



# Aldersgate United Methodist Church

**December 18, 2022**  
Lessons and Carols

**11:00 a.m.**

Guest Musicians: Mary K. Burns  
Dianne Frydendall-Smith  
Madison Nielsen  
Narrator: Sheila Kellenbarger

Ministers: All of Aldersgate's Members  
Pastor: Joseph Rafique  
Director of Music: Julie Clopper-Smith  
Organist: Jan Malone  
Digital Media Specialist: Nancy Taylor  
Administrative Assistant: Stacey Lienemann  
Custodian: Scott Hoyt

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*Worshippers are welcomed to use their own terminology for God.  
If you are considering membership, please contact our pastor, 402-489-1510.*



December 18, 2022

## Greeting and Announcements

### Music for Centering Prayer

“The Sussex Carol” — arr. E. Butler

### Lighting the Advent Wreath

Uncontainable, irrepressible, bubbling up in an explosion of energy. What the weary long for, what children often embody, what makes the Divine smile — joy. It cannot be paid for, but is a priceless treasure. As we hope for your arrival, as we pray for peace, as we look for love, as we wonder how you might reveal yourself to us, God, give us joy in your Advent.

### Advent Hymn (to the tune of #2090, black)

Light the Advent candle, four: think of joy forevermore;  
Let all heav'n and nature sing, of the birth of Christ the King.  
Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;  
Candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with joyous light.

Based on WORDS and MUSIC: Mary Lu Walker

### Call to Worship

from pp. 22 & 23 of *Responsive Prayers, Year A* by David Sparks

PASTOR: Loving God, this is a time of joy – joy as we come to worship,

ALL: **joy as we praise God with heart and mind and spirit.**

PASTOR: Joy as we come to worship,

ALL: **joy as we listen to the Word in Christian and Hebrew scriptures.**

PASTOR: Joy as we come to worship

ALL: **joy as we work out the Word day by day, situation by situation.**

PASTOR: Joy as we come to worship,

ALL: **joy as we meet our friends, as we make new friends.**

PASTOR: Joy as we come to worship,

ALL: **joy as we prepare for Jesus, joy as we follow the Jesus way. Amen**

### Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer #895 (red, *John*)

PASTOR: Let us offer our prayers and thanksgivings to God either silently or aloud. That we may seek Christ in the Scriptures and recognize him in the songs we sing, let us pray to the Lord.

ALL: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: We pray to God for the needs of the whole world, and all his people; for peace upon the earth he came to save; for love and unity within the one church he did build; for goodwill among all peoples. And particularly at this time, let us remember the poor, the cold, the hungry, the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all who do not know the Lord Jesus or do not love.

ALL: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: That God may bless all those who are on our church's prayer list and have personally asked us for prayer. For them let us pray to the Lord.

ALL: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PASTOR: These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words that Christ himself has taught his disciples saying:

ALL: **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.**

## **Lessons and Carols**

### **“Christmas Seekers”**

NARRATOR: “Ask, and it will be given you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who seeks will find.”

Throughout the ages God has sent prophets, angels, and then finally, His Son to earth to confirm that he was, is, and will always be ready to receive us and bestow upon us his gifts of forgiveness, redemption, truth, wisdom and peace.

On Christmas, the night of the birth of God’s Son, all people were called to seek the child and through him, to seek the path to love and eternal life. Now we come together to celebrate His birth and to rededicate ourselves by being Christmas seekers...seekers of Christ in all parts of our lives... oh, come, all ye faithful...”Seek, and you will find.”

**Hymn #234** (red, vs. 1 & 3)

### **“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.

3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation; O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest;

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

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

WORDS & MUSIC: John F. Wade, ca. 1743;

trans. by Frederick Oakeley, 1841, harm. from *Collections of Motetts or Antiphons*, 1792

NARRATOR: God had sent word through his prophets that those who despaired could expect the arrival of a savior. This savior would lead the faithful out of darkness and on to a promised land where love and forgiveness would flourish. Those who were seeking God’s presence on earth waited and watched for the savior to make his presence known.

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Isaiah 35:10 and those the Lord has rescued will return.

They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Isaiah 11:6 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

**“A Little Child Will Come to Lead Us”** — *Aldersgate Choir with Diane Frydendall-Smith*

NARRATOR: No matter how many times we hear the story of Christ’s birth, we look forward to the retelling of the events of the moment. First, there was an angel with an announcement. Then, a census and shepherds...and a journey...a journey of hope for a frightened young virgin and a man named Joseph.

The Salvation of the world entered quietly that night through a small, cramped stable...in the midst of the small and seemingly insignificant town of Bethlehem.

