

**Service of Worship**  
Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2015

10:30 AM

**FOR QUIET MEDITATION**

*In each heart lies a Bethlehem, an inn where we must ultimately answer whether there is room or not.*

*When we are Bethlehem-bound we experience our own advent in his. When we are Bethlehem-bound we can no longer look the other way conveniently not seeing stars, not hearing angel voices. We can no longer excuse ourselves busily tending our sheep or our kingdoms.*

*So this Advent let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that the Lord has made known to us. In the midst of shopping sprees let's ponder in our hearts the Gift of Gifts. Through the tinsel let's look for the gold of the Christmas Star. In the excitement and confusion, in the merry chaos, let's listen for the brush of angels' wings. This Advent, let's go to Bethlehem and find our kneeling places.*

by Ann Weems in Kneeling in Bethlehem

\*those who are able, please stand.

**GATHER AND PREPARE FOR WORSHIP**

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE** *O Savior, Rend The Heavens Wide* Walcha

**CHIMES**

**INTROIT** *Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring* J.S. Bach

**THE PEOPLE OF GOD GATHER**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Lighting the Advent Candle – “Love”

Leader: The Season of Advent continues. We are a people of hope, peace, and joy.  
*(first three candles lit)*

Leader: Today we celebrate the coming of Christ with the lighting of the candle of Love. *(fourth candle lit)*

**All: For God so loved the world that a child was given – God's love in human form.**

Leader: No other word so adequately captures the spirit and goal of our faith. No other word so completely describes what we know of our God.

**All: We give thanks for that love and await the dawning of Christ in our midst.**

\***HYMN # 128** (vss. 1-4)

*One Candle Is Lit*

\***PRAYER OF LOVE** *(let us pray together . . .)*

**Gracious God, you have shown us in your son the perfect expression of love. As we light this fourth candle of Advent, help us to let our light of love shine brightly through us that all may know of our peace, our hope, our joy, our love in Christ. Amen.**

\***WORDS OF GOD'S ENDURING LOVE**

One: Friends, believe the joyful news that in Jesus Christ we are loved and forgiven.

**All: Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## \*MUSICAL RESPONSE

### *Glory to God*

Capo 3: ( Bm) (Em) (A) (D)  
Dm Gm C F (chords continue)

Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!  
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

\*May be sung as a canon.

(MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1979, Music ©1979, 1981 Les Presses de Taize  
(admin. GIA Pub. Inc. All rights reserved. OneLicense.net License # A-725159.)

**A POEM** *First Coming* by Madeleine L'Engle

## LISTEN FOR THE WORD OF GOD

**OLD TESTAMENT** *Micah 5:2-5a* OT page 865

**ANTHEM** *Song of the Angels* Arr. Hayes  
(The congregation is invited to join with the choir for The First Nowell at the end of the song. See below. )

**The first Nowell the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

**Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
Born is the King of Israel.**

**Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
Let Heaven ring!  
Gladly we sing!  
Born is the King if Israel.**

## CHILDREN'S MOMENT

(Children may go to the nursery following the Children's Moment.)

**QUARTET** *I Wonder as I Wander* Niles

**THE GOSPEL** Matthew 1:18-25 NT page 1

**ANTHEM** *Do You Hear What I Hear?* Arr. Simone

**THE GOSPEL** Luke 1:39-45 NT page 57

**ANTHEM** *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day*

Composed J. Ford  
World Premiere

## GOD'S PEOPLE RESPOND

### \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(From *Lost in Wonder, Love & Praise* by John Killinger)

**I believe that Christmas is more than a time for parties  
and ornaments; it is a time for remembering Christ  
and the incarnation of God's love in human flesh.**

**I believe there are gifts more important than the ones  
under the Christmas tree, such as the things we teach  
our children, the way we share ourselves with friends,  
and the industry with which we set about reshaping the  
world in our time.**

**I believe that the finest carols are often sung by the  
poorest voices, from hearts made warm by the wonder  
of the season.**

**I believe in the angels' message that we should not be afraid, that the Child of Bethlehem is able to overcome all anxieties and insecurities.**

**I believe in prayer and quietness as a way of appropriating Christmas – that if I wait in silence I will experience the presence of the one born in the manger, for he lives today as surely as he lived then.**

**I believe in going away from Christmas as the wise men went – “another way.” I want to be different when these days are past – more centered, more thoughtful, more caring. And I believe God will help me in this journey. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION

**The Lord's Prayer** (*in unison*)

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## OFFERING

**Invitation**

**Offertory** *O Savior, Rend The Heavens Wide* Lind

## \*ADVENT DOXOLGY

Tune: Veni Emmanuel



Em G C D7 G D G C G  
Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea - tures

5 Am Bm7 Em Am Em B7 Em A7 D Em  
here be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heav - en - ly host. Praise

10 D Bm G C Am D7 G D Em Bm G  
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -

15 C D7 Em D G C G Am Em Bm Em  
man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

**\*Prayer of Dedication** (*let us pray together . . .*)

**We bring our offerings to you, O God. May these gifts help to proclaim good news, bring justice and healing, and comfort to those who mourn. To these same ends we dedicate our lives. Amen.**

