



Service for the Lord's Day

3rd Sunday of Advent – A Service of Carols and Special Music

Rockdale Lutheran, London Moravian and Oakland Cambridge Presbyterian Churches

December 17, 2023

10:00 a.m.

Please SILENCE ALL Personal Electronic Devices Before Worship.

We Gather as God's People

Welcome to our worship service. Take a moment to quiet yourself as we prepare ourselves for worship.

Welcome and Preparation for Worship

Welcome to Oakland Cambridge Presbyterian Church! In this space, we invite you to bring all of who you are - your identity, your beliefs, your doubts, your questions, and your story wherever you are on your journey in life. Our prayer is that together we will experience God's presence.

The Gathering Music "A Christmas Medley" arr. Martha Mier

The Welcome and Announcements

Two+ (A new way to share the peace of Christ and greet one another.)

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:20

Question: "What is your favorite Christmas Carol or Song?"

Prelude

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
arr, Pethel

Flute: Mare Stewart;
Piano: Barb Brown

The Advent Call to Worship [Responsive]

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and set lights in the sky — sun and moon and stars.

Many: By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys.

One: By these stars, they knew God was with them.

Many: Today we light three candles to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.

One: We name this candle Hope.

We name this candle Peace.

We name this candle Joy.

We name this candle Love.

We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way.

Many: But we chart our path by the star of joy.

One: Even when sharp words rattle in our ears, and our hearts sit cold and numb,

Many: we set our face steadily towards the light.

The Special Music

“There’s a Song in the Air”
arr. Pethel

Flute: Mare Stewart;
Piano: Barb Brown

The Advent Scripture

Isaiah 61:1-3

Listen now to the prophecy of Isaiah: “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; God has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion, to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.”

The Advent Carol *PH* # 2 “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.**

**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.**

The Advent Prayer [In Unison]

Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of joy this week, help us to become the signs of joy that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s joy. Amen.

Carol *PH* # 53 (verses 1, 3)..... “What Child Is This?”

**What Child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?**

Refrain:

**This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!**

**So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, one and all, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.**

Refrain

A Poem “Mary, Nazareth Girl” by Ann Weems

Mary, Nazareth girl,
what did you know of ethereal beings
with messages from God?

What did you know of men
when you found yourself with child?

What did you know of babies,
you, barely out of childhood yourself?

God-chosen girl;
What did you know of God
that brought you to this stable
most blessed among women?

Could it be that you had been ready
waiting
listening
for the footsteps of an angel?

Could it be that there are messages for us
if we had the faith to listen?

(from "Kneeling in Bethlehem" p.25)

Special Music "Mary Did You Know" Bella Bamlett (soloist)

A Poem "The Christmas Spirit" by Ann Weems

The Christmas spirit is that hope
which tenaciously clings to the hearts of the faithful
and announces
in the face of any Herod the world can produce
and all the inn doors slammed in our faces
and all the dark nights of our souls
that with God all things still are possible,
that even now
unto us a Child is born!

The Special Music "Love Has Comee" by Cindy Ovokaitys
Vocal Ensemble from London Moravian Church: Kathi Fox, Jeny Hollenberger,
Barbara Berg, Kathy Wendt, Dan Behrend; Jerry Schultz: Piano

We Listen for God's Word

The Prayer for Illumination [Responsive]

One: Let us pray... God, you reach into our lives not through instruction, but story.

Many: **Open our hearts to be attentive: that seeing, we may perceive, and hearing, we may understand, and understanding, may act upon your word, that still lives and speaks to us. Amen.**

The Scripture Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to

expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

One: For the Word of God in Scripture, For the Word of God among us, For the Word of God within us,

Many: We give thanks to God!

The Special Music "The Gift" by Garth Brooks Nick Castle on guitar and solo

A Poem "Sitting on the Hillside" by Ann Weems

Most of us who gather in Bethlehem on this night
Are not the star seekers.
We've not traveled our dreams
month after month and year after year,
poring over predictions and promises.
Most of us sit on our hillsides
tending our sheep,
business as usual.
Oh, we've heard rumors of stars,
But we don't really give ourselves to seeking.
After all, there's more than enough to do
in the daily tending.
We're simply not on the lookout for stars,
Nor expecting any light in our darkness.
I suppose the important thing is,
in the light of the glory of the Lord,
to recognize the voice of an angel
and to get up
and in spite of our sheep
to go even unto Bethlehem
to see this thing that has happened.

The Special Music "The First Noel/Pachelbel's Canon"
Sarah Dudnik and Hannah Thorson (duet)
Accompanied by Heidi Woodstock

We Respond to God's Love

The Prayers of the People

One: Holy One, healer of the world,

Many: shed your light upon this world.

One: Holy One, healer of brokenness,

Many: make us bold to share your light with others.

One: Holy One, healer of the world, in this time we offer our silent prayers to you:

(Silence is kept for prayers)

One: Lead us to wholeness

Many: and make us shine with your light of healing love.

One: We thank you for your gift of Loving presence among us, around us, and within us, as we continue this blessed journey through Advent into the Christmas season, even as we continue our prayers, praying...

The Lord's Prayer *(using 'sins' and 'sins against us'...)*

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 sins as we forgive those who sin 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.

The Special Music Medley of "Joy to the World" with "Away in a Manger" and "It Came upon a Midnight Clear" arr. Pethel: Flute: Mare Stewart; Piano: Barb Brown

Offering of Our Tithes and Our Gifts to God

(There are 3 baskets in Fellowship hall—one for each church.)

