

**Wesley United Methodist Church – Bloomington, Illinois**

**Incarnation: The Savior and Our Need for Saving – December 6th, 2020**

Greeting

Second Advent Candle Lighting by Kimberly Martin-Boyd, Chad, Killian, and Cohen Boyd

Organ Prelude

*Chorale Prelude on Noel Nouvelet - Cherwien*

John Stombres, organist

Scripture Call to Worship: Jeremiah 23:5-6

5 The days are surely coming, says the LORD,  
when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch,  
and he shall reign as king and deal wisely,  
and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

6 In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety.

And this is the name by which he will be called:

“The LORD is our righteousness.”

Pastoral Prayer

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.**

Opening Hymn UMH #250 *Once in Royal David’s City*

Children’s Time

Anthem

*Mary’s Boy Child - arr. Moore*

Rex Moore, harp

Scripture: Matthew 1:18-21, 24-25 (NRSV)

<sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

<sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Sermon

*Incarnation: The Savior and Our Need for Saving*

Reverend Sara L. Isbell

Sermon Response Hymn UMH #216 *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

Service of Holy Communion

*Liturgy used and adapted by permission from Rev. Robb McCoy <https://fatpastor.me/2014/12/02/a-service-of-communion-for-advent/>*

Communion Music

*We Have a Savior* - Hillsong

Matt Sherrill, guitar

Invitation to the Offering

Closing Song

*Our God Saves/Joy to the World* - Paul Baloche

Matt Sherrill, guitar

Announcements and Benediction

Worship Participants

Reverend Sara L. Isbell, Senior Pastor

Reverend Justin Iverson, Associate Pastor

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.

This year 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 group will meet by Zoom from 6-7 p.m. for four weeks. (December 1, 8, 15 & 22) Please contact Kathi Pritts at [kpritts@wesley-umc.com](mailto:kpritts@wesley-umc.com) for the Zoom link and a book.

Learn the meaning behind the names of Christ and the difference He makes in our lives this Christmas. His parents gave him the name Jesus. But the prophets, the shepherds, the wise men, and the angels addressed him by other names. They called him Lord, Messiah, Savior, Emmanuel, Light of the World, and Word Made Flesh. In *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*, best-selling author Adam Hamilton examines the names of Christ used by the gospel writers, exploring the historical and personal significance of his birth.

This Advent season church families will come together to remember what's important. In the face of uncertainty and conflict, Christians reclaim the Christ child who brings us together, heals our hearts, and calls us to bring light into the darkness. Now more than ever, we invite you to reflect upon the significance of the Christ child for our lives and world today!

## **Is Grief Getting to You? GriefShare Starts Tuesday, Dec. 1.**

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](mailto:cornellumc@gmail.com), or click [Cornell United Methodist Church group - GriefShare](#) to register. All sessions are free.

## **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** 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 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.

## **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. We know it hasn't been easy for some of us – and we know that others of us have stepped up to bridge the gap. What an amazing congregation you are, Wesley UMC!

**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 178 cards received totaling \$768,818. 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](mailto:msimpson@wesley-umc.com)
4. Drop off the commitment card in a sealed envelope at the church Monday – Friday, 9am-3 pm

## **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 9– WESLEY'S MASKED SINGERS**

Join Director of Christian Education, Kathi Pritts, on Wednesday, December 9th at 6pm for a Wesley edition of the popular television show, The Masked Singer. Try to guess the identity of each singer as familiar voices from Wesley sing popular Christmas carols from inside costumes.

**Contact [Kathi Pritts](#) to receive a Zoom link.**

### **Wednesday, December 16 – MERRY & BRIGHT**

Plan to join us on December 16th at 6:00 pm for a Wesley Christmas Light Competition! Watch out for a special e-mail blast releasing the addresses of 4 Wesley Family houses that are decked out for Christmas. Go on a driving tour around town to find your favorite and vote online for the house that wins the award for best display!

## **SURGE MEETING SUNDAY NIGHTS ONLINE**

Surge (Grades 6-12) meets on Sunday nights! Our "Bonfires of Belonging" series welcomes all students to come and belong as a part of our Surge family while we join in fellowship, games and spiritual devotion.

UPDATE! Due to the growing number of COVID cases in McLean County, SURGE will move to online programming until further notice. Students are invited to join our zoom meeting room at 6:00 pm for a time of devotion, games, and fellowship.

Please note that EVERYONE (6th-12th grade) is invited from 6:00-6:30 for a game and then students will separate for their weekly small group meeting at 6:30. Link to zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87184121766>

Please feel free to contact Kelsey with any questions/concerns! 618-558-0748.

## **MISSION ADVENT OFFERING**

Wesley Missions Advent Offering supports many local & state organizations and domestic missions. Some of the local organizations are Safe Harbor, Western Avenue Community Center, Faith in Action, Community Health Care Clinic and Habitat for Give as you can by sending your contribution by mail to 502 E. Front Street, Bloomington IL 61701, or through the website – <https://www.wesley-umc.com/give/>. For more information about these organizations, see the website <https://www.wesley-umc.com/2020/11/2020-missions-advent-offering/>

***Give as you can. Every donation is appreciated.***

## **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 \(https://www.wesley-umc.com/give/\)](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

## **COVID-19 UPDATE FOR BLOOMINGTON WESLEY UMC**

On Tuesday, Nov. 17, Illinois Governor Pritzker announced that the entire state of Illinois would be moving to Tier 3 COVID restrictions beginning Friday, Nov. 20. Tier 3 is not a mandated “shelter-in-place,” but can be described as “If you don’t have to do it, don’t.”

On the same day, Bishop Beard issued a letter to all IGRC churches instructing a pause in all in-person worship (inside and outside), limiting building use to 10 persons or less, and asking that all church staff work from home as much as possible. These restrictions are to be observed until Dec. 13, at which time the conference will re-evaluate. You can find the letter at

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Pastoral-Letter-from-Bishop-Frank-J--Beard.html?soid=1101770231079&aid=JnFqngsox8A>

Click here to learn how this will affect Wesley UMC: <https://www.wesley-umc.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Tier-3-mitigations-Nov-18-2020.pdf>