*The Gospel of Luke tells us of how the angels sang “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased!” Today we hear new songs of this old and wondrous story of Jesus and His love! - Pastor Randy*

***Crescentville & Frankford Memorial United Methodist Churches***

**4TH Sunday of Advent *LOVE* December 18, 2022**

**Welcome**

 Chorus of Welcome *“The Family of God”*

I’m so glad I’m a part of the family of God—I’ve been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood!

Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod; for I’m part of the family, the family of God.

 Call to Worship *Romans 1*

 *The Good News was promised long ago by God through his prophets,*

 *as written in the Holy Scriptures. It is about his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: as to his humanity,*

 *he was born a descendant of David; as to his divine holiness,*

 *he was shown with great power to be the Son of God by being raised from death.*

**Opening Hymn** *“**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”* [VS. 1-2, 6] # 211

 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,

 that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

 *Refrain:* Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

 O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, who ordered all things mightily;

 to us the path of knowledge show and teach us in her ways to go. *Refrain*

 O come, thou Dayspring, from on high and cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;

 disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death’s dark shadows put to flight. *Refrain*

 **Advent Candle Lighting**

 Reader One: Isaiah said that the Lord spoke to the king and said, “Ask a sign of the LORD your God;

 let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But when the king refused,

 God would not be stopped. “Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign.

 Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel.”

 Reader Two: God wants us to know, even when we aren’t sure ourselves. God wants us to experience

 God’s presence, even when we think we can handle life on our own. God sends us signs

 of God’s presence with us; all we need to do is keep our eyes open and look.

 Reader One: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

 which means, ‘God is with us.’" When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel

 of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her

 until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

 Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of joyous hope, of proclaimed peace,

 of deep everlasting joy, and today of presence that speaks of love,

 as a sign that no matter our circumstance, we know we are not alone.

 Response *“Kum Ba Yah”*

Come by here, my Lord, come by here. Come by here, my Lord, come by here.

Come by here, my Lord, come by here. Oh, Lord, come by here!

 **Opening Prayer**

 **O God, who has promised to be with us in power and in the flesh:**

 **Stir up Your might, and come and save us; mercifully fulfill that which You have promised**

 **to the end of the world; Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You**

 **and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.**

**Joys & Concerns………………….……..*Gathered Prayer…………………………The Lord’s Prayer***

*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 and debts as we forgive our debtors and 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.*

**Gifts and Offerings**

**Offertory**  *“Love’s Pure Light”*

**The Doxology** *raise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”* [TUNE: VENI EMMANUEL]

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;

praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**The Offertory Prayer**

**Hymn** *“Sing We Now of Christmas”* [VS. 1-3]# 237

 Sing we now of Christmas, Noel, sing we here! Hear our grateful praises to the babe so dear.

*Refrain:* Sing we Noel, the King is born, Noel! Sing we now of Christmas, sing we now Noel!

 Angels called to shepherds, "Leave your flocks at rest,

 journey forth to Bethlehem, find the child so blest.” *Refrain*

 In Bethlehem they found him; Joseph and Mary mild, seated by the manger, watching the holy child. *R*

**Gospel Lesson** *St. Matthew 1:18-25*

 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph,

 before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. **19**Joseph her husband

 was a righteous man. Because he didn’t want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement

 quietly. **20**As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,

 “Joseph son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries

 was conceived by the Holy Spirit. **21**She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus,

 because he will save his people from their sins.” **22**Now all of this took place so that what the Lord

 had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

**23***Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,* *And they will call him,* Emmanuel.

 (*Emmanuel* means “God with us.”)

**24**When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife.

**25**But he didn’t have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. Joseph called him Jesus.

**Youth Presentation: *“MERRY CHRISTMAS”***

**Song: Merry Christmas**

Merry Christmas Everyone! This time of year is so exciting! December twenty-fifth is the day we celebrate Jesus’ birthday. The Bible tells us that Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem when it came time for her baby to be born. She gave birth to a son – Baby Jesus! Jesus was born about two thousand years ago. God Promised the world He would send a Savior, and two thousand years ago the time was right. *”Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord”*

On the day Jesus was born, JOY came to the world.

