

***Doxology\*\****

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayers of the People/The Lord's Prayer***

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.

**SENDING FORTH**

*The people of God are sent forth to serve others and witness to their faith.*

***Closing Hymn 219\*\*—What Child Is This***

***Benediction & Congregational Response (Hymn 202, v. 4)\*\*—People Look East***

***Postlude—Noël Suisse—Louis Claude Daquin***

***Music—One License A-731491***

**The flowers on the altar this morning are dedicated to the glory of God.**

\*\*Please stand as you are able.

**Clergy & Staff**

Jon Priebe, Lead Minister

Howard Pippin, Associate Minister

Marvin Brown, Senior Minister Emeritus

Dean Wagner, Director of Music/Organist

Tim Zuschin, Assistant Chancel Choir Director

Donna Curfman, Director of Children's Ministries

Jennifer Brooks, Director of *Weekday Christian Preschool*

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# Fourth Sunday in Advent

10:45 am

December 22, 2024

## GATHERING

*The people of God come together in the Lord's name.*

### Welcome & Announcements

**Prelude**—*Prelude and Fugue on Noel Nouvelet*—Fred Gramann

Chancel Ringers

### Call to Worship

See! The ruler of the Earth is come

**the hills and the mountains will be singing praise**

Every tree in the forest will be clapping its hands

**The Lord will come and rule forever. Alleluia.**

**Opening Hymn 238\*\*** —*Angels We Have Heard on High*

### Invocation

God of the ages, we praise you, for in the dawn of time you created the world, sending light by your Word to dispel darkness. In Jesus Christ, you began and new creation, sending him to be the Light of the world, to drive away fear and despair, and to rule in peace and justice, holiness and love. Prepare the world for your rule, for we long for the day when there shall be no more crying or tears and death will be destroyed. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray, Amen.

## PROCLAMATION

*The Word of God is read and proclaimed for all ages.*

**Candle Lighting Hymn 204**—*Emmanuel, Emmanuel (sing before and after liturgy)*

### Candle Lighting Liturgy

Bonds Family

Reader: When the people were looking for deliverance, the prophet Micah declared, "But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah...from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient day." (Micah 5:2). But what if Micah is also talking to us, proclaiming, "But you, O Cuyahoga Falls, from you shall come forth for me..." What? What might God be calling forth from us?

**Congregation:** God invites us to receive the promise of God's salvation and the sustenance of God's mercy and grace, enabling us to live the promise as God-bearers to the world. As Christ was born in Bethlehem, so too we answer God's invitation to have Christ born among us today and every day.

Reader: We light this candle of love as a sign of our commitment to live as people of God's promise, a promise of salvation and flourishing for all people that springs forth from God's love for all creation.

**Scripture Reading**—*Psalm 96:1-6*

**Gloria Patri**—*Glory Be to the Father* (Hymnal p. 70)

**Anthem**—*Away in a Manger (Forever Amen)*—Dan Forrest

Chancel Choir

Instrumentalists; Josiah and Kristen van Dyck, Phil Lantry

**God's Word for Young Disciples**

**Scripture Reading**—*Luke 2:8-15*

*This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.*

**Anthem**—*Glory to God*—G.F. Handel

Chancel Choir

Sue Poling, soprano

**Sermon**—*"The Angelic Host's Proclamation"*

Pastor Jon Priebe

## RESPONSE

*The People of God respond to the Word.*

**Hymn of Response 236**—*While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night*

**Discipleship Moment**

**Offertory**—*Were You There on That Christmas Night*—Natalie Sleeth

Epworth Choir

—continued

## OPENING HYMN

*Hymn #238, Angels We Have Heard on High*

1. Angels we have heard on high  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply  
echoing their joyous strains.  
Refrain:  
Gloria, gloria, gloria, gloria,  
in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria, gloria, gloria, gloria,  
in excelsis Deo!
2. Shepherds, shy this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
which inspire your heavenly song?  
(Refrain)
3. Come to Bethlehem and see  
Christ whose birth the angels sing,  
come, adore on bended knee,  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.  
(Refrain)
4. See him in a manger laid,  
whom the choirs of angels praise,  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,  
while our hearts in love we raise.

## GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen. Amen.

## ADVENT CANDLE RESPONSE

*Hymn #204, Emmanuel*

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

## HYMN OF RESPONSE

*Hymn #236, While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night*

1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
all seated on the ground;  
the angel of the Lord came down,  
and glory shone around,  
and glory shone around.
2. "Fear not!" said he, for mighty dread  
had seized their troubled mind.  
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
to all of humankind,  
to all of humankind."

3. "To you, in David's town, this day  
is born of David's line  
a Savior, who is Christ the Lord,  
and this shall be the sign,  
and this shall be the sign:"
4. "The heavenly babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,  
and in a manger laid,  
and in a manger laid."
5. Thus spake the seraph and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels praising God on high,  
who thus addressed their song,  
who thus addressed their song:
6. "All glory be to God on high,  
and to the earth be peace;  
good will henceforth from heaven to earth  
begin and never cease,  
begin and never cease!"

