

Today's Worship
December 6, 2020
Second Sunday in Advent

WELCOME Rev. Dr. Rob Bruce

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Deborah Phillips

OPENING PRAYER Rev. Karen Hoyt

MUSIC **Hark the Herald Angels Sing**

PASTORAL PRAYER Rev. Hoyt

LORD'S PRAYER

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 1:5–25 (NRSV) *The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold*

⁵In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. ⁷But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

⁸Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. ¹⁰Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. ¹¹Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. ¹³But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. ¹⁴You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” ¹⁸Zechariah said to the angel, “How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.” ¹⁹The angel replied, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.”

²¹Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. ²²When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. ²³When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, ²⁵“This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.”

Luke 1:57–80 (NRSV) *The Birth of John the Baptist*

⁵⁷Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

⁵⁹On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. ⁶⁰But his mother said, “No; he is to be called John.” ⁶¹They said to her, “None of your relatives has this name.” ⁶²Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. ⁶³He

asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And all of them were amazed. ⁶⁴Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. ⁶⁵Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. ⁶⁶All who heard them pondered them and said, “What then will this child become?” For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

Zechariah's Prophecy

⁶⁷Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

⁶⁸“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹He has raised up a mighty savior for us
in the house of his servant David,

⁷⁰as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
⁷¹that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

⁷²Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant,

⁷³the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us ⁷⁴that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.

⁷⁶And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

⁷⁷to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.

⁷⁸By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,

⁷⁹to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

⁸⁰The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

MUSIC **Breath of Heaven**

SERMON Rev. Dr. Bruce

INVITATION AND CONFESSION

Paul’s letter to the Hebrews includes a wonderful word: “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” As we enter this season of Advent, it is right and good that we gather at the table of Jesus Christ, whose ministry was centered in showing hospitality—inviting us all, no matter whether we feel at home in our faith or at times feel like strangers, to know the grace of God that is already and always awaiting us if we will but open to it. Let us set aside any hesitation, any obstacle to the invitation. In this silence, we offer to God our confession of the ways we turn away from the fullness of love.

ABSOLUTION Rev. Hoyt

Know this: The things you have confessed before God, and even those things you have no words for at this moment, are all being lifted away on the wings of God’s love. Be assured of your freedom as forgiven and beloved children of the Most Gracious God, And all God’s people say, “**Amen!**”

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Rev. Hoyt: God be with you!

ALL: And also with you!

Rev. Hoyt: Lift up your hearts!

All: We lift them up to God!

Rev. Hoyt: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Rev. Hoyt: In the beginning you set everything in motion, Creator of heaven and earth. With bold ingenuity you splashed the sky with light and stars, sun and moon; wind and clouds, rainbows and wing-ed ones. With a word you brought forth the waters, the waves, the mountains and valleys. And you called forth our lives from the dust and called it good.

And so we proclaim this ancient song with all of the saints and angels:

ALL: Holy, holy, holy God!

God of power!

God of might!

Heaven and earth are full of your glory!

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed are you!

Blessed are you!

Rev. Hoyt: You sent your Son, Jesus—your message-made-flesh to dwell among us: Harbinger of Hope, Prince of Peace, Cup of Joy, Bread of Love. Through Jesus you gave birth to your church and sealed a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

Rev. Dr. Bruce: On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so as we anticipate the birth of hope anew, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

ALL: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Rev. Dr. Bruce: Touch us, O Spirit, with your transforming power.

Open us to your promise of resurrection from fear and death.

In partaking of these elements, make us a people ready as

your Body in and for an anxious world.

Let us become your messengers of hope in all that we say and do.

Make us one in this purpose, O God.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Make them to be for us the body and blood of Christ that we may be for the world

the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit, make us one with

Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ

comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son

Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,

All honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, Now and forever.