**Song: Joy! To The World**

Jesus brought JOY to the world! The JOY that Jesus brought us is great! Happiness lasts only a little while, but JOY lasts forever. One JOY Jesus gives, us a His children, is that He will always be our friend. Nothing can stop our friendship with Jesus. Jesus brought JOY to the world, but He brought a lot more. Jesus also brought PEACE. If we trust in Him, the Bible tells us that Jesus will be our PEACE. The PEACE of Jesus will be with us through the tough times of life. Jesus will always be the PEACE we can find in a storm. *“For He Himself is our PEACE”*. . Jesus brought peace to the world.

**Song: Peace To The World with Silent Night**

PEACE is a good gift. No matter what happens, with Jesus you can have real PEACE. Jesus gives us a PEACE in our hearts that passes all of our understanding. Jesus brought JOY and PEACE.

Jesus also brought LIGHT. In fact, JESUS is the LIGHT. He also gave us the Bible which is filled with words that show us the way. Jesus brought His LIGHT to each person who believes in Him. And guess what…..the LIGHT of Jesus is meant to be shared.. Like candles on a birthday cake, the more you light, the brighter it gets. Jesus said “I am the LIGHT of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”.

Happy Birthday, Jesus! You are the LIGHT in our world!

**Song: Happy Birthday Jesus**

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He brought JOY to the world. And with JOY came PEACE to calm our hearts. And, He brought His LIGHT. Jesus is the LIGHT of the world. But He did not stop there. He brought something wonderful that can change the lives of everyone. Jesus brought LOVE. Jesus was God’s greatest gift of LOVE to the world. Jesus is LOVE. Jesus was the way God could show His LOVE to everyone. God loved us so much He gave us Jesus.

 *“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”* We can have eternal life when we believe in Jesus.

Jesus is LOVE, the LOVE of God on earth.

**Song: I Love You Too**

JOY, PEACE, LIGHT, LOVE: Jesus does give great gifts! These gifts are not like regular gifts. They are special. You can’t wrap JOY and PEACE or put LIGHT and LOVE in a box. Jesus puts them in a special place. He hides them safely in our hearts.

Jesus has given so much to us! What can we give to Him? It’s His birthday after all.

The best gift we can give Him is our heart. Believe in Him. Then, we too can have JOY and PEACE and LIGHT and LOVE! We can have JESUS*! “Let them shout it from the mountain tops. Let them give glory to the LORD.”*  Christmas is a day of JOY, PEACE, LIGHT, and LOVE. It’s your special day, Jesus, and we love you.

Jesus gives us JOY, PEACE, LIGHT & LOVE let’s give him our hearts.

**Song: On Christmas Day with We Wish You A Merry Christmas**

 **Affirmation of Faith** *The Apostles’ Creed*

 I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

 And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

 born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;

 the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God

 the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead;

 I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,

 the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**Closing Song** *“Joy! To The World”* Pam Andrews / Arr. John DeVries

 …Joy to the world! The Lord is come; the Lord is come! Let earth, let earth receive, receive her King,

 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**

***Quiet Meditation, Reflection, and Prayer***

**Choral Benediction** *“Joy! To The World”* Pam Andrews / Arr. John DeVries

 Joy to the world! The Lord is come, the Lord is come. Jesus brought His peace and joy to everyone.

 Joy to the world! The Lord is come, the Lord is come. Our King is born in Bethlehem,

 God’s one and only Son. Joy to the world!

To all who have participated in

our Advent Candlelighting,

and to the youth who led us in worship today!

 **December 24th –**

**CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE**

**OF CAROLS & LESSONS**

**Crescentville UMC 8:00 PM**

(Frankford Memorial UMC 6:30 PM)

Crescentville will have light refreshments after our service.