The Candle Lighting Service

The Carol *(Traditional Moravian Carol – see handout)*..... "Morning Star"

The Scripture **John 1:1-5**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Closing Carol *PH # 60 (Please stand)*..... "Silent Night"

(During the singing of "Silent Night" the candles will be lit closest to the center aisle. Once your candle has been lit, please do not tip it. Instead, allow the person next to you to tip their unlit candle, and receive the light from you.)

**Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright!
Round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.**

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing: “Alleluia;”
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light;
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend Thy light;
With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

(Please extinguish your light following the Christmas Blessing. As we leave the sanctuary, the extinguished candles may be placed in the baskets or boxes.)

We Depart to Do God’s Will

The Blessing “Blessed Are You Who Bear the Light” by Jan Richardson

One: Blessed are you who bear the light in unbearable times,
who testify to its endurance amid the unendurable,
who bear witness to its persistence^[SEP] when everything seems in shadow and grief.
Blessed are you in whom the light lives
in whom the brightness blazes—
your heart a chapel, an altar where
in the deepest night can be seen the fire that shines forth in you
in unaccountable faith, in stubborn hope,
in love that illumines every broken thing it finds.

The Benediction

One: Friends, May the power and the mystery go before us, to show us the way,
shine above us to lighten our world, lie beneath us to bear us up, walk with us and give
us companionship, and glow and flow within us to bring us hope, peace, joy and love.

Many: **We go in peace to joyfully bear the light of God’s Love - Emmanuel! Amen!**

The Sung Response *PH* # 40 (Verse 1) “Joy to the World”

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come: Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room, And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

Postlude “Joy to the World” arr. Gerald Peterson



Our liturgy this morning is from: The Prayers of the People ~ from *Daily Prayer for All Seasons*.

Everyone is invited to stay for fellowship and refreshment following worship today.

- Thank you to all our musicians today for providing wonderful music for our worship service. From London Moravian Church: Bella Bamlett – soloist; Jerry Schultz – Piano; Kathi Fox, Jenny Hollenberger, Barbara Berg, Kathy Wendt and Dan Behrend – vocal ensemble. From Rockdale Lutheran Church: Nick Castle – guitar and vocals; Sarh Dudnik and Hannah Thorson – vocalists; Heidi Woodstock – piano. From OCPC: Barb Brown – piano, and Mare Stewart – Flute.
- Thank you to Marian Korthk who is our accompanist today, for sharing her musical gifts on the piano and organ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS —

- **Please pick up your 2024 Offering Envelopes, now available in Fellowship Hall. If we've missed your name, please notify the office.**
- If you would like to be added to the mailing list for our newsletter, *The Good News*, please send either your email (preferred) or snail mail address to the church office. (Our addresses are listed on the last page of the bulletin.)

- Help us save “pig points.” For us to receive a rebate, please turn in your receipts from the Cambridge Piggly Wiggly in one of three ways: **1.** Place them in the brown bag in the narthex. **2.** Cheryl Stitz will do a porch pickup of any receipts that you may have. Call her at 608-695-1838 to make arrangements. **3.** Receipts can also be mailed to the church office. All funds received are used for mission projects. **Deadline to turn in receipts for this year is today, Sunday, December 17.**

PLEASE HOLD THESE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS IN PRAYER THIS WEEK —

Dale Febock
Jan & Nancy Kristiansen
Marilyn Schuster
Dick Trailer

Those suffering from the conflict and humanitarian crisis in the Middle East and violence around the world and here in America.

Those recovering from fire and storm damage across the United States.

The families of: Sylvia Jensen; Fred Trailer (Dick's brother); Stub Lund; Barbara Baker (Judy Pearson's sister); Betty Mennenga (mother of Angie Williams), and other families who are grieving the loss of loved ones.

If you would like to be added to our weekly prayer list, please leave word in the church office or contact the pastor. Permission to be included in this publicly posted list has been obtained from those listed or their families.

WORSHIP SERVICES UPDATE:

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVE,

DECEMBER 24 WORSHIP AT 5 PM – In-person worship continues this Sunday in the sanctuary. We still recommend using masks but it will be optional for those vaccinated and boosted, If someone is not vaccinated, we request that you still wear a mask. Everyone must still be mindful of their own health and the health of others.

THERE WILL BE NO 10 AM WORSHIP SERVICE ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24. On Sunday, December 31 Rev. Hugh Drennan will lead our 10 AM worship service.

Church Schedule

Worship Service: 10:00 a.m. Sunday

Communion: First Sunday of each month

Pastoral Office Hours: Generally 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. Wednesday or by appointment

Business Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Monday – Thursday

(Church hours are approved by Session and posted on church entry doors.)

Telephone/Fax: 608-423-3001

Email: Office@OCPChurch.com or Pastor@OCPChurch.com

Web: www.OCPChurch.com

Mailing Address: 313 E. Main St., Cambridge, WI 53523-9629



Visit us on Facebook: Oakland-Cambridge Presbyterian Church

SESSION (Meets the second Sunday of each month.)

Class of 2023: Randy Johnson.

Class of 2024: Mare Stewart, Mark Touhey

Class of 2025: Joe Leto, Melanie Rumpf

CHURCH STAFF

Music—

Accompanists: Karen Brunk, Marian Korth, Angie Williams

Business Manager: Ruth Poole

Pastor: Pastor Scott Marrese-Wheeler: (608) 417-0231 cell;

Pastor@OCPChurch.com

Facebook: Scott Marrese-Wheeler

Follow Rev. Scott on Twitter: @2revsScott

