

SUNDAY WORSHIP

December 4, 2022

PRELUDE *Sleep of the Child Jesus*

WELCOME & PRAYER

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (from Psalm 13)

L: *I trust in Your unfailing love;*

C: my heart rejoices in Your salvation.

L: *I will sing the Lord's praise—*

C: for He has been good to me.

ADVENT CANDLE *Love*

***CAROL** *We Hail You* Black #104; vv. 1,3,4

PRAYING WITH AND FOR ONE ANOTHER

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

CANTATA *Once Upon A Night* Pepper Choplin

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Celebrate Christmas*

**please stand as you are able*

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The Advent Festival happens today!

*Coffee & crafts follow the morning service in Fellowship Hall,
and there's a full ham & turkey dinner at noon.*

*Then enjoy a Christmas Concert with the
St. Thomas Dulcimer Society
in the sanctuary at 1.30pm*

Stay/come for any or all!

If you're new to St. Thomas, welcome!

To share a prayer request, or receive email updates about the church,
please fill out a white 'Hi!' card (check the pew rack) and drop it in the
plate by one of the doors.

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Forward

What is it that draws us all to the Christmas Story? Even unbelievers are touched by its power. Everyone wants to experience the excitement of the angel's prophecies. We all want to touch the baby's cheek and feel the warmth of the mother's love for her child. The account of angels in the sky captures our imagination. We are intrigued by the thought that there could possibly be "peace on earth, goodwill to men."

As believers, we know that the Christmas narrative is more than a story. We see God in the baby's eyes. We hear heaven's glory in the angels' voices. And when we consider how God reached down to earth in this holy visitation, we are inspired to worship with gratitude and praise.

The world chases after the warmth, the joy and love that is known as the Christmas spirit. However, it is the *Holy* Spirit that brings hope in the depth of despair; strength in the trough of exhaustion; and life in the midst of death.

Let us join now together with Luke as we bring to life his account of this ultimate story of love. As you share this work with others, I pray that the *Holy* Spirit of Christmas will be upon you. May you discover the story's power and embody the miracle that happened...

ONCE UPON A NIGHT

Soloists

Julie Forester,
Connie Stackhouse

Narrator

Ray Wright

News & Notes

Bulletin covers are in loving memory of Joseph Moyer.

Indulge your inner pastry chef at a class on **holiday cake decorating**— offered by Ella Hepler of *Ella Bella Bakery* on Dec 11, 10.30am, in Fellowship Hall. Invite a friend, and please register on the hallway board so there are enough supplies.

Volunteers are still needed for the **Live Nativity** on Dec 10. See any Community Impact Team member for more info.

The **midweek study** meets 7-8pm via zoom on Nov 30, Dec 7 & 14, then will be on hiatus until mid-January. For info on connecting, check the website.

December Mission: Aveanna Gift Tree & Bethany Home.

Brighten Christmas for the **children from Aveanna** Medical Daycare by donating a gift. For info on doing this, check the website, or contact the office for a link.

Christmas cookies for shut-ins— contact a member of the Community Impact Team about baking and/or delivering.

Support **CCU this Christmas** with a gift of music (the 2022 entry of *Joy to the Burg*) or cards (displayed in Fellowship Hall). Claire Gallagher has more info.

From the Deacons: *Christmas Gift for St. Thomas*

As you're reflecting on God's blessings this year, consider a Christmas gift to St. Thomas. Cards are in the foyers and you can use one to write a message to St. Thomas friends, enclose your Christmas gift, and place it in the offering plate. Cards and messages will be displayed on the bulletin board early in the new year, and gifts will go to the General Fund. This special donation can be made via your regular offering envelope (write *Christmas Gift* on the "other" line) and through the online portal.

Celebrating Advent & Christmas with St. Thomas

advent begins Nov 27, and on each of its Sundays, we'll light candles and sing carols. There are other activities, events, and ways to help this season, too:

Christmas Cantata—Sunday, Dec 4, in the 9am service

Advent Festival—Sunday, Dec 4

Christmas crafting with projects to choose (10.15 to noon)

Ham and turkey dinner with all the fixings (noon)

Concert by the St. Thomas Dulcimer Society (1.30pm)

Brighten Christmas for the *children from Aveanna Medical Daycare* by donating a gift for their party. There's a link for more info @website—or contact the church office to help.

Donate food & clothing—Drop 14-15oz cans of green beans & winter clothing in the foyer for people in our community.

Living Nativity—Saturday, Dec 10

Holiday cake decorating—Sunday, Dec 11, 10.30am

Tips and tricks from Ella Bella Bakery in a hands-on session open to all (please register by calling the office).

Christmas Eve services

Traditional candlelight service at 6pm

Lessons & carols (with candles & communion) at 7.30pm

Christmas Day—there's an online worship service

New Year's Day—the 9am service will be in person & online

Advent at home

Try making an Advent wreath with some greens and 5 candles—4 on the perimeter of a circle, with a fifth candle in the circle's middle. A new candle gets lit each week, as each candle highlights a different aspect of Advent.

Passages listed below can be read as part of the lighting; you can also read these portions during the week to spark thinking on each of the Advent themes. An Advent wreath will be part of Sunday worship at St. Thomas, and you may hear one or more of these passages read as part of those services, too.

First week: Hope

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 149:1-11; Zechariah 9:9-13; Jeremiah 23:1-8; Jeremiah 33:14-22

Second week: Love

John 3:16-19; Psalm 24:1-10; Isaiah 7:10-14; Romans 8:35-39; 1 John 4:7-11; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Third week: Joy

Matthew 2:10-11; Psalm 146:5-10; Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 2:8-14; Psalm 94:17-19

Fourth week: Peace

Isaiah 9:1-7; Luke 2:1-14; John 14:23-27; Isaiah 26:1-4

On Christmas Eve, the fifth candle—the Christ Candle—signifies how light has come into the world (John 1:1-9).