



*\*Stand if you are able.*

**Leaders in Today's Worship Service**

ACCOMPANIST: JILL KOHLER  
LAY READER: KIM NAVE  
SONG LEADERS: GAIL GIRARD & RUTH SATORIUS

**Minooka  
United Methodist  
Church**

**Rev. Dave Buerstetta,  
Pastor**

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**Welcome to Minooka United Methodist Church**  
Sunday, December 3, 2023 11:30AM

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**Luke 1:5-25 (The Message)**

<sup>5-7</sup> During the rule of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest assigned service in the regiment of Abijah. His name was Zachariah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron. Her name was Elizabeth. Together they lived honorably before God, careful in keeping to the ways of the commandments and enjoying a clear conscience before God. But they were childless because Elizabeth could never conceive, and now they were quite old.

<sup>8-12</sup> It so happened that as Zachariah was carrying out his priestly duties before God, working the shift assigned to his regiment, it came his one turn in life to enter the sanctuary of God and burn incense. The congregation was gathered and praying outside the Temple at the hour of the incense offering. Unannounced, an angel of God appeared just to the right of the altar of incense. Zachariah was paralyzed in fear.

<sup>13-15</sup> But the angel reassured him, "Don't fear, Zachariah. Your prayer has been heard. Elizabeth, your wife, will bear a son by you. You are to name him John. You're going to leap like a gazelle for joy, and not only you—many will delight in his birth. He'll achieve great stature with God.

15-17 “He’ll drink neither wine nor beer. He’ll be filled with the Holy Spirit from the moment he leaves his mother’s womb. He will turn many sons and daughters of Israel back to their God. He will herald God’s arrival in the style and strength of Elijah, soften the hearts of parents to children, and kindle devout understanding among hardened skeptics—he’ll get the people ready for God.”

18 Zachariah said to the angel, “Do you expect me to believe this? I’m an old man and my wife is an old woman.”

19-20 But the angel said, “I am Gabriel, the sentinel of God, sent especially to bring you this glad news. But because you won’t believe me, you’ll be unable to say a word until the day of your son’s birth. Every word I’ve spoken to you will come true on time—*God’s time.*”

21-22 Meanwhile, the congregation waiting for Zachariah was getting restless, wondering what was keeping him so long in the sanctuary. When he came out and couldn’t speak, they knew he had seen a vision. He continued speechless and had to use sign language with the people.

23-25 When the course of his priestly assignment was completed, he went back home. It wasn’t long before his wife, Elizabeth, conceived. She went off by herself for five months, relishing her pregnancy. “So, this is how God acts to remedy my unfortunate condition!” she said.

**Entering Music** Accompanist

**Welcoming** Pastor Dave

**Preparing** Accompanist

**\*Gathering** Lay Reader

Reader: Don’t be quiet! Make noise, a lot of it! Advent is not a whisper. God’s return is not a murmur; the prophets do not mutter the news. Mountains shift, valleys fill, roadways straighten!

**Many Voices: All creation moves and we join that journey with songs of praise! This is advent’s invitation to clear our throats with holy songs, for Incarnation is on its way!**

**\*Singing** “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” UMH #196

**Lighting the Advent Wreath** Will, Jill & Kyla Kohler  
Reader: Advent is a time of expectation; a four-week period of preparation. Each Sunday of Advent we light a new candle to remind us that something is happening, but something more is still to come. The tradition of the Advent wreath is traced back to an old Scandinavian custom that celebrated light in the midst of darkness. We use a circle of evergreen to remind us of the continuous love of God. The candlelight symbolizes the light of Christ entering our troubled world and our wounded hearts.

**Many Voices: We wait as people surprised again and again by God who shakes us out of our complacency and wakes us up to the work of the kin-dom all around us.**

Reader: We light this candle as a sign of our shocking hope. May we stay awake to God’s activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another.

**Many Voices: Loving God, as we enter this Advent season, we open all the bleak places in our lives and memories to the healing light of Christ. Show us the creative power of hope. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.**

**Singing** “Light the Advent Candle” TFWS #2090, v1

**Blessing Children** Pastor Dave

**Singing** “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” UMH #211, v1,2,4

**Praying** Lay Reader  
[silent prayer: In this time of silence may we move from busyness to quietness.]

Reader: Source of Life, if we are honest, we struggle when suffering loved ones are not cured. Help us to recognize that

physical suffering is not a punishment for sin. Help us to know in our heart of hearts that comfort is part of your healing touch, that in the bleakest places, we find your light. We offer up those we know who struggle and those who care for them in prayer now...

[quiet reflection]

Reader: Our governments have responsibility for distributing funds, for supporting those in need. Help officials to make wise, caring decisions recalling that there are people behind the numbers. We look to care for people in this country and people beyond our shores who are affected by decisions sometimes carelessly made. While recognizing our responsibility in righting past wrongs, do not allow us to be so caught up in the past that we forget to think about the present. We pray for people in leadership today...

