

Wesley United Methodist Church – Bloomington, Illinois
Incarnation: The Light of the World
December 20, 2020
Fourth Sunday in Advent

Greeting

Family Advent candle lighting by Alycia Hund, Andy and Aberash Hoffman

Organ Prelude

Chorale Prelude on Come Thou, Redeemer on Earth –Praetorius
John Stombres, organist

Scripture Call to Worship

Isaiah 9:2 (NRSV)

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

Opening Prayer

Opening Hymn UMH #234 *O Come, All Ye Faithful* vs. 1, 2, and 3

Children's Time

Anthem

Silent Night -arr. Raney
Ellen Hagen and Kim Snyder, piano duet

Scripture

John 1:1-5 (NRSV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Sermon

Incarnation: The Light of the World
Reverend Justin Iverson

Sermon Response Hymn UMH #230 *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

Prayer Song

Here I Am to Worship -Tim Hughes
Matt Sherrill, guitar

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.

Invitation to and Blessing of the Offering

Closing Song

Light of the World -Chris Tomlin and Matt Redman
Matt Sherrill, guitar

Announcements and Benediction

Worship Participants
Reverend Justin Iverson
Reverend Sara L. Isbell, Liturgist
John Stombres, Organist
Matt Sherrill, Guitarist
Kathi Pritts, Children's Time
Ron Kiesewetter, Hymn Singer

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT 2020: INCARNATION

This year Advent looks a little different. Families are staying home; shopping is done online; carolers are visiting friends by phone. It's a season to remember that God didn't wait for us to gather all together in heaven to meet us face-to-face; God came to us – visited us where we lived – brought the kingdom to us in the form of a baby boy. Divine Presence took on human flesh – that's what Incarnation means.

Wesley will be bringing Advent “home” by looking at the ways Christ comes to us, right where we live. We’ll be using Adam Hamilton’s “*Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas,*” to look at the different titles describing Jesus – in His day and ours. Titles include: Messiah/King, Savior, Emmanuel, Light of the World, Word made Flesh.

Advent Study

Incarnation will also be the theme of our Tuesday evening Advent study, using Hamilton’s study book. The final session will meet by Zoom from 6-7 p.m. on December 22. Contact [Barb Phend](#) if you need the zoom link.

THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS

Visit the sanctuary, which will be adorned for Christmas, **December 21st-23rd**. The sanctuary will be open from **9am-8pm** (Space will be limited to 10 persons at a time in the sanctuary) for you to enjoy prayerful reflection and private worship, and will feature a wooden nativity display, created especially for Christmas 2020. Christmas music will play overhead, and from **5:40pm-8:00pm** each evening, instrumentalists will provide music.

Sign up [online \(www.wesley-umc.com\)](http://www.wesley-umc.com) to attend one of the 20-minute evening sessions or call the Church office. Limited seating will be available, so sign up early. A special commemorative Christmas ornament will be given to everyone who visits the sanctuary any time on these days.

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS EVE

At noon on December 24, an online Christmas Eve service, featuring traditional carols, scripture readings, and Communion, will be posted to YouTube. ***Pastor Sally will make DVDs of the service available starting December 21st for those without internet access. Please call the Church office to request one.***

At 8pm, or another time of your family’s choosing, share the joy of Jesus’ birth with your neighbors by hosting a socially-distanced candles & carols - sing from your driveway. Extra candles can be found in your Advent Kit.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27 WORSHIP SERVICE

Pastor of Visitation, Sally Hamon will lead us in worship on this first Sunday of Christmas. Her sermon will center on the story of the Baby Jesus presented at the Temple, Luke 2:22-38.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3 WORSHIP SERVICE

Retired Pastor, Vaughn Hoffman will lead us in the Wesley Covenant Renewal Service as we begin the new year. The service will include John Wesley’s Covenant Prayer.

PAINT THE TOWN WESLEY: ALL - CHURCH WEDNESDAY NIGHT PROGRAM

Wesley UMC is finding new ways to do ministry during Phase 4 of COVID-19. Please plan to join us every Wednesday evening this fall for "Paint the Town WESLEY."

Wednesday, December 23 – THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS

This week's Paint the Town Wesley event will be *'The Sights and Sounds of Christmas.'* See event information in announcement above.

Wednesday, December 30 - A TREAT AND A TALE

Join Early Childhood Ministries Coordinator, Liz Tomera, on Wednesday, December 30th at 6pm for an evening story time via Zoom. Bring a snack and drink to enjoy with some of the Tomera Family's favorite stories. If you'd like to make your own hot chocolate like Liz does, here's a tasty [recipe](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/493003490462458880/). (<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/493003490462458880/>) Click [here](#) to join us for the final Paint the Town Wesley Of 2020: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89166145472>

Wednesday, January 6 – CHALK YOUR DOOR

January 6 is Epiphany –the day we remember the visit of the Wise Men to the Christ Child. But this year we can do more than just "remember"; we can welcome the wisemen ourselves and ask God's blessing upon our own homes for 2021! Find a piece of chalk and plan to join us in an European tradition: marking our doorways in the new year! This event will be the Wednesday daily devotion – a link can be found on our website, www.wesleyumc.com .

