

*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

4th Sunday of Advent

“Do Not Be Afraid”

December 24, 2023

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

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Prelude

“The First Noel”

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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!!

* Opening Hymn

“Once in Royal David’s City”

UMH #250

1. Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed;
Mary, loving mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little child.
2. He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall.
With the poor, the scorned, the lowly lived on earth our Savior holy.
3. Jesus is our childhood’s pattern; day by day, like us he grew;
he was little, weak, and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feeleth for our sadness, and he shareth in our gladness.
4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;
for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

* Call to Worship:

Relatives conceive— one a barren woman,
the other a young girl who has not been with a man.

How can this be?

With God, all things are possible.

Our hearts beat with laughter.

Our lips sing of God’s glory.

Let us magnify the Lord as we worship God this day.

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* **Opening Prayer**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Come to us, Promised One,
in this season of waiting.

Set our hearts ablaze with the glory of your salvation.

Set our minds afire with the richness of your word.

Reveal to us a secret of your ways;

for you alone are wise,

you alone are worthy of our thanks and praise.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Prayer from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2023*, pg. 243. Copyright ©2022 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

Prayer of Yearning

**God of grace and God of glory,
pour your power on your people.**

**We long for the strength and the courage
to glorify your name in all that we say
and in all that we do.**

**Open our eyes to the promise of your salvation,
as you scatter the proud,
pull down the powerful from their thrones,
fill the hungry with good things,
and send the rich away empty.**

**Live in and through us this Christmas season,
that we might be messengers of your grace and instruments of your peace. Amen.**

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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

The Hundley Family

Luke 1:34, 46-49

Reader 1: When the angel Gabriel visited Mary, announcing God's plan for her to conceive and give birth to the Messiah, "Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'" And yet, only a few months later, Mary sings to Elizabeth, My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

Reader 2: We, like Mary, hear God’s call to be part of making God’s dream for our salvation and flourishing a reality, and we question, “How can this be? I am only…” Yet, like Mary, the “onlys” that make us hesitate are gifts God can and will use as God’s love transforms us into bearers of good news.

Congregation: We wait as people who have encountered divine Love that disrupts the status quo and ushers us into abundant life marked by mutual love and peace that flows from the flourishing of all people.

Reader 1: We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, and the love that transforms us. May Love grow within us, transforming us into bold witnesses of God’s salvation with our voices and our lives. Amen.

Light the four outer candles of the advent wreath.

Hymn: “Light The Advent Candle”

TFWS 2090, verse 4

**Light the Advent Candle, four:
Think of joy forevermore;
Christ Child in a stable born,
gift of love that Christmas morn.
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

Scriptures

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

pg. 281

¹ Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.” ⁴ But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷ Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸ Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹ and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰ And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹ from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

²⁵ Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 & Romans 16:25-27 from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright ©1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Glory Ringers

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” Contributors: Janet Van Valey, Lewis Redner, Susan Berry Tune: ©1998 Lorenz Publishing Company, a division of The Lorenz Corporation (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.) Permission to reprint, podcast, and/or stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #A-737731. All rights reserved.

*Canticle

Canticle of Mary

UMH #199

Response: The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

R

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
who has looked with favor on me, a lowly servant.

From this day all generations shall call me blessed:

the Almighty has done great things for me
and holy is the name of the Lord,
whose mercy is on those who fear God
from generation to generation.

The arm of the Lord is strong,
 and has scattered the proud in their conceit.

God has cast down the mighty from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly.

God has filled the hungry with good things
 and sent the rich empty away.

God has come to the aid of Israel, the chosen servant,
remembering the promise of mercy,
the promise made to our forebears,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

R

* The Gloria Patri

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
 As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
 world without end. Amen. Amen.*

* Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

pg. 56-57

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He 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.

Luke 1:26-38 from New Revised Standard Version Bible, ©1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Prayer before the Sermon

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight,
O God our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

The Sermon

“Do Not Be Afraid”

Rev. Rebecca L. Minor

*** Hymn of Response**

“In The Bleak Midwinter”

UMH #221

1. In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
2. Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.
3. Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.
4. What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Affirmation of Faith

UMH # 884

**We believe in the one God,
creator and sustainer of all things, Father of all nations,
the source of all goodness and beauty, all truth and love.
We believe in Jesus Christ,**

**God manifest in the flesh,
our teacher, example, and Redeemer, the Savior of the world.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
God present with us for guidance, for comfort, and for strength.
We believe in the forgiveness of sins,
in the life of love and prayer,
and in grace equal to every need.
We believe in the Word of God
contained in the Old and New Testaments
as the sufficient rule both of faith and of practice.
We believe in the church,
those who are united in the living Lord
for the purpose of worship and service.
We believe in the reign of God
as the divine will realized in human society,
and in the family of God,
where we are all brothers and sisters.
We believe in the final triumph of righteousness
and in the life everlasting. Amen.**

A Statement of Faith of the Korean Methodist Church, *United Methodist Hymnal*, no. 884. Adapt. ©1989 The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.

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 and Palestine; 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

"Silent Night"

Rob Wright, John Moncreif- guitar

* 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

"It Came Upon The Midnight Clear"

UMH #218

1. It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.
2. Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.
3. And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!
4. For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

* Benediction

"Three Fold Amen"

UMH #898

Amen, Amen, Amen.

* Postlude

"Go Tell It On The Mountain"

Thank you for joining us in worship!

PRAYER LIST

Wright Andrews, Eddie Bliss, the family of Lois Bonhouse, Woody Campbell, Roxanne Griffith, Susie Hardwick, Maurice Hawa, Madeline Hawkins, the family of Jessica Hayes, Bill Hendricks, Lauma Hill, Cindy Huber, Betty Gregory, the family of Brandon Kiser, Carolyn Lewis, Bill Loser, Ron Lucas, Ray Massie, Nate Parker, the family of Eleanor Rehm, Mary Lou Simpson, the family of Bishop Thomas Stockton, the family of Les Sisson, the family of 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, and Europe 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

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	4th Sunday of Advent
	5:00 PM	Christmas Eve Worship
Sunday, December 31 st :	10:00 AM	Epiphany

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