

A night sky with a bright star in the upper left corner. A thin, vertical white line extends downwards from the star. The words "Hope", "Peace", "Joy", and "Love" are written vertically in a white, serif font along this line. The background is a deep blue night sky with a silhouette of evergreen trees at the bottom.

Hope

Peace

Joy

Love

Ebenezer United Methodist Church

December 20, 2020



*Ebenezer United Methodist Church is a
Stephen Ministry Congregation.*



Flowers today are presented to the Glory of God and
In Loving Memory of all our previous Pastors at Ebenezer
Presented by Michael and Helen Lynch

Participating in Service

Pastor: Rev. Mary H. Browne
Organist: Robert Rudolph
Worship Leader: Calvin Keeler, Jr.
Live Stream Team: Richard Browne, Bill Clark, and Reed Williams
Ushers: Dorothy Towery and Sherri Hodgson
Song Leader/Soloist: Sharon Keeler
Lighting Advent Wreath: Sandy and Geoffrey Steggell
Good Chimes Handbell Ensemble: Rev. Mary Browne, Rick Browne, Mark Clausing, Beth Jackson, Maria Gillette, Carolyn Wilhelm, and Laurel Wirtz

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“And now you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.

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.

He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and in his kingdom there will be no end.” Luke 2:31-33

December 20, 2020

10:00 a.m.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CENTERING PRAYER

Mighty God, pour out your Holy Spirit on all of us gathered here.

As we follow in Mary’s footsteps, open our hearts, that we might be filled with your goodness and your love.

Live in us, that we might bear the Christ light for all to see.

Overshadow us with your presence that we might truly be blessed and offer your blessing of love to the world. Amen.

CENTERING MUSIC

“What Child Is This” arr. Anna Laura Page/English Ballad
Good Chimes Handbell Ensemble.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES OF HOPE, PEACE, JOY, AND LOVE

We live on the brink every day. We stand on the threshold between this world and the next one.

We live and move between the ordinary and divine, between the mundane and the mystery.

Too often, we forget to look up and see the angels in our living room.

We forget that the love we give and live is a sign of eternity, God with us, right now.

We forget that company is coming.

Luke tells us that God’s favor came to a girl, an ordinary girl.

It might have been you or your daughter; it might have been the girl down the street or your grandchild.

But the messenger of God came and greeted her and said, “The Lord is with you.”

What a gift and a promise: Emmanuel, God is with us.

We light these candles with peace in our hearts for the promise of proximity, the nearness of God.

Even when we forget to listen, to lean into that presence, God is as close as our own breath.

This, in a confused and confusing world, is a peace that passes all understanding.

It is the peace that knows that company is coming.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

**Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the Source, the ending he
of the things that are, that have been
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore.**

**O ye heights of heaven, adore him;
angel hosts, his praises sing;
powers, dominions, bow before him, and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
every voice in concert ring, evermore and evermore.**

**Christ, to thee with God the Father,
and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving, and unwearied praises be:
honor, glory and dominion,
and eternal victory,
evermore and evermore.**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Holy One, giver of life and light,
as your word is read and proclaimed, illumine our hearts and minds,
that by the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives may reflect God's glory.
Amen.**

FIRST TESTAMENT LESSON

This is the Word of the Lord.

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL LESSON

This is the Word of the Lord.

Luke 1:26-38

Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S CHAPEL TIME

MUSIC MINISTRY

"Away in a Manger"
Sharon Keeler, soloist

arr. Larry R. Beebe

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes;
I love you, Lord Jesus: look down from the sky
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay,
close by me forever, and love me, I pray;
bless all the dear children in your tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

MESSAGE

"Waiting on the Threshold"

Rev. Mary Browne

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

"Sweet Little Jesus Boy"
Sharon Keeler, soloist

Robert Mac Gimsey

Sweet little Jesus boy
They made you be born in a manger
Sweet little holy child
Didn't know who, You was
Didn't know you'd come to save us Lord
To take our sins away
Our eyes were blind, we could not see
We didn't know who, You was

Long time ago
You was born
Born in a manger low
Sweet little Jesus boy
The world treat you mean Lord
Treats me mean too
But, Please, Sir, Forgive us Lord
We didn't know 'twas you.

