

Mulberry Street United Methodist Church
Macon, Georgia

The Church at Worship

*Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2019
Eleven O'clock*



Entrance and Praise

Greeting in the Name of Christ

Rev. Dr. Matt Woodbery

Introit

Love Came Down at Christmas

John Rutter

Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas, star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead, love incarnate, love divine;
Worship we our Jesus: but wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token, love be yours and love be mine;
Love to God and all men, love for plea, and gift and sign.

Call to Worship

Ella Magda

We are courageous

when we are vulnerable.

We are courageous

when we are honest with ourselves.

We are courageous

when we extend words of welcome.

We are courageous

when we invite others to sit with us.

We are courageous

when we proclaim the love of God to a broken world.

We are courageous

when we say that love cannot wait.

So let us be courageous –

Let us worship Holy God.

* **Entrance Hymn No. 220** (Stanzas 1-2) *Angels from the Realms of Glory*

REGENT SQUARE

Prayer of Confession

Ella Magda

Gracious God,

We long to be as courageous as Joseph –

brave enough to trust your call,

and strong enough to hold onto one another.

There are so many places in the world that could use our courage.

You know them, but we do too.

**So when fear takes over, forgive us.
When our knees shake and our words fail, forgive us.
When self-hatred is easier than self-love, forgive us.
When walls are more convenient than peace, forgive us.
When pessimism is more convenient than hope, forgive us.
When our comfort is more important than our neighbor, forgive us.**

**You invite us to be courageous. Forgive us.
Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

Ella Magda

The good news of this Advent season is forgiveness of sin and new life.
Let us commit our lives to Christ's way of hope and peace.

**Thanks be to the Advent God, who comes among us,
setting us free to love and serve.**

Advent Candle Lighting

Choral Response *Light One Candle*

Natalie Sleeth

Light one candle for hope, one bright candle for hope.
He brings hope to every heart. He comes, He comes.

Light one candle for peace, one bright candle for peace.
He brings peace to every heart. He comes, He comes.

Light one candle for joy, one bright candle for joy.
Every nation will find salvation in Bethlehem's baby boy.

Light one candle for love, one bright candle for love.
He brings love to every heart. He comes, He comes.

Lighting the Candle for Love

Clay, Sherry, Sarah, and Lilly Singleton

Congregational Response *What Can't Wait*

HYFRYDOL

Love can't wait; she beckons brightly, saving, sealing us to grace.

God disperses ev'ry mercy to redeem the human race.

Love requires imagination, truth and courage, risk and trust.

Love renews the whole creation; grows the grains up from the dust.

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Anthems

One Star

Cheryl Jones Rogers

One star led to Bethlehem. One star clearly showed the way.
One star brought the Savior near. One star brought him here.

One love came to earth that night. One love wrapped in blankets warm.
One love brought the Savior near. One love brought him here.

Why so meek and lowly? Why in a cattle stall?
What should one so kingly have been brought to earth this way?

One birth was the manger boy. One birth grew into a man.
One birth brought the Savior near. One birth brought him here.

Sing We Now of Christmas

Traditional French Carol

Children involved with The Children's Nativity will go to the back of the sanctuary with their leader. Those children not involved in The Nativity, grades K-4-K-5, are invited to go to Children's Church with Mildred Howard.

Proclamation

Congregational Prayer for Illumination No. 204

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.

God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

Old Testament

Isaiah 7:10-16

Bill Stembridge

Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

Rev. Dr. Matt Woodbery

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

WHAT CAN'T WAIT?

Rev. Dr. Matt Woodbery

4. Courage can't wait. (Love can't wait.)

Response

* **Hymn No. 218** (Stanzas 1-2) *It Came upon the Midnight Clear*

CAROL

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Julia Norman

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Alleluia!

Shout to the Lord, all the earth. Alleluia!

O Christ, splendor of God's eternal glory, the mighty Word, sustaining the universe:

Renew our lives by your presence.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, born into the world in the fullness of time for the liberation of all creation:

Release all into your promised freedom.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, begotten of the Father before all time, born in a stable at Bethlehem:

May your church be a sign of hope and joy.

Lord have mercy.

O Christ, truly God and truly human, born to a people in fulfillment of their expectations:

Fulfill our desires in you.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, child of wonder and splendor,

Mighty God of all ages, Prince of Peace:

May the whole world live in peace and justice.

Lord, have mercy.

from The Worship Sourcebook

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.

Offering of Our Gifts

This Christmastide

Donald Fraser

Green and silver, red and gold, and a story born of old.

Truth and love and hope abide this Christmastide.

Holly, ivy, mistletoe, and the gently falling snow.

From a simple ox's stall came the greatest gift of all.

Children sing of peace and joy at the birth of one small boy.

Let the bells ring loud and clear, ring out now for all to hear.

Trumpets sound and voices raise in an endless stream of praise.

Green and silver, red and gold, and a story born of old.

The Children's Nativity

*Carols are sung by the congregation
as the children present the nativity story.*

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 the dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

Gentle Mary

**Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
There he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.**

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 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.**

We Three Kings

**We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

Joy to the World

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and heaven, and nature sing.**

* **Benediction**

Rev. Dr. Matt Woodbery

* **Congregational Response**

**He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.**

Families are invited to come forward and take photos.

