



**Centenary United Methodist Church  
2300 W. Friendly Ave.  
Greensboro, NC 27403  
December 24, 2022**

**Reverend Kelley Groce, Pastor**

**Anita Trumpler-Rich, Music Director**

*Welcome friends, family, and visitors. May your hearts be touched by the  
Holy Spirit as we join in worship with devotion, songs, and prayer.  
Our Mission: To experience God's life-changing love and take God's love into the world.  
Our Vision: To be a church where everyone is involved in ministry.*

Gathering Music "Green Sleeves" and "Sonata on Joy to the World"

Brian Blauch, Flute

Welcome

†Call to Worship:

Leader: Come, let us go to Bethlehem, and see what God has done!

**People: We will listen to the wind**

Leader: We will watch for the angel.

**People: We will search for the stable.**

Leader: We will look for the manger.

**All: We will see the Holy Child of God.**

†Hymn of Praise

O Come All Ye Faithful

O Come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold Him, Born the King of angels:

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,

O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Lighting The Christ Candle

Debra Schlueter, Ben & Emma Hockman

The Christmas Story

**Luke 2: 1-5**

**O Little Town of Bethlehem**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee 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.

**Luke 2: 6-7**

**Away in a Manger**

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,

The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.

The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,

The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,

But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.

I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky

And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

## Luke 2: 8-14

### Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinner reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

## Luke 2: 15-20

### The First Noel

The first Noel the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay.  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

## Matthew 2: 1-11

### We Three Kings

We three kings of Orient are bearing gifts we traverse afar  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain following yonder star.  
Oh, star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright  
Westward leading, still proceeding guide us to thy Perfect Light.

Anthem

Joyous Nowell to the World

Pepper Choplin

Choir

### Invitation to the Table:

Tonight, heaven and earth meet.

Tonight, a backyard shed is holy ground.

Tonight, strangers gather as family.

And so, we come here, to the feast table of God, as Christ's invited friends, chosen and beloved.

If you have been here often, if the memory of this table stretches back through all your Christmases, you are welcome.

If you have been here rarely, if reverence for bread and juice is strange to you, you are welcome.

If you have much faith, or little, or wouldn't know where to begin even if you wanted to believe, you are welcome here. For Christ does not hold himself back from us, but boldly enters every heart.

Christ welcomes you to this table. That is all you need to know.

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon

**All: We confess, O God, that the Christmas rush is typical of our efforts to live the Christian life. We pursue peace on earth, but we end up with frayed nerves and short tempers. We wish good will to all, but in our**

**unceasing hurry we feel malice toward all instead. Joy gives way to frustration, and the spirit of Scrooge replaces the Spirit of Christ. Forgive our foolishness, and remind us again that our Lord was born into a world just like this. Hear us as we continue to pray in silence...**

*Silent prayer*

Leader: The Babe Born in Bethlehem hears our confession, and through his love and mercy offers us unconditional love and forgiveness. In gratitude we pray in Christ's name.

All: **Amen.**

*\*\*Submitted by Chip Hardwick*

We Worship with God's Tithes and our Offerings

Offertory

Sing We Now of Christmas

Brian Blauch, Clarinet, and Choir

†Doxology

†**Angels We Have Heard on High**

Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,  
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,  
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,  
and spoke to us through your prophets.

In the fullness of time

you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior,

and at his birth the angels sang

glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.  
As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem  
and there found no room,  
so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected.  
As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born,  
so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection  
you gave birth to your Church,  
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,  
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.  
As your Word became flesh, born of woman, on that night long ago,  
so, 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, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving  
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Make them 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 for ever.  
**Amen.**

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 and ever. Amen.**

## Giving of the Bread and Cup

### Prayer Following Communion:

O God, Creator of all, because of the birth of Jesus, your Son, we look forward to celebrating the whole mystery of Christ, our salvation, in this coming year. Amidst the many gifts of this season, may we be thankful for the greatest gift of this night, the gift of your love for us, through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

### Sharing the Light of Christ

#### †Silent Night

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child.  
Holy Infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace...

Silent night! Holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight!  
Glories stream from Heaven afar,  
Heavenly Hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night! Holy night!  
Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy Holy Face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy Birth!  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy Birth!

#### †Blessing and Benediction

Leader: Go, singing a song to the God of our salvation.

Sing of mighty deeds and glory.

Join the heavenly chorus and sing:

**People: "Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace."**

Leader: Sing of God's salvation from day to day.

**All: Jesus Christ is born today!**

#### †Hymns of Praise

##### **Joy to the World**

Joy to the world! The Lord has come  
Let earth receive her King!  
Let every heart prepare Him room

##### **Go Tell it on the Mountain**

Go, tell it on the mountain  
Over the hills and everywhere  
Go, tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born

† Postlude

† Please stand as you are able and take time during the gathering music to silence all cell phones.

'We welcome Brian Blauch and thank him for his wonderful flute and clarinet music today, helping us celebrate the birth of Jesus!'



**As you engage your 'Prayer Life' this week, please remember these prayer concerns: If you have a prayer concern or praise, please contact the church office at 336-299-9643, or call Kelley at the parsonage 336-285-081. Let us know if the concern may be shared with the congregation.**

**Prayer Requests:**

Betty Pleasants, Faye Elliott. Win and Lin Johnson, health issues (Jeane Batten's brother and sister-in-law). Susan Carrick. Sheridian Wacker. Dave Blackman. Lori Johnson. Lori Eaton. Peggy Harris. Diane, Jim & Scott Stanley. Anne Murr. Trudy Sillmon. Don & Clara Ellis. Aly Saunders. Sharry Hastings (Caryn Hull's sister). Quinton Verchick (Harold & Linda Billing's grandson). Rowan James (David Groce's co-worker's child). Zeda Beth Woods fell (Kelley Groce's friend). Mike, heart issues (Nancy and Coak May's brother-in-law). Nancy Gordan's brother, eye surgery. Scott Stanley's great aunt Peggy. Mike Crabtree's Aunt Martha.



December Birthdays –Trudy Sillmon (24). Mary Jo Baugh (30). Travis John (31).

**Announcements and Calendar of events**

**December 24- Christmas Eve 4pm** – Candlelight Worship Service with Communion.

We will light special personalized luminaries after the service.

**December 25- 11am Christmas Day Worship Service.** No Sunday School.

On Christmas Eve We will light special personalized luminaries

**Wednesdays at 6:45pm** choir practice and bell practice at 7:30pm. All are welcome to join. See Anita if you have any questions.

**Sunday School at 9:45am** –in the Fellowship Hall.

**Undie Sunday-** The First Sunday of each month. Please, we need new, packaged undies for men and women all sizes. Also needed black and white socks for men and women all sizes

**Light Up the Sanctuary Campaign.** The sanctuary lights have been fixed but the campaign is continuing! If you would like to contribute to the cause-please gift to **Light Up the Sanctuary Campaign and designate as such.**

**The UMW still has pecans (whole and pieces) available for \$15.00 each. If interested please see Debra Schlueter or call the church office!**