[quiet reflection]

Reader: Share the Good News! We are beginning the journey to God's in-breaking. Incarnation: a transforming gift unparalleled in its equality. Illuminate this Advent season with hope for the coming days, hope for equality, hope for evolution, hope for eternity. All this we pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray by saying... [Lord's Prayer, UMH #894]

**\*Singing** "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" UMH #211, v5-7

**Giving**

Pastor Dave

**Blessing our Gifts with Music and Prayer**

Accompanist  
& Lay Reader

**Many Voices: Generous God, we offer gifts not because we are commanded, but because we are grateful. In this hopeful season of Advent, take what we have gathered, the fruits of our labors, and help us to distribute them remembering your justice and equality. Take our very selves, let us be a gift to people in our community. Thanks be to God, Amen.**

**Reading Scripture**

Lay Reader

Luke 1:5-25 (The Message)

Reader: May God add blessing to the reading, hearing, and living of these words.

**Many Voices: Amen.**

**Proclaiming**

"What If I Missed It?"

Pastor Dave

**Celebrating Communion**

Pastor Dave: We are grateful God welcomes us to this table.

**Many Voices: We celebrate all the ways God cares for us and shows us love.**

Pastor Dave: Long ago, our tradition says, Jesus arrived in the humble birth of a child. A child of amazing and divine love, a child of Mary's 'yes' to you, a child of Joseph's acceptance, a child of our humanity.

**Many Voices: We pledge ourselves to embody Jesus' dreams for the world.**

Pastor Dave: Long ago, our tradition says, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with his friends saying:

**Many Voices: This bread is broken, as my body will be broken. Eat and remember all that I have been to you.**

Pastor Dave: Long ago, our tradition says, Jesus poured a cup of wine, offered thanks for it, and shared it with his friends, saying:

**Many Voices: This wine is poured out, as my life will be poured out. Drink and remember all that I have given you.**

Pastor Dave: May all of us be both comforted and challenged during this Advent season.

**Many Voices: May people see in us the courage, the generosity, and the wonder that characterized Jesus' life.**

Pastor Dave: We join with all our siblings everywhere in signing your praises, God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

[The United Methodist Church offers open Communion. That means *all* are welcome at this table. Today we serve by intinction: lightly dip the piece of bread into the cup then eat. Self-contained packets of bread and juice are also available. All the bread is gluten free.]

**\*Singing**

“King of Glory Comes”

TFWS #2091

**Sending Forth**

Pastor Dave

Beloved of God, keep awake! Stay alert! Into Advent, into the way of God, into the comfort of promise let us travel as God's people made of hope and ready to believe that God is on the way. Go now from this place blessed to be bowled over by hope and shocked out of our complacency to watch and wait and join in the work of bringing God's dream for all creation to life. Amen.

**Exiting Music**

Accompanist

# HYMNS

## **Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus**

### *Verse 1*

Come Thou long expected Jesus  
Born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us,  
Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation,  
Hope of all the earth Thou art;  
Dear desire of every nation,  
Joy of every longing heart.

### *Verse 2*

Born Thy people to deliver,  
Born a child and yet a King,  
Born to reign in us forever,  
Now Thy gracious Kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal Spirit  
Rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all sufficient merit,  
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

## **Light the Advent Candle**

### *Verse 1*

Light the Advent candle, one:  
Now the waiting has begun;  
We have started on our way,  
Time to think of Christmas day.

### *Chorus*

Candle, candle, burning bright,  
Shining in the cold winter night;  
Candle, candle, burning bright,  
Fill our hearts with Christmas light.

## **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

### *Verse 1*

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.  
(Refrain)

### *Verse 2*

O come, thou Wisdom from on high,  
And ordered all things far and nigh;  
To us the path of knowledge show and causes us in her ways to go.  
(Refrain)

### *Verse 4*

O come, thou Root of Jesse's tree, an ensign of Thy people be;  
Before Thee rulers silent fall; all peoples on Thy mercy call.  
(Refrain)

### *Verse 5*

O come, thou Key of David, come,  
And open wide our heavenly home;  
The captives from their prison free,  
and conquer death's deep misery.  
(Refrain)

### *Verse 6*

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer  
Our spirits by Thy justice here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.  
(Refrain)

### *Verse 7*

O come, desire of nations, bind  
All peoples in one heart and mind.  
From dust thou brought us forth to life;  
Deliver us from earthly strife.  
(Refrain)

## **King of Glory Comes**

### *Refrain*

The king of glory comes,  
The nation rejoices.  
Open the gates before Him  
Lift up your voices

### *Verse 1*

Who is the king of glory;  
How shall we call Him?  
He is Emmanuel,  
The promised of ages.  
(Refrain)

### *Verses 2*

In all of Galilee,  
In city or village,  
He goes among his people  
Curing their illness.

### *Verse 3*

Sing then of David's son  
Our savior and brother;  
In all of Galilee  
Was never another.