

December 20, 2020

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas! Even in such a strange year as this one has been, I am feeling excited to celebrate the birth of Jesus and hope you are too. The story of Christmas has always been that no matter the state of the world, God would arrive and walk with us on the way to the promised future. This week's at-home guide includes both a service for the Sunday before Christmas as well as an at-home service for Christmas Eve! Additionally on Christmas Eve, you are also invited to worship with us online at 5 or 7:30pm at youtube.com/manchesterunitedmethodistchurch, in-person in the church parking lot at 11pm, or **any time on December 24th by calling the Sermon by Phone line at 734-206-1531 to hear an entire worship service** including hymns, scripture, and sermon. If you have any questions about our Christmas worship options, please give the church office a call! Merry Christmas! -Pastor Dillon

MUMC At-Home Worship: December 20, 2020 (Dec. 24 is on the back)

If available, place a candle in the center of your gathering space and light it with this prayer:

Almighty God, calm our spirits and prepare our hearts for the celebration of your birth this year. Remove our fear, we pray, and replace it with love. In Christ's name, Amen.

Hymn: *O Holy Night* [watch/listen here](#)

Gospel Reading: John 1:1-14

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Reflect:

1. The portions of this scripture (verses 1-5 and 9-14) are portions of poetry as can be recognized in many Bibles by their indentation and line breaks. How does seeing these verses as poetry impact how we read them?
2. One of the most beloved parts of Christmas is the music that sets the tone while telling the story of the season. If you were to set the poetry in this scripture passage to music, what style of music would you use? What emotions would you want the music to evoke?
3. John's first verse is reminiscent of the first verse of Genesis ("In the beginning...") and might be intended to show Jesus' birth as a new beginning. Where might we be witnessing a new beginning this Christmas season? Are there any new beginnings you might like God to bring about in your life?

Hymn: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*, United Methodist Hymnal #240 [watch/listen here](#)

Prayer Requests: Share prayer requests and have a moment of silent prayer

Lord's Prayer

Hymn: *Angels We Have Heard on High*, United Methodist Hymnal #238 [watch/listen here](#)

Closing Prayer: Coming Christ, we look forward to the celebration of your coming with great hope for the new beginnings you bring. May our songs of Christmas remind us of the story of your birth and prepare our hearts to love you and love one another. Amen. (*Blow out the candle*)

O Holy Night

1. O holy night! the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope--the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious
morn!
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was
born!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!
2. Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by his cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here came the Wise Men from Orient land.
The King of kings lay thus in lowly
manger,
In all our trials born to be our Friend.
He knows our need-- to our weakness is no
stranger.
Behold your King, before him lowly bend!
Behold your King, before him lowly bend!
3. Truly he taught us to love one another;
His law is love and his gospel is peace.
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our
brother,
And in his name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise
we;
Let all within us praise his holy name.
Christ is the Lord! O praise his name
forever!
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!

John 1:1-14 Common English Bible

In the beginning was the Word
and the Word was with God
and the Word was God.

The Word was with God in the beginning.

Everything came into being through the Word,
and without the Word
nothing came into being.

What came into being
through the Word was life,
and the life was the light for all people.

The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.

A man named John was sent from God. He came
as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that
through him everyone would believe in the
light. He himself wasn't the light, but his mission
was to testify concerning the light.

The true light that shines on all people
was coming into the world.

The light was in the world,
and the world came into being through the light,
but the world didn't recognize the light.

The light came to his own people,
and his own people didn't welcome him.

But those who did welcome him,
those who believed in his name,
he authorized to become God's children,
born not from blood
nor from human desire or passion,
but born from God.

The Word became flesh
and made his home among us.

We have seen his glory,
glory like that of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.

*Scripture quotations noted CEB are taken from the
Common English Bible, copyright 2011. Used by
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Hark! the Herald Angels Sing
United Methodist Hymnal #240

1. Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King:
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain:
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"
2. Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel. [Refrain]
3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth. [Refrain]

"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" words by Charles Wesley, 1734, music by Felix Mendelssohn, 1840, both are in the public domain.

Angels We Have Heard on High
United Methodist Hymnal #238

1. Angels we have heard on high,
singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their brave delight.

Refrain:
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.
2. Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see?
What glad tidings did you hear?
[Refrain]
3. Come to Bethlehem and see
him 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 angels praise above.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
while we raise our hearts in love.
[Refrain]

"Angels We Have Heard on High" traditional French carol. Harmony © 1964 Abingdon Press