MISSION ADVENT OFFERING

Wesley Missions Advent Offering supports many local & state organizations and domestic missions. The domestic missions are the Henderson Settlement and the Red Bird mission in Appalachia. Give as you can by sending your contribution by mail to 502 E. Front Street, Bloomington IL 61701, or through the website – www.wesley-emc.com/give. Every donation is appreciated. For more information about these organizations, see the website <https://www.wesley-umc.com/category/news/>

LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS – LOVING OUR CHURCH STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Thank you, Wesley Church, for your faithfulness and generosity in our 2021 Stewardship Appeal! We are humbly grateful for your generosity at such a time as this.

Financial faith commitments for 2021 are still needed, and we encourage every Wesley member to be a part of assuring the love of Wesley Church in the coming year. So far we have received 194 cards received totaling \$823,970. If you need a card mailed to you, let us know; we'll be happy to send it. Every gift, no matter how large or small, is a sign of our gratitude for God's generosity, and a promise to Love God – Love Neighbor – Love You through Wesley Church.

Commitment cards may be submitted in any of the following ways:

1. Mail your commitment card to 502 E. Front St., Bloomington IL 61701
2. Use the electronic commitment card found at here (<https://www.wesley-umc.com/2020/10/2021-commitment-card/>)
3. E-mail our Business Manager, Myrna Simpson at msimpson@wesley-umc.com
4. Drop off the commitment card in a sealed envelope at the church Monday – Friday, 9am-3 pm

WESLEY DISTRIBUTION MINISTRY NEEDS

The following items are needed for the monthly paper goods distribution:

- Diapers – all sizes
- Diaper wipes
- Adult diapers
- Feminine hygiene items
- Bar soap
- Paper Towels
- 2021 calendars
- Scarves
- Ear warmers

You may drop off the items in the collection box located at the entrance door of Wesley West at any time, Monday - Friday. Monetary donations are welcome! [CLICK HERE](#) (<https://www.wesley-umc.com/give/>) to give online (be sure to note WDM in the memo) OR mail to the church at: 502 E. Front Street, Bloomington, IL 61701

SHARING OUR LOVE WITH AREA HEALTHCARE WORKERS

As a member of the Carle BroMenn Delegate Church Association, we have a great opportunity to participate in a *card shower* to show our appreciation, support, and encouragement to the entire Carle BroMenn staff. Please write a card or two (or more) to express appreciation to those who have gone above and beyond during this difficult time. **The completed cards should be delivered to the Unitarian Universalist Church at 1613 E Emerson, Bloomington. A collection container can be found at the front of the Church.**

Items to consider:

1. Cards do not need to be holiday related or individually addressed.
2. Please sign the card and include Wesley UMC.
3. Individually wrapped treats or gift cards are always appreciated.

WE'RE HIRING

Wesley UMC seeks a part-time **video editor** for our online daily devotions and weekly worship services. Please send cover letter & resume to [Myrna Simpson](#). Click [here](#) for a job description.

Wesley UMC is also seeking a full-time **Director of Communications** to help us get out the good word about Wesley Church! Please send cover letter & resume to [Myrna Simpson](#). Click [here](#) for a job description.

IS GRIEF GETTING TO YOU? GRIEF SHARE CONTINUES THROUGH MARCH

The year 2020 has been tough so far. Most of us feel we have lost much of what we took for granted and counted on: family get-togethers, social events, communal worship – not to mention school, jobs, income – and, of course, the lives and health of people we love. Most of us are carrying grief. **GriefShare** is a grief support group hosted by church groups of all denominations. It is led by a trained facilitator, and includes video and small-group discussion.

Cornell UMC in Cornell IL will be offering weekly GriefShare sessions starting Tuesday, Dec. 1, continuing through March 2. United Methodists of any congregation are welcome to participate. For more information, contact Darcy Woodburn at cornellumc@gmail.com, or click [Cornell United Methodist Church group - GriefShare](#) to register. All sessions are free.

COVID-19 UPDATE FOR BLOOMINGTON WESLEY UMC

On December 9, Bishop Beard released a new statement for the churches of the Illinois Great Rivers Conference. The statement advises IGRC churches to refrain from in-house worship through the month of December and “until further notice.” Read the full letter [here](#). (<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Pastoral-Letter-from-Bishop-Frank-J--Beard.html?soid=1101770231079&aid=i8gzQO8EfhQ>)

We know Advent and Christmas are times the Church longs to be together for worship, and we acknowledge the disappointment and grief that many Wesley members are feeling as the pandemic stretches into 2021. But Wesley Church will continue to keep the safety and health of our members and staff at the top of our priority list and will continue to offer regular worship and children’s Sunday School, daily devotions, weekly study opportunities, terrific “Paint The Town Wesley” events, and so much more, via internet. We are all in this together, Church, and we’re going to make it through! Click [here](#) to learn how this will affect Wesley UMC: <https://www.wesley-umc.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Covid-Tier-3-mitigations-update-Dec-9-2020.pdf>