

Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 2021, 7:00 p.m.
Alden United Methodist Church
Rev. Katie Waggoner, Pastor

***Gathering Hymn #234 - *O Come, All Ye Faithful* verse 1**

OPENING PRAYER (in unison)

Gracious God,
With joy and thanksgiving we gather as your people.
We have come to hear again the timeless story of Christ's birth.
In the excitement of this night, quiet our hearts
that we may know the peace and fullness of this holy time.
Shine, O Light, in the darkness of our world.
Sing, O angels, in the stillness of our hearts,
"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those God favors."
This we pray in the name of the Child of Bethlehem. Amen.

The Prophecy of the Messiah - John 1:1-2, 4-5

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Hymn #2090 - *Light the Advent Candle* - 5th verse

The Coming of Jesus Is Announced to Mary and Joseph

Luke 1:26-38

Matthew 1:18-25

The Preparations for and the Birth of Jesus - Luke 2:1-7

Hymn #217 - *Away in a Manger* -1st verse

CHILDRENS TIME

Jesus' Birth is Announced to the Shepherds - Luke 2:9-14

Hymn #218 – *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* - 1st verse

Hymn #245 – *The First Noel* – 1st verse

The Shepherds Find the Baby Jesus - Luke 2:15-18

The Wise Men Bring Their Gifts to Jesus – Matthew 2:1-11

Hymn #245 - *The First Noel* – 3rd & 5th verse

OFFERING – *Our offering this evening is going to the Methodist Childrens Home Society.*

*Offertory Response -- Hymn #219 – *What Child is This* – 3rd verse*

MEDITATION by Rev. Katie Waggoner

PRAYER OF CONFESSION and PARDON

Loving God, we confess that often we find darkness more comfortable than light. We confess that we find your good news frightening and unsettling, especially when we consider its demands as well as its promises. Forgive us. Give us the courage to lay ourselves open to the wonder and healing of your coming. Be born again into our world, be born again into our hearts and lives.

The true light that enlightens all has come into the world.

That light shines on in the darkness,

and the darkness has never been able to put it out.

This is the good news: In the name of the Christ child, you are forgiven.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (On Insert)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We are filled with joy for we have heard good news of great joy.

We are filled with love for we have tasted the sign of God's great love.

We are filled with hope for the angels still sing in our world and there is a Light for us to follow.

THE PASSING OF THE LIGHT

Hymn #239 -- Silent Night – 1st-4th verses

BENEDICTION

Our offering tonight is going to the Methodist Children's Home Society, which is a child welfare agency located in Redford and Detroit providing residential and home foster care and adoption, transitional living, child abuse prevention and community wellness programs. Their 60 acre Campus is home to 60 boys ages 5 to 18 who are in search of healing from their past traumas and building a brighter future. They also provide services to Senior Citizens, Children aging out of Foster Care, and teen parenting programs.

We invite you to our Christmas Sweater Sunday Worship on December 26 at 9am. Wear your favorite or ugliest Christmas sweater, your Christmas jammies or whatever you are comfortable in. Our dress code is "wear clothes!" There will be coffee, tea and cocoa, and breakfast goodies for all. You are encouraged to bring your favorite Christmas gift to church for a blessing of the toys and we are going to hear the old, old story of the birth of Jesus in some new ways, and you are going to help tell the Christmas story! We'll also have a chance to sing your

favorite Christmas carols. Bring your friends, family, big and little kids as this is an all ages worship.