 **December 25th – Christmas Day 10:00 AM**

 Crescentville and Frankford Memorial will worship together

 at Frankford Memorial UMC Church

**January 1st – New Year’s Day 10:00 AM**

Crescentville and Frankford Memorial will worship together at Crescentville UMC Church



**WHY SHOULD WE ATTEND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICES?**

 This Christmas, give yourself the best gift possible - press pause on the holiday hustle and bustle and carve out time and space to reflect on God's perfect gift of love more than 2,000 Christmases ago. A gift of hope, peace, joy, and love, the birth of Jesus pierced a dark world with inextinguishable light. Don’t just marvel at Jesus being born in a manger, let Him be born in you.

 Our Christmas Eve service of Lessons and Carols tells the Christmas story through selected readings of scripture of prophecy and narrative, and each reading is followed by choral music reflecting the reading. The congregation will be asked to join in singing Christmas carols. This service should put you in a joyful mood for Christmas.

 Christmas day falls on a Sunday this year. As the day when Christians have historically gathered to worship Jesus, *Sunday is a perfect day to celebrate the birth of our Savior.* However, with all the busy events and traveling to visit family and friends, believers may wonder if they should attend church services on Christmas Sunday.

 Like many others, you may find yourself busy on Christmas. Especially since Christmas falls on a Sunday this year, you might feel overwhelmed and stressed at the thought of adding “attend church” to your growing to-do list.

 While the holiday season is often stressful, we need to take a step back and think. Despite what the world teaches, Christmas is about Jesus, and we are wise to focus our attention on Him, not the distractions of this world.

 Going to church on Christmas Sunday affirms the belief that “*Jesus is the reason for the season.”* Not that we cannot make Christ the center of Christmas from home, but it seems appropriate to set aside a little time to go to church if it’s really all about Him.

 Let us not give up meeting together, even if Christmas falls on a Sunday.

**Lectionary Scripture Readings**

Christmas is a season of spiritual reflection on the foundations of the Christian faith. It’s also a celebration of the arrival of Jesus. Christmas is a time for Christians to praise God’s love for the world through the birth of the Christ child: Jesus. The Bible tells of His birth hundreds of years before, fulfilling prophecies from the Old Testament.

**December 24, 2022 – Christmas Eve**

Luke 2:1-20 - Isaiah 9:2-7 - Psalm 96 - Titus 2:11-14

 **December 25, 2022 – Christmas Day**

 John 1:1-14 - Isaiah 52:7-10 - Psalm 98 - Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)

**Joys & Concerns: Keep those prayers going and thank God for His answers! To add a prayer request or share a joy, *please call the church and leave a message.***

 ***(215) 745-7115.*** When we offer intercessory prayers, pleading with God on behalf of loved ones and friends, we are trusting in His ability to answer, and He does. We are giving up our capabilities to answer and depending on God to keep His promise to answer our prayers. When we pray for others, God will answer.

**Prayer Requests from December 11th**

 JOY - Sue Snyder's sister, Carol Arnold has moved back into her new rebuilt home. (Her home was destroyed by fire last year on Christmas Eve.)

Cocoa - prayers for healing from a torn retina and blood clot in her right eye.

Continued prayers for James & Zilpha Browne

Continued prayers for Erdric's family as they grieve his death.

Prayers for Matt (Gene Saloky's friend) Matt has surgery for colon cancer.

Families - Stefanescu, Mc Manus, Didirea, Salvadore

Continued prayers for Steven Matthias

**Continuing Prayers:**

Pastor Randy & Family Sana Aman Zilpha & James Browne Dorothy Buzzard

Caroline (Burghaze’s Daughter) Rev. Khan Scott Meyer Marva

Cass Quigley Betty Sauerwald & family Wondor Korto

Sylvia Spotts Suzanne TurnerEva Baumgartel

Prayers for the Ukraine and Russia - for world peace

Prayers for our city and end to violence

Prayers for peace and stability in Sierra Leone.