But, here and now, we shout for joy and rejoice! Make music all ye lands! Arise, shine, for your Light has come! The One you seek has come! Joy to the earth...the Savior has come.

**“Introit for Christmas!”** — *Aldersgate Choir*

NARRATOR: In a very real sense, Mary and Joseph are here with us today, sitting there, and there, and over there. They are here because, in so many ways they are ...like us. Mary and Joseph could have been the nice family just down the street, doing what was necessary, expected to begin life together, obeying the laws of their time, and hoping that God was listening to their prayers. How did it happen that God chose them to be the instruments to present the greatest gift ever given to humankind? We will never know the answer to that question, of course, but what is important to understand is that they accepted the presence and will of God in their personal lives. Did they react with bewildered wonderment? Probably. Did they have questions and doubts? Surely they did. Did they accept God's will with determination and strength? Their actions prove that they did. Mary and Joseph are here with us today because they were seekers of faith and strength, and in seeking God, they made him a part of their lives in a personal way.

## Hymn #215

### **“To a Maid Engaged to Joseph”**

To a maid engaged to Joseph, the angel Gabriel came.  
“Fear not,” the angel told her, “I come to bring good news,  
good news I come to tell you, good news, I say, good news.

2. “For you are highly favored by God the Lord of all,  
who even now is with you. You are on earth most blest,  
you are most blest, most blessed, God chose you, you are blest!”

3. But Mary was most troubled to hear the angel's word.  
What was the angel saying? It troubled her to hear,  
to hear the angel's message, it troubled her to hear.

4. “Fear not, for God is with you, and you shall bear a child.  
His name shall be called Jesus, God's offspring from on high.  
And he shall reign forever, forever reign on high.”

5. “How shall this be?” said Mary, “I am not yet a wife.”  
The angel answered quickly, “The power of the Most High  
will come upon you shortly, your child will be God's child.”

6. As Mary heard the angel, she wondered at his words.  
“Behold, I am your hand-maid,” she said unto her God.  
“So be it; I am ready according to your word.”

WORDS: Gracia Grindal, 1983

MUSIC: Rusty Edwards, 1983 © 1984 Hope Publishing Co.

NARRATOR: The unsuspecting shepherds were charged to be seekers of Christ, “Be not afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior who is Christ the Lord.”  
We all have voices inside us which whisper in our more quiet moments, “Come, seek the Lord.” - Voices which sometimes get lost in the noise of life around us. It was quiet in the hills above Bethlehem that long-ago night, and we can picture the shepherds sitting near their small fire, lost in their own thoughts or sleeping, unaware that this was not just any night...this was the night of nights on earth. The sounds and voices that the shepherds heard then were not quiet or whispered...they were gloriously tumultuous, renting the sky with light and sound! “And then, there was a multitude of angels singing, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among all with whom He is pleased.’”

**“And the Angels Sang”** — *Aldersgate Choir*

NARRATOR: And so, as the wonderful story told down through the ages tells us, the shepherds began to look for the child whose birth had been heralded by the angels. Down from the dark hills they came, cautiously yet hopefully, then perhaps joyously and happily, looking here and there, seeking the stable in which the Christ child had been born. We can readily picture the timid yet excited shepherds knocking softly on the doorway that night, seeking entrance, seeking a glimpse of the Christ child, seeking the promised Savior.

**“Do You Hear What I Hear?”** — *Aldersgate Choir*

NARRATOR: We too are timid shepherds...we’ve been told that all we have to do is ask, knock, and seek...but we’re not quite sure how or where to find Christ in our everyday lives...so sometimes we hesitate. Today, we come to be reminded that just as the shepherds went looking for the Babe in the manger, knowing not where to look or what they’d find, so we are seekers of Christ this Christmas. We’ve heard the good news, but we have to follow our own star, our own unique path to find Him.

**“Pretty Little Baby”** — *Aldersgate Choir*

NARRATOR: Christmas is a time to come together and celebrate, singing carols of praise and rejoicing in God’s greatest gift to us. God so loved the world He gave His only Son to bring us truth and grace - the gift for us to know Him in our daily lives. Let us continue to seek him now and always, celebrating the joy of Christmas, the joy of a Savior, the joy of Christ in our lives every day.

**Hymn #246** (red, vs. 1-2, 4)

**“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.

2. Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

4. 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.

WORDS: Issac Watts, 1719

MUSIC: arr. from G. F. Handel, 1741 by Lowell Mason, 1848

PASTOR: Blessed be everyone who is a seeker...of truth, of love, of the Word, the Way, and the Light. Jesus came to bring us the message of love and peace, and He continues to challenge us to be seekers of this message in every hour of every day – in small acts of kindness and in decisions we make. Jesus still speaks the same words to us as He did to His disciples, “Follow me...seek me.”

