

*Tappahannock Memorial
United Methodist Church*

P. O. Box 326
345 Earl Street
Tappahannock, VA 22560



*“To all who mourn and need comfort,
to all who are tired and need rest,
to all who are lonely and need companionship,
to all who sin and need a Savior, and to all who will,
this church opens wide its doors.”*

Tappahannock Memorial UMC

3rd Sunday of Advent

“The Christmas Story”

December 17, 2023

Luke 1:26-28; Luke 2:1-20; Matthew 2:1-12

<>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <>< + <><

Prelude

“Sing We Now Of Christmas”

“Sing We Now Of Christmas” Contributors: William Tortolano Text: hymnal adaptation; © 2011, GIA Publications, inc. Permission to reprint, podcast, and/or stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #A-737731. All rights reserved.

Welcome & Announcements

Good Morning! I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I welcome you to our time of worship today. I welcome those who are present with us in the sanctuary as well as those worshipping online via our Facebook and YouTube pages. We welcome your feedback as we continue offering in person and online worship.

We are tracking our attendance, so thank you in advance to all who will let us know that you have watched or read our service this morning. Please email our Administrative Assistant at tappmethodist@gmail.com, with your attendance information.

This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!!

Special Music

“Silent Night”

JeyLynn Minor, Piano

* Call to Worship:

When the Lord restores our fortunes,
we are like those who dream.

Our mouths are filled with laughter;
our hearts sing with shouts of joy.

Worship the Lord of our salvation.

Worship the Lord!

Call to Worship from The Abingdon Worship Annual 2023, pg. 239. ©2022 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

* Opening Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

God of Dreams, you have done great things
for your people.

From times of old, you awaken the faithful
to the dawn of your glory.

Fill our mouths with laughter.

Loose our tongues with shouts of joy.

Amount us with the oil of gladness

and make it known among all people

that we will live as oaks of righteousness,

the plantings of the Lord. Amen.

Prayer from The Abingdon Worship Annual 2023, pg. 239. Copyright ©2022 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

Prayer of Yearning

**Merciful God, we hear John's fervent cry;
"Make straight the way of the Lord,"
but we don't know what we should do.**

Our lives carry on as they have before.

Nothing seems to change.

**Yet we long to be caught up in the ecstatic visions
of prophets and mystics.**

**We yearn to tune our ears to the heralds
who testify to your light.**

**Help us walk in the ways that lead to life,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Prayer from The Abingdon Worship Annual 2023, pg. 239. Copyright ©2022 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

The Declaration of Pardon

Hear the good news:

Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;

That proves God's love toward us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

Glory to God. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you!

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Mike & Tami Ward-Dahl

Isaiah 61:1-3a

Reader 1: When God's people were surrounded by hardship, suffering, and grief, Isaiah proclaimed, The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit (Isaiah 61:1-3a).

Reader 2: We come today as people who are also surrounded by suffering and grief. And yet, the Spirit hovers among us, tending and anointing, inspiring freedom where there is captivity, declaring blessing in places the world has cursed, and igniting fierce joy where mourning and heartache prevail.

Congregation: We wait as people who experience hardship and pain, yet we are called to witness to the persistent joy that sustains our life as God's people.

Reader 1: We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, just peace, and fierce joy. May our lives shine with the fierce, tenacious joy of the Light who lives in our hearts as we wait and work for the coming of God's kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Light the third (pink) candle of the Advent wreath.

Hymn: "Light The Advent Candle"

TFWS 2090, verse 3

**Light the Advent Candle, three:
Think of heavenly harmony,
angels singing “Peace on earth”
at the blessed Savior’s birth.
Candle, candle, burning bright,
shining in the cold winter night;
candle, candle, burning bright,
fill our hearts with Christmas light.**

“Advent Song: Light The Advent Candle” Author: Mary Lu Walker ©1975, 2001 Butterfly Productions (Admin. by William Walker). CCLI Song #216714 CCLI License #2350408.

Children’s Time

Pastor Becca

*Hymn

“O Little Town Of Bethlehem”

UMH #230

1. O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see the lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth!
3. How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given;
so God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Scriptures

Luke 1:26-38

pg. 56-57

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

Scriptures**Luke 2:1-7****pg. 58**

¹ In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Special Music**“Away In A Manger”****Children of the Church****Scriptures****Luke 2:8-20****pg. 58**

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Special Music**“Silent Night”****Children of the Church****Anthem****“What Child Is This?”****Choir****Scriptures****Matthew 2:1-10****pg. 2**

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶ ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’” ⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared.

⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

Hymn*“We Three Kings”****UMH #254**

verses 1, 2, 5

1. We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.
2. Born a King of Bethlehem's plan, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.
5. Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, Alleluia, sounds through the earth and skies.
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Scriptures

Matthew 2:11-12

pg. 2

¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Special Music

“Joy To The World”

Children of the Church

Bringing Forward Gifts

Congregation while Choir Sings

Sharing of Our Joys & Concerns

We want to continue to pray for the healing of the nations through this pandemic, and for all those impacted by: war – especially the people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Palestine and Sudan; natural disasters; gun violence; and other catastrophic events. Remember those who have been in the hospital for treatments and surgeries, as well as for COVID 19. Remember those who are isolated with no one to interact with. Please continue to pray for: your prayer partners; our homebound folks; those in nursing, rehabilitative, and assisted living facilities; as well as for those on the front lines. I would once again ask that we pray for those who have chosen to keep their illnesses between themselves and God. While we respect their privacy, they still need our collective prayers.

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

UMH #895

**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.**

The Offering

Please remember to keep your tithes and offerings current so that the ministries of our church can continue. You may mail them to P. O. Box 326, Tappahannock, VA 22560, use the E-Giving link available on our website www.tappahannockmethodist.org, or download our mobile e-giving app identified on the last page of today's bulletin. Thank you for your continued support!

The Offertory

“O Holy Night”

Lauren Ficklin, alto saxophone

“O Holy Night” Authors: Adolphe Charles Adam, John Sullivan Dwight, Placide Cappeau. CCLI Song # 32015 CCLI License #2350408.

*** Doxology**

UMH #95

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.

*** Closing Hymn**

“There’s A Song In The Air”

UMH #249

1. There’s a song in the air! There’s a star in the sky!
There’s a mother’s deep prayer and a baby’s low cry!
And the star rains its fire while the beautiful sing,
for the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King!
2. There’s a tumult of joy o’er the wonderful birth,
for the virgin’s sweet boy is the Lord of the earth.
Ay! the star rains its fire while the beautiful sing,
for the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King!
3. In the light of that star lie the ages impearled;
and that song from afar has swept over the world.
Every hearth is aflame, and the beautiful sing
in the homes of the nations that Jesus is King!
4. We rejoice in the light, and we echo the song
that comes down through the night from the heavenly throng.
Ay! we shout to the lovely evangel they bring,
and we greet in his cradle our Savior and King!

*** Benediction**

*** Postlude**

“Angels We Have Heard On High”

“Angels We Have Heard On High” Contributors: Terry Kirkland Tune and Text: ©1995 Kirkland House, assigned to Lorenz Publishing Company (Admin. by Music Services) Permission to reprint, podcast, and/or stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #A-737731. All rights reserved.



Thank you for joining us in worship!

PRAYER LIST

Wright Andrews, Eddie Bliss, Faye Brooks, Royce Burruss, Woody Campbell, Roxanne Griffith, Maurice Hawa, Madeline Hawkins, Bill Hendricks, Cindy Huber, Betty Gregory, the family of Brandon Kiser, Carolyn Lewis, Bill Loser, Ron Lucas, Nate Parker, Mary Lou Simpson, Les Sisson, George Wells and Betty Whitten. Inclusion & equality for the LGBTQ family & friends. All affected by critical weather and violence, everyone who struggles with drug addiction and alcoholism, those in peril, all missing persons, those who serve in the Armed Forces, students and educators, the people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Palestine, and Sudan during this time of war, everyone around the world as we fight the spread of COVID-19, and the UMC during the separation and as the church moves forward.

MILITARY: SSGT Jonathan Simpson. SA Ethan Minor while at Navy Advanced Schooling.

PRAYERS AND CARDS ARE WELCOME FOR THESE MEMBERS

Lee Black, Barbara Brooks, Jim Climaldi, Jean Edwards, Cecile Farmer,
Don and Carol Nicholas, Edna Parrish, and Jean Rhines.

** Please contact the office for the phone number or address for these members of our church family.*

SERVICE AND OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Today:	10:00 AM	3rd Sunday of Advent
Wednesday:	10:30 AM	Wednesday Morning Group
Sunday, December 24 th :	10:00 AM	4 th Sunday of Advent
	5:00 PM	Christmas Eve Worship

All meetings are offered in-person and via Zoom unless stated otherwise.

*We seek to be the Disciples of Christ, welcoming all as we nurture
and support one another through service and outreach.*

Our facility is handicap accessible.

Pastor: The Reverend Rebecca L. Minor, Cell Phone: (757) 870-8265

Music Director: Kelly Wright; **Pianist:** Beth Harvey

Church: 804-443-2278 / **Church Administrative Email:** tappmethodist@gmail.com

Pastor's Office Hours: Tue - Thu: 9 am – 2 pm