

Advent Week 4

THOSE
WHO
DREAM

...are not alone

UNIVERSITY MENNONITE CHURCH

Sunday December 20, 2020

Virtual Worship Service

Welcome and intro to Zoom worship – Ben Wideman

Prelude video – Christmas hymn selections by Kate
and Nathan Derstine Grieser

Call to worship – Pastor Kate Heinzl and Doug Miller

Lighting the Advent Candles

The Candle of Love – David and Eviella Sefu, with Mike
Bratt's rendition of *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

Children's time – Ieva Perkons

Scripture Psalm 89:1-2, 5-6 from The Message
read by Doug Miller

*Your love, God, is my song, and I'll sing it!
I'm forever telling everyone how faithful you are.
I'll never quit telling the story of your love—
how you built the cosmos
and guaranteed everything in it.
Your love has always been our lives' foundation,
your fidelity has been the roof over our world.*

*God! Let the cosmos praise your wonderful ways,
the choir of holy angels sing anthems to your faithful ways!
Search high and low, scan skies and land,
you'll find nothing and no one quite like God.*

Offering prayer and offertory

HWB 197 – *Angels we have heard on high*

Scripture Luke 1:26-45, Sarah Martin

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. 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 of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

And Mary said,

*'My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.*

*Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,*

and holy is his name.

*His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.*

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

*He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;*

*he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.*

*He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,*

*according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'*

Sermon – Ben Wideman

Sharing time – Pastor Kate Heinzel

Sharing response – *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus,*
performed by Mike Bratt

Announcements/birthdays/introduction of visitors

Benediction

Announcements

Sunday School today at 11 am EST (same Zoom link as worship)

Ken Litwiller will lead a general session with breakouts to reflect on Luke 1:26-45. Questions for discussion are below.

- A. We are picturing Mary as an engaged but unmarried teenager in a conservative rural setting. When an angel comes to announce that she will become pregnant and bear a child, what emotions might Mary have experienced?
- B. We could assume that Mary felt fear. There are three possible responses to fear: fight, flight, or freeze. Which response(s) does Mary choose? Why?
- C. Mary retreats to the home of an elderly relative, Elizabeth. In that culture, Elizabeth could have rejected Mary based on appearances. What response did Elizabeth choose? What were the results?
- D. What is God doing through unexpected people in our society today? Where is God at work through people whom our neighbors and fellow church members may exclude or treat as shameful?
- E. What very unusual thing might God be calling you to do?

Wednesday sharing and prayer time - Join us Wednesdays at noon for a time of scripture, prayer, and an opportunity to share more fully with one another. The Zoom meeting link will be distributed via our email list.

Join us for a special Christmas Eve candle lighting service on Zoom. Services will begin at 7 pm EST and will use the same Zoom link as our Sunday morning Zoom services.

If you're interested in attending the **mindful meditation sessions** on Monday evenings and Thursday or Friday mornings, contact [Kate](#), as times and dates vary.

Announcements (cont.)

Collecting and sharing treasures! Notebooks and pencils are treasures for families who struggle to afford basic school supplies. School kits often are requested after disasters and help bring normalcy to children whose families have been forced to flee their homes. Last year MCC shipped 79,557 kits to Jordan, Lebanon, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and the U.S.

The Children's Sunday School Committee is inviting you to collect school kit contents this month. **Click [HERE](#) for a complete list of supplies needed.** Drop off supplies in the Rubbermaid container at UMC Norma Street entrance December 26-31. Questions: Call Laura Litwiller 717-543-2419.

Christmas Star - Go outside, not long after sunset, and look to the southwestern sky to see the coming together of Saturn and Jupiter to create the "Christmas Star." The two largest planets in our solar system will be closer to one another on December 21 than they have been since 1623. Wonders abound all around us!

This year the **Music & Worship Leaders Retreat** at Laurelville on January 8-10 will be virtual. The schedule for the retreat and information on how to register can be found online at <https://laurelville.org/our-programs/mwlr/>

The deadline to register is December 29, 2020.

University Baptist & Brethren Church is holding their 38th annual **Alternative Christmas Fair** virtually this year. Make the season merrier by supporting the good work of thirty local charities. Check out the attachment sent with this bulletin or visit <https://ubbcwelcome.org/acf>

Announcements (cont.)

Gift cards – We have many options to give this season. Each week, we'll highlight a local organization. Thanks to all who contributed to the Park Forest Preschool. We received \$1,450 in contributions, allowing all families to receive a \$50 gift card to Giant.

This week we ask you to consider supporting clients at [Centre Safe](#) (formerly the Women's Resource Center) with gift cards from Giant, Weis, Walmart, and Sheetz. Send gift cards to Centre Safe at 140 W. Nittany Ave, State College, PA 16801.

Need help? We are a community with talents, tools, and a willingness to serve each other. If you need some extra help - gathering groceries, taking care of leaves, etc., let Kate know. There are some here who might be able to lend a hand.

Financial struggles? As you continue to live into the realities of COVID-19, please let Kate or one of the [elders](#) know if you are living with financial uncertainty and could use some help. UMC, in partnership with [Everence](#), has funds available to help those in need.

UMC YouTube channel: [Check out our YouTube channel](#) to see our worship services, short meditations by Kate, and more! We will regularly post new content, so stop by often to stay connected.

Your offerings support UMC – Don't forget to support UMC with your financial gifts during this time of remote gatherings. You can make your offering the following ways:

- Mail a check to the church to the attention of our treasurer, 1606 Norma Street, State College PA, 16801
- Set up an automatic payment with your bank (bill pay service)
- Use a service like Zelle

Questions? Contact Jim Rosenberger JLRosenberger@gmail.com

Church Information

1606 Norma St., State College, PA 16801; (814) 234-2039

www.universitymennonite.org

Pastor: Kate Heinzl

Submissions for bulletin: umcbulletin@yahoo.com

Deadline for bulletin inclusion: Fridays at noon (for virtual services)

Staff and Volunteer Leadership

Pastor: Kate Heinzl, kate@universitymennonite.org 717-606-2909

Worship Coordinator:

Ben Wideman, benwideman@gmail.com 215-859-0037

Elders

Rosita Benner Derstine, rderstine@gmail.com 814-360-8789

Leland Glenna, lelandglenna@gmail.com 814-769-3313

Meredith Wideman, meredith.wideman@gmail.com 626-808-2306

Laura Litwiller, 1978lauraashley@gmail.com 717-543-3419

Cong. Chair: Rick Stehouwer rsc15@psu.edu 814-883-3503

Asst. Chair: Cathy Bresee, cbs4@psu.edu 814-933-8005

University Mennonite Church's safe-child policy demonstrates our commitment to the physical safety and the spiritual growth of all our children and youth, ages birth to 18, as well as to our volunteers who care for them. The complete policy is posted in the lobby entrances and in the nursery room.

Our church maintains a Google Group email list to keep members informed about prayer requests and happenings in the community. Join the email list by sending an email to:

university-mennonite-sharing-list+subscribe@googlegroups.com

Zoom church services are being recorded and published on our [YouTube channel](#). You can also listen to audio recordings at on our web site at: <http://www.universitymennonite.org/worship-service-recordings-2020/>