“For those who seek will find, and those who knock, it will be opened to them.” Begin now to be a seeker. Christ will reveal Himself to us, so that we like the shepherds, may rejoice and hear the angels sing, “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to all!”

Hear the good news: At last a Savior has come to save us all from sin. He was the central theme of that first Christmas. The star, the songs, the gifts, the joy, the hope, the excitement—all were because of Him.

**Postlude**

“He Is Born, the Divine Christ Child” — arr. M. James & D. Ream

# Announcements

## **Today, December 18, 2022** Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:00 a.m. Lessons and Carols — Worship Center and online <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCt21eDWxyIs1fpzpifo4LYg/live>. Or at your convenience at [www.aldersgatelinc.org](http://www.aldersgatelinc.org) or on YouTube on the Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Lincoln, Nebraska channel.

10:00 a.m. Hymns of the Season with Jim Miller — Room 4

10:00 a.m. Children's Sunday School — Room 2

10:00 a.m. Youth Sunday School — Room 1

11:00 a.m. Lessons and Carols — Worship Center

Noon Christmas Potluck — Sunshine Room

1:30 p.m. Virtual Fellowship — zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/812243946?pwd=clRSQUlOZjYrQjlyZHk0aTZvQzFMOT09>

Meeting ID: 812 243 946

Password: 021075

One tap mobile +12532158782,,812243946#,,1#,021075# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 812 243 946

Password: 021075

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/812243946?pwd=clRSQUlOZjYrQjlyZHk0aTZvQzFMOT09>



## **Thursday, December 22**

12:30 p.m. Worship & Prayer Service — Theater, Legacy Estates

## **Saturday, December 24**

7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service — Worship Center and online

## **Sunday, December 25**

No Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship — Worship Center and online

## **Next Monday, December 26**

7:00 p.m. Spiritual Living and Worship Planning Team — Room 4

## **Tuesday, December 27**

7:00 p.m. Earth Steward Ministry — zoom

## **Sunday, January 1**

No Children's Sunday School

## **Tuesday, January 3**

11:30 a.m. Grand Generation — Stauffer's Café, 5600 S. 48th. Seniors fellowship over a pay-for-your-own lunch.

7:00 p.m. Advocacy 101: Learn to be an effective advocate for policies you care about — zoom at [First-Plymouth.org/cat](http://First-Plymouth.org/cat)

## **Wednesday, January 4, 2023**

1:30 p.m. Book Club *The One Hundred Years of Lenni and Margot* by Marianne Cronin — zoom

## **Friday, January 13**

6:30 p.m. Friday Fling — Fellowship Hall

## **Tuesday, January 17**

7:00 p.m. Book Club *The One Hundred Years of Lenni and Margot* by Marianne Cronin — Room 4

**Wednesday, January 18**

1:30 p.m. Stitcheroos — Room 4

**Thursday, January 19**

2:30 p.m. Care Ministry — zoom

**Saturday, January 21**

8:00 a.m. Men’s Breakfast — Room 4. Catered by Hy-Vee

**Tuesday, January 24**

7:00 p.m. Earth Steward Ministry — zoom

**Wednesday, February 1**

1:30 p.m. Book Club *Hamnet* by Maggie O’Farrell — zoom

**Tuesday, February 7**

11:30 a.m. Grand Generation — Stauffer’s Café. Seniors socialize over lunch.

**Friday, February 10**

6:30 p.m. Friday Fling — Fellowship Hall

**Saturday, February 11**

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Ecumenical Legislative Briefing Day — Christ U.M. Church, 4530 ‘A’ St. \$20 includes lunch if registered by Saturday, Feb. 4. Choose 2 workshops.

**Wednesday, February 15**

1:30 p.m. Stitcheroos — Room 4

**Thursday, February 16**

2:30 p.m. Care Ministry — zoom

**Saturday, February 18**

8:00 a.m. Men’s Breakfast — Room 4.



**Spirit of Giving**

If you wish to make a donation in memory or in honor of a loved one for poinsettias, please return this form in the offering plate or to the Church Office by Wednesday, December 21. The remainder of the money collected will go to Mosaic in Axtell at Bethphage Village (Zach Steward’s home.)

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s) you wish to honor \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s) you wish to remember \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Gifts for the Staff**

At this time of year, we often express our appreciation through gifts. If you would like to participate in a monetary Christmas gift for our staff, you may give your contribution to Mary K. Burns, Carol Clymer or Harry Kellenbarger by Wednesday, December 21.