## CLOSING HYMN

*Hymn #219, What Child Is This*

1. 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.

2. Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading.

(Refrain)

3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,  
come, peasant, king, to own him;  
the King of kings salvation brings,  
let loving hearts enthrone him.

(Refrain)

and praises sing to God the king,  
and peace to all on earth!

## BENEDICTION

*Hymn #202, v.4 People Look East*

4. Angels announce with shouts of mirth  
him who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming  
with the word, the Lord is coming.

People look east and sing today  
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

## CHURCH NOTES 12-22-24

**Poinsettia Pick-up:** You may take home your Christmas poinsettias after the 8:30pm Christmas Eve worship service is finished, Friday, December 27 during office hours, or Sunday, December 29, before or after 10:45am worship.

**Holiday Nut Sale:** Purchase your nuts on Sundays, and in the office from 9-3pm/M-F. All proceeds from the sale benefit 2025 Work Camp.

**Winter Gear Collection:** We need some winter gear! Any scarfs, hats, and gloves, donated for the clothesline outside can be placed in the collection area near the Library. Thank you!

**Christmas Eve Offering:** This year our Christmas Eve offering will go to ZOE Empowers, where it will be used to support a group of vulnerable orphans in Zimbabwe. ZOE uses an empowerment model rather than a traditional charity model. For more information, visit their website at [www.zoeempowers.org](http://www.zoeempowers.org).

**Christmas Eve Services:** Tuesday, December 24

Family-friendly worship @6:00p—featuring our Kids' choirs

Candlelight service @8:00p—featuring our Adult choirs\*

\*all Epworth alumni are invited to sing. Please meet for rehearsal @7:30pm

**Mark your calendars:** Sunday, December 29 there will only be one service @10:45am. There will not be Sunday School or Children's Worship that day.

**Men's Time Out:** will meet on Saturday, January 4 beginning at 8:30am in Asbury Hall. Will Fenton-Jones will be here to speak with us about his work as director of *Multicultural Ministries* for the East Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church. Hope to see you there!

**Women's Bible Study:** All women of the church are invited to join in a study of "Nehemiah" by Kelly Minter. Learn from his courage and faith and let God move you to be the hands and feet of Jesus, in a lost, hurting world. Classes meet on Tuesdays (7-9 pm) and Wednesdays (10am-noon) beginning Feb. 4 and 5. The cost of the book is \$18. Please register in the church office by *Thursday, January 16*.

**2025 Altar Flowers:** We are taking orders for Altar Flowers for 2025. The cost is \$40 and the church takes care of ordering and delivery. If you would like to reserve a date contact Christy Meyers, 330-923-5241,

or [cmeyersfallsumc@gmail.com](mailto:cmeyersfallsumc@gmail.com).

## **PRAYER REQUESTS**

Scott Adie	Marge Magee
Bob Ahonen	Bonnie Michaud
Joanne Ames	Delores Marefka
Debbie Amundsen	Lee Miller
Mary Ellen Atwood	Lee Minier
Dorothy Bates	Becky & Jerry Pecko
Mark & Cindy Blaser	Becky Petty
Suzanne Callahan	Sandi Robinson
Jim Evans	Kathi Sawyer
Mary Griest	Todd Schneider
Jim Henes	John Toomey
Jeff Iula	Kathy Walker
Dwight Konic	Rose Ann Youngkin
Kristopher Lewis	

**In our greater world:** We pray for those who are grieving this season. We pray for Greensburg UMC and Heart 4 The City.

## **The Angelic Host's Proclamation**

vs. 10 – The heavenly choir delivers good news with cosmic consequences

vs. 12 – But how is a baby in a manger good news for all people?

## **The Four Chapter Gospel**

Creation – "... and God said it was ***very good.***"

The Fall – Because of ***sin***, things are not as they are supposed to be

Redemption – Out of God's great love and mercy, Jesus saves

**Restoration** – We are redeemed not ***out of***, but as ***part of*** a restored creation

*"Who among us will celebrate Christmas correctly? Whoever finally lays down all power, all honor, all reputation, all vanity, all arrogance, all individualism beside the manger; whoever remains lowly and lets God alone be high."*

**– Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

**Questions for Reflection:** What power, honor, reputation, vanity, arrogance, or individualism have I yet to lay down beside the manger in adoration of the Christ child?

**Questions for Discussion:** Read Revelation 21:1-5. This describes the ultimate chapter of the Gospel; God's plans for a restored creation. How does this change or reinforce your understanding of the good news of Jesus Christ?

**Memory Verse:** Luke 2:12 – *"This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."*

**Readings for this Week:** Luke 2, Romans 8:14-25