Sweet little Jesus boy
Born a long time ago
Sweet little holy child
We didn't know who you was

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

OFFERTORY

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" arr. Anna Laura Page/Cantus Diversi
Good Chimes Handbell Ensemble

*PRESENTATION OF GIFTS (UMH 587) "Bless Thou the Gifts" DEUS TUORUM MILITUM

**Bless thou the gifts our hands have brought;
bless thou the work our hearts have planned.
Ours is the faith, the will, the thought;
the rest, O God, is in thy hand.**

*OFFERING PRAYER

**Thanks be to you, O God, maker of heaven and earth—
giver of justice, lover of righteousness, hope of the afflicted,
and friend of the poor.**

Your faithfulness never fails.

**Take and use these gifts we offer to further your purpose in the world
and to fulfill the promise of the world to come:
through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Come to this table, not because you must but because you may,
not because you are strong, but because you are weak.
Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to come,
but because you need mercy and help.
Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more.
Come, because he loved you and gave himself for you.
Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his Body.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Savior God, shine upon us with your grace.
We long to align ourselves with the proud and the mighty.
Guide us to walk with those who are poor and weak.
When we yearn for riches and glory, guide our hearts back
to your thirst for justice and righteousness.
Remember us with mercy.
We desire to live as the household of faith you would have us to be.
Help us live according to your gospel and trust that all things are possible
in your love.
In Christ's saving grace we pray. Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Rejoice! God has looked with favor upon the powerless and the lowly.
Christ has come to redeem us from our sin.
The Spirit has strengthened us with the power of grace and love.
In the mercy of the triune God, we are forgiven.

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*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.**

...So we do not sing Your praises alone, but everyone and everything on the earth,
above the earth and under the earth join with us to praise Your holy name.
All of heaven joins with us, so that the whole universe declares and joins
an unending hymn of praise saying:

**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.

...We believe that this will always be the way we want to follow, the truth that will always guide us, and the life of love and compassion we choose to live always. This we have found in the holy mystery we now declare:

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

...We say these words to the Christ the Son of the living God,
held in the loving embrace of the Holy Spirit, for the glory and the honor
of the One True God,
Loving and Compassionate, now and forever. **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. Amen.**

BREAKING THE BREAD

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**We thank you for allowing us to enter into this holy mystery
found in Jesus Christ.**

In Christ we always find hope, help, health and happiness.

**We want the same for others, so send us out with Your good news
that is for all people,**

**so they too might see You and join us in worship before Your throne.
Amen.**

*CLOSING HYMN (*UMH* 218 v. 1, 4) "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

**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.**

**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.**

***DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING**

Remember what the Lord has done for you and for all the peoples of the earth.
Do not be afraid, for God is with you, and will strengthen you in your journey
through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever!

May God strengthen you according to the gospel.
May the proclamation of Jesus Christ dwell in your hearts and in your lives.
And may the power of the Holy Spirit be with you now and forevermore.
Amen.

Please be seated

SENDING FORTH

"Swiss Noel"

Hustad/Daquin

*Please remain seated until the SENDING FORTH is concluded
and you are dismissed by an usher.
You will be dismissed by rows, starting at the back of the sanctuary.*

*please stand in body or spirit
bold text indicates congregation response

*UMH: The United Methodist Hymnal (red)
TFWS: The Faith We Sing (black)*

††This Order of Worship is subject to the direction of the Holy Spirit.††

Lectionary Scriptures for Christmas Eve, December 24, 2020:
Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-10

Lectionary Scriptures for Christmas Day, December 25, 2020:
Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14

Lectionary Scriptures for the First Sunday after Christmas, December 27, 2020:
Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

UPATED WORSHIP INFORMATION

Here is updated information regarding the worship services, beyond our regular Sunday morning worship at 10:00 a.m., planned for the Advent and Christmas seasons. For each service, there will be an online sign-up for in-person attendance, limited to the maximum number allowed following the caring safety protocols outlined in the State of Delaware guidelines. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Pastor Mary Browne (eumc_pastor@verizon.net)

December 20, 7:00 p.m. – Service of Hope and Healing (Blue Christmas): this service will be in-person and livestreamed. We will celebrate Holy Communion; if you will be viewing the service livestreamed and wish to receive communion, please plan to stop by the church and pick-up communion elements.

December 24, 4:30 p.m. – Family Christmas Eve Service: this service will be held in the sanctuary and will be in-person and livestreamed. There will not be a do-it-yourself Christmas pageant; our children will participate through recorded segments. There will be carols sung and candle lighting.

December 24, 6:30 p.m. – Lessons & Carols Service: this service will be held in the sanctuary and will be in-person and livestreamed. There will be carols sung and candle lighting. A harpist will celebrate the music of the service.