## GOD'S PEOPLE DEPART TO SERVE

**\*HYMN # 143**

*Joy to the World*

**\*BENEDICTION**

**BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

Saint-Saëns

*“Tollite Hostias” from A Christmas Oratorio*

**CHIMES**

**POSTLUDE**

Bingham

*Lift Up Your Heads You Mighty Gate*



*Our Sanctuary has been decorated  
with Poinsettias,  
given in memory or in honor, by  
the following:*

*Carol Agate and family in memory of Keith Agate and loved ones*

*Kathy Alvord in memory of David Alvord*

*Anne and Dave Barnes in honor of friends and families*

*Bev and Steve Berry in memory of loved ones*

*Doris Brohard in memory of family members*

*Jean Cadwallader in memory of Dr. William Cadwallader, Jr.*

*Carol Costell Corbin in honor of Anelia and Elizabeth*

*Ingrid Fox and family in memory of Richard Fox, Colin Garrey, Mr.  
and Mrs. Charles Goodwin, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fox*

*Darci, Carrie, John, and Furby Gumaer in honor of  
Carolene Gumaer and Joe and Alice Sullivan*

*The Gumaer Family in memory of  
Larry V. Gumaer and Eillen Baker*

*Andy and Bonnie Haaland in memory of Robert and Bettie Burtner  
and Andrew and Mary Haaland*

*Sylvia Hammond and Dale Halstead  
in memory of Fred Hammond and Jennie Halstead*

*Gwen Hayne in memory of loved ones*



*Our Sanctuary has been decorated  
with Poinsettias,  
given in memory or in honor, by  
the following:*

*Andrea Herzog-O'Hara and Heather O'Hara  
in honor of Sharon and Tony Herzog and  
in memory of Helen, Vincent and Joseph Herzog and  
Ruth, Howard and Donald Akers*

*Gordon and Beverly Johnson in memory of loved ones*

*Becky Jones in honor of Dora and Bob Jones*

*Virginia W. Knobel in memory of Robert T. Knobel*

*Stanley B. Nilsson in memory of Beulah Nilsson*

*Ellen Root Paterson in memory of Gordon and Marguerite Root and  
Charles Waldrop*

*The Pedersen Family in honor of Emery Pedersen and  
in memory of Edna and Sheldon Baldwin, Sally Churchill, Rosemary  
Cross, Lori Scarpulla, Alyssa Churchill, and  
Elizabeth and Richard Pedersen*

*Rachel Rood in memory of Richard H. Rood*

*Jacob and Betsy Schuhle in memory of Shirley D. Wilson and  
Donald E. Berg*

*Gail Van Patten, Debbie, Jim Matthew Pelowki, and Shannon and  
Andrew Kostuk in memory of Bill VanPatten, Mary Louise Smith,  
Daniel Terry, and loved ones*

*James A. and Sharon W. Wainman in memory of our parents, Mr.  
and Mrs. C. James Wainman and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Warner*

*Phyllis and Les Wainman in memory of loved ones*

## NOTES AND NOTICES

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### Worship Service Participants

**Ushers and Greeters**  
Kurt and Lori Schmidt  
Bill and Sherri Masterson

**Worship Leader**  
Vicki Johnson

**Lectors**  
Bonnie Haaland  
Chuck Feiszli  
Jim Ulrich

**Nursery Volunteers**  
Susan Benedict,  
John Gumaer

**Flowers**  
Poinsettias from the Congregation

**Coffee Hour**  
Kelly Settineri

**Attendance**  
December 6 - 93  
(incorrectly posted last week)  
December 13 - 96

### Life in the Parish Week of December 20

**TODAY December 20**  
*Choir Sunday*  
9:15 am – Sunday School classes,  
The Well  
10:30 am – Worship service

**MONDAY – December 21**  
7:30 pm – Al-Anon meets in RFR

**TUESDAY – December 22**  
1:30 pm – Collating Committee  
meets  
2:00 pm – Bridge Group

**WEDNESDAY – December 23**  
7:00 pm – Choir rehearsal

**THURSDAY – December 24**  
*Christmas Eve*  
Noon – Bible Study group  
5:30 pm – Dish-to-pass supper  
7:30 pm – Candlelight service

**SUNDAY – December 27**  
*No Sunday School classes*  
10:30 am – Worship service

On Christmas Eve:

Please bring a dish to pass, whether that be holiday hors d'oeuvres, a special holiday soup, or Grandpa's favorite cookies, and join us for a simple meal at 5:30 pm.

At 7:30 pm, our Christmas Eve service will be the Service of Lessons and Carols, which follows an ancient custom of placing music between scripture readings. The service concludes with a candle lighting custom.

*The Angel Tree is a gift-giving ministry in which the children of families that are receiving Christmas Boxes through the Homer Food Pantry can receive gifts. Today is the deadline to provide funds for to the Methodist Church for them to complete their mission and ensure that all children receive a gift for Christmas. Simply go to the Methodist Church after service if you would like to make a contribution.*

"Love Shines Through." Today we are participating in the UCC Christmas Fund. It is one of the four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ and enables the Ministerial Assistance program to provide, on behalf of the whole church, Pension supplementation, Health Premium Supplementation, Emergency Grants, and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks to individuals and families in need.

**The Homer Congregational Church seeks a Child Care Coordinator.** This is a part-time position, approximately 3-4 hours per week with presence required on Sunday mornings and during other events as requested. Normal duties are performed in the church facility. To apply, send resume to Resumes@homercc.org. Job description is available on our web site at www.homercc.com. For more information contact Karen Dudgeon.