit,  
raise us to thy glorious throne.*

## **Light the Advent Candle**

### ***Refrain:***

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

*Light the Advent candle, two:  
Think of humble shepherds, who  
Filled with wonder at the sight  
Of the child of Christmas night. **Refrain***

## **Emmanuel, Emmanuel**

*Emmanuel, Emmanuel,  
His name is called Emmanuel.  
God with us,  
revealed in us,  
his name is called Emmanuel.*

## **O Little Town of Bethlehem**

*O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie;  
above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.*

*2. For Christ is born of Mary,  
and gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars together,  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to all on earth!*

*3. How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is given;  
so God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming,  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.*

*4. 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!*