December 25, 10:00 a.m. – Christmas Day Service: this service will be held in the sanctuary and will be in-person and livestreamed. There will carols sung and the celebration of Holy Communion.



In the event of inclement weather which affects a Sunday morning, please listen to WDEL-1150AM or 101.7FM or check out SnowWatch list at www.wdel.com for information regarding the cancellation of worship services.



Our Prayers

Alex +++++ Ruth Dalton +++ Matt and Hannah Devestine +++++ John Humphreys Delia Irwin + Ken Jamison ++ Jordyn +++++	Connie Miller Jordan Rumbly +++ Shane Rumbly +++ Becky Van Cott +++ Neal Vanderpool +++ Bill Winkelman Becky Wolfe	<u>Ongoing Concerns</u> Jade August Barbara Anna Marie Beasom Donald Bogert Roy Brown Judy Crescenzo Frieda Crossan Max Dawson Ruth Dore Victoria "Bo" Fulton Ken Johnson	Kristin Howard & Louise Pierce Curtis Reedy Denise Reedy Jeannette Richart Zach Trexler Josh Vible Alex Wiant
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In an effort to list all prayer requests each will appear for 4 weeks as indicated by the number of + after the name

Please pray for all Law Enforcement Officers.

**Please continue to remember all who serve our country in the military,
especially pray for those represented from our congregation.**

**Your giving envelopes for 2021 are available for pick
up in Room 211.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday Morning Bible Study: Meets every Tuesday at 9:30am in the CLC.

United Methodist Women's Pecan Sale

We will have large pecan halves and medium pecan pieces for sale. If you would like to pick up, please contact Brooksie Pruden at 302-239-3191 (home phone), email: brooksiepru@gmail.com or text me at 302-559-1497. If you have questions, let me know.

Brooksie Pruden

Blue Christmas Service at Ebenezer Sunday, December 20th at 7:00 pm

Blue? Yes, blue, as in "the blues;" as in "I am feeling blue." Not everyone is up and cheery for the Christmas holidays. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with cancer or some other disease that puts a question mark over the future, and a number of other human situations make parties and joviality painful for many people in our congregations and communities.



There is a growing attentiveness to the needs of people who are blue at Christmas. Increasing numbers of churches are creating sacred space for people living through dark times. Such services are reflective, accepting where we really are, and holding out healing and hope.

Ebenezer Church is holding a Service of the Longest Night (or Blue Christmas service) on Sunday, December 20th at 7:00 pm. It will include quiet carols, an inspiring message and Holy Communion. Please join us in worshiping our God of light, who meets us in our times of darkness and deepest needs.

Gifts for the Christ Child 2020

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

It is a tradition and ministry of Ebenezer church that every year during Advent we conduct a baby food collection. The items gathered are then distributed to families in need through the St. Stephen's Food Pantry in Wilmington. In the past, Ebenezer family and friends have responded with overwhelming generosity. We are hoping that this year will be no different despite the challenges presented by COVID-19 protocols.

In order to allow everyone to participate in a way that they maintain personal health and safety we will be adding a few new giving options. You can continue to present your gifts by depositing the baby food in the cradle in front of the altar during Sunday worship services in Advent as well as the special Christmas services. In addition to that, there will be a marked receptacle in the narthex where items can be dropped off during the week when the church is open. If you prefer not to travel to the church, you can call the office and we will arrange to pick up the baby food items at your home. Finally, this year we will be accepting monetary donations that will be used to purchase baby food and add it to the collection. If you decide to make a financial donation, please make checks payable to Ebenezer UMC, and write the words "Baby Food" in memo section. May God's blessings be upon us all, and especially the little ones as we enter into a season of anticipation and joy at the arrival of the Christ child.



All our members, ministers
Rev. Mary H. Browne, Senior Pastor
contact @ eumc_pastor@verizon.net
Robert Rudolph, Music Director
contact @ eumc_music@aol.com
Calvin Keeler, Sr., Minister of Visitation
Megan Burns, Preschool Director
Megan & Mike Jones, Youth Ministry
Carol Coney, Administrative Assistant
Jackie Scott, Facilities Manager
Church email: NewarkEbenezerUMC@verizon.net
Phone: 302-731-9495

STAY CONNECTED THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA!



Website: www.EbenezerUMCNewark.org and **Facebook:** [Ebenezer UMC Newark](https://www.facebook.com/EbenezerUMCNewark).

If you have information about an event which you would like featured on the website, please contact Lori Brown loribrown927@msn.com or Rick Browne at rbrowne646@gmail.com.