Sharing of the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving Rev. Hoyt

MUSIC **Away in a Manger**

BENEDICTION Rev. Hoyt



McEver Road UMC is Praying For:

Jack Anderson, Family of Kimiko Carlson, Family of Brenda Crow, Family of Shirley Powell, Becky Smith

Continued Prayers For:

Pat Adams, Bill and Liz Anderson, Noel and Betsy Bassett, Jim Burton, Bill Carman, Brandon Cartledge, Judy Chosewood, Jan Christian, Gary Clark, Tom Cooper, Terry Dale, Wayne

Davidson, Natalie Donatelli, Martha Farr, Dick Fleming, Shari Gwaltney, Paul and Nan Hagerty, Linda Hewell, Jill Johnson, Michele Lecorchic, Carolyn Lindsley, Thomas Lindsley, Mark Mobarry, Paul Mobarry, Celeste Mullins, Jeff Palulis, Fern Patterson, Jean Pool, Martha Shay, Shelly Simpson, Lloyd and Florence Smee, Andrea Steptowe, Kya Strickland, Connie Towe, Hannah Turcotte, Sharon Walton, Teresa Wheeler, Linda Yocum, John Young, those fighting cancer

Our Service Men and Women:

Chris Anderson, Ryan Cantrell, Breanna Cantrell, Christian Edens, Maribel Edens, Robby Harrison, Travis Hutchinson, Kiernan Kane, Keenen McDaniel, Mason McDaniel, Jacob Miller, Zachary Peterson, Darrell Scales

Missionaries:

Ashley Johnson, Christie and Rick Krueger, Ann Milligan

Please contact the church office (770-532-3160) or the Jordans (770-536-9043, ljordan4751@charter.net) for updates to the prayer list.

This Week At a Glance

Today

Children’s Sunday School 9:15AM online
(Chris Hester 678-936-5127, chrishester23@gmail.com)

Joyful Noise Sunday School class 10:15AM, Bagley Annex
(John Wright 770-967-1950, grampajohngrumps@gmail.com)

Garry Glenn’s Sunday School class 10:15, Bagley Annex
(Garry Glenn 678-617-8073, rglenn@aim.com)

Current Hearts Adult Sunday School class 10AM online
(Debbie Durrence 678-833-1214, debbie.durrence@gmail.com)

Tuesday, Dec. 8

Bible Study 7PM Bagley Annex and virtual
(Chris Hester: chrishester23@gmail.com or 678-936-5127)

Thursday, Dec. 10

Bible Study 10:30AM virtual
(Rob Bruce 404-906-8276, rob.bruce@ngumc.net)

Sunday, Dec. 13

Children’s Sunday School 9:15AM virtual
(Chris Hester 678-936-5127, chrishester23@gmail.com)

Joyful Noise Sunday School class 10:15AM, Bagley Annex
(John Wright 770-967-1950, grampajohngrumps@gmail.com)

Garry Glenn’s Sunday School class 10:15, Bagley Annex
(Garry Glenn 678-617-8073, rglenn@aim.com)

Current Hearts Adult Sunday School class 10AM virtual
(Debbie Durrence 678-833-1214, debbie.durrence@gmail.com)

Staff Love Offering

Please join with us to celebrate our staff in what has been a very challenging year in the life of our church. Let’s continue to show our support with a Love Offering to be given to staff before Christmas. Donations will be accepted beginning immediately and no later than Sunday, December 13th at the Bagley Annex office and through the mail at 5226 McEver Road, Oakwood, GA 30566.

Thank you,

Staff Parish Relations Committee



McEver Rd

— CHURCH —

A United Methodist Community

Loving Christ Loving People Helping People Love Christ

Welcome! We’re Glad You’re Here!



We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, filthy rich, dirt poor. We extend a special welcome to those who are crying newborns, skinny as a rail or could afford to lose a few pounds.

We welcome you if you can sing like Andrea Bocelli or like our pastor who can’t carry a note

in a bucket. You’re welcome here if you’re “just browsing,” just woke up or just got out of jail. We don’t care if you’re more Methodist than Asbury, or haven’t been in church since little Joey’s Baptism.

We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome soccer moms, NASCAR dads, starving artists, latte-sippers, vegetarians, junk-food eaters.

We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you’re having problems or you’re down in the dumps or if you don’t like “organized religion;” we’ve been there too.

If you blew all your offering money at the dog track, you’re welcome here. We offer a special welcome to those who think the earth is flat, work too hard, don’t work, can’t spell, or because grandma is in town and wanted to go to church.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced or both. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down your throat as a kid or got lost in traffic and wound up here by mistake. We welcome tourists, seekers and doubters, bleeding hearts and you!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Nancie Daugherty	12/8
Joshua Siderakis	12/10

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Mike and Vickie Fieser 12/8

Follow us on Facebook: facebook.com/McEverUMC
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mceverumc.org

Next Week’s Sermon:
#More Peace
Luke 1:26-56

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