Closing Voluntary

Joy to the World

Hugo Gehrke

* *Please rise in body or spirit.*

*Those parts of the service of worship in which the congregation participates in word or song are noted in **bold type**.*

*The altar will be open if you would like to spend time in private prayer.
If you would like someone to pray with you, a member of our prayer team
will be available in the prayer room.*


Rev. Dr. Matt Woodbery, Lead Pastor
Rev. Julia Norman, Minister for Families & Children
Tom Granum, Director of Music/Organist
Ainsworth Choir
Lisa Shepard, Piano
Christmas Children's Choir and Katie Trotter, Director
Ella Magda, Reader
Bill Stembridge, Reader
Clay, Sherry, Sarah, and Lilly Singleton, Lighting of the Advent Wreath
Matt Newberry, Lead Acolyte
Austin Carter, Crucifer
Barrett Moody & Walter Moody, Candlelighters
Mildred Howard, Children's Church

*The arrangement in the sanctuary is given to the glory of God and in loving memory of their parents,
Mr. & Mrs. Sam Lamback and Mr. & Mrs. Harry Harshbarger, by Sam and Gini Lamback.*

Much of our liturgy for Advent comes from the worship-resource series *What Can't Wait*, developed by A Sanctified Art and complementing the lectionary for Advent. These materials are copyrighted and licensed for our use.

Welcome to Mulberry

Thank you for worshiping with us today! We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate in Mulberry's worship and our opportunities for growing through education, fellowship, and mission. We hope you find our congregation to be a warm and caring community.

Please sign the Attendance Register as it is passed. The church newsletter is sent out electronically to all members for whom we have email addresses. If you are not receiving the electronic newsletter, please share your email address on the Attendance Register as it is passed. You may also include other changes or additions for contact information.

Children's church is open to children in Kindergarten and under after the Children's Moment each week. Please see our nursery staff or volunteer on the front row to check your child in and receive your Nursery pickup tag. Nursery is available for the entire service for children below Prekindergarten. Please see an usher for assistance in locating our nursery.

To keep up with Mulberry Street UMC's events, services, and more, we invite you to visit us at www.mulberrymethodist.org and find us on Facebook.

Please speak to one of the pastors if you are interested in knowing more about membership at Mulberry Street United Methodist Church. Our next Joining Sunday will be January 12.

Our 11:00 a.m. worship service is broadcast live over radio station AM 940 WMAC. You can download the Sunday bulletin at <https://mulberrymethodist.org/worship/worship-online>.

Why Blue for Advent?

Blue reminds us of the predawn sky and symbolizes the heavens where the angels proclaimed Jesus' birth. We use deep blue for Advent to shade the season with a hint of expectation and anticipation of the dawn of Christ.

Advent is a time to recommit to our faith to our God. Surely penitence and spiritual discipline are part of the traditional Advent observance, and this is why so many of us are using Advent wreaths and devotionals to mark the days of Advent. But Advent involves more than penitence and by using deep blue we err on the side of emphasizing the church's hope-filled and faithful watch for Christ. The deep blue of Advent is meant to inspire in us the hope of faith, and to encourage us to keep watch for the promised light of Christ to break over the horizon, changing night into day, darkness into light, and filling our lives and our world with a holy and righteous splendor.

Giving Opportunities

Christmas Offering

In 2020, several of our fellow United Methodist churches in Macon are participating in a new build in Pleasant Hill, in partnership with the Mayor's Clergy Council and the Beloved Community Paired Clergy Group. This year, you are invited to consider making your special offering in support of this ecumenical initiative to provide affordable housing through Habitat for Humanity to another family in our community. You may do so by marking your gift "2019 Christmas Offering" or by selecting the special offering option when giving online at www.mulberrymethodist.org/give.

Generation to Generation (G2G) Mission Trip – January 17-20

Join us for our annual trip to Hinton Rural Life Center. From one generation to the next we travel as one church to reach the rural community surrounding the center by offering our skills, time, energy, and efforts to bless and serve the families of the local area. This trip has continued to be an amazing time of fellowship as well as outreach and mission. 6th Grade-Older Adults.

Cost: \$215 per person Sign up Deadline/\$100 Deposit Due: January 5

Final Payment Due: January 17 Sign up online at: <https://mulberrymethodist.org/community/youth>

Macon Outreach Cold Weather Drive

We are collecting gloves, hats, and foot warmers for our Macon Outreach for the cold weather months. Please drop off your donation in the atrium.

Church News

Prayer Can't Wait

You are invited to bring your prayer concerns and pray with Prayer Team members following today's services. Please come to the altar following 9 a.m. Chapel Worship and to the Parlor following the 11 a.m. worship services.

Last Printed Mailed Newsletter – December 22

Email newsletters will continue as usual. If you need to be added to the email distribution list, please contact Linda Parker at the church office. If you have no electronic means to receive a newsletter, please contact the church office to opt in to receiving a printed copy.

This change will save the church \$15,600 per year.

Sunday, December 22

Youth Christmas Party

5:00-7:00 p.m. – Youth Room

Tuesday, December 24

Christmas Eve Services – Sanctuary

3:00 p.m. – Candlelight Communion Service (*especially mindful of children*)

5:00 p.m. – Candlelight Communion Service (with 4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Prelude)

We will have four communion stations for the 5:00 p.m. service.

Sunday, December 29

One Worship Service @ 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Rev. Julia Norman preaching.

10:00 a.m. – Fellowship for All – Sweet Rolls & Coffee – Fellowship Hall