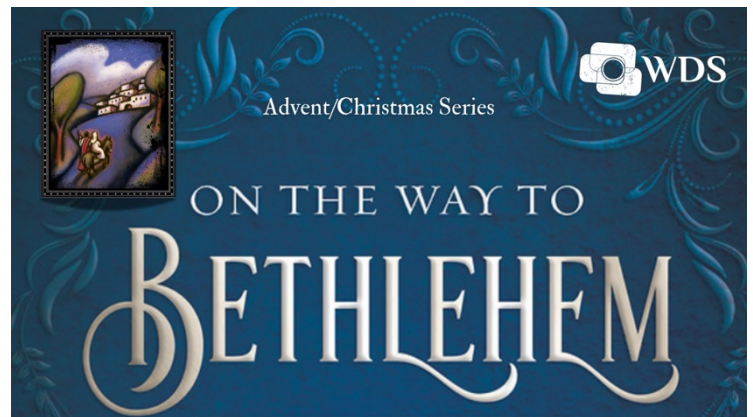


First Presbyterian Church of Marysville

“Bethlehem: A Place of Humility” (Love)

Worship @ Home
December 22, 2024
(Fourth Sunday of Advent)



PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Light a candle to remind you of Christ's light.

Take three deep and centering breaths.

Breathe in "Loving God"

Breathe out "Prepare my heart"

OR

Sing "Surely the Presence of the Lord"

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place

I can feel his mighty power and his grace

I can hear the brush of angels' wings

I see glory on each face

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Pastor: It is time we got to Bethlehem. First, a decree set by Rome; second, a declaration of birth for an elderly couple in Jerusalem; third, a girl surprised by news of pregnancy in Nazareth. And now it all culminates in our travels to Bethlehem. Bethlehem is the ancestral home of mighty King David as well as his humble and faithful descendant: Joseph, the carpenter.

One: Bethlehem was called "little" by the prophet Micah who recognized that something of great worth would come from a humble place. As a champion of the "least of these," Jesus' ministry would shine light on the worth of humble people and places. Let us ask: How will we show this kind of humble love to others?

All: **Holy and Living God, we pray for hearts and minds to be open wide to merciful acts in your name. Too often, we clench our fists in fear that what we have will not be enough for us. Give us the humility to make more room. Call us to a "generosity of grace." Call us to be generous, not to a fault, but to a future where all have a place and a hope where they are deeply loved. We pray in the name of your Son, Jesus the Christ, your Love Incarnate. Amen.**

HYMN: "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist Cry" #10 Blue (*words are attached*)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE – LOVE

One: The journey continues, and this candle will help light our way.

All: We are on our way to more love.

One: So many are in need of grace, in need of loving acceptance.

All: We are a people who can bring Good News.

One: Stories of generosity are markers and signs that goodness is the nature of God.

All: God's light goes before us. We are not alone.

**Song: O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

One: Let this Candle of Love be a marker of assurance that we are moving in a faithful direction.

All: God is with us every step of our way toward the Love of Bethlehem.

One: Jesus is being born into our lives even now.

All: The Spirit is transforming us in this place.

HYMN: "Love Divine, All Love's Excelling" #376 Blue (*words are attached*)

PUPPET SKIT – "Little Donkey: Love"

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 2:1-14

MESSAGE: "Welcoming the Least"

Rev. Grace Suwabe

In spite of Bethlehem's ancestral connection to King David, it is still viewed as a little place, one of the little clans of Judah. And this is where the Son of God, Jesus, is born. Also it is the shepherds who were first invited to greet Jesus after he was born, representing God's desire to come and restore people. (Please contemplate on these words and spend some time with God in prayer.)

GATHERING AND DEDICATING OUR OFFERING

One: During this Advent season, we wait in love, and we give in love – a love for God and God's people.

All: May these generous offerings be used for God's work of love in our world.

Consider what gifts you could offer to God and to God's people during this uncertain time. Speak them out loud or write them down and after worship, make a plan to share these gifts.

Some examples include – sharing the gift of love by spending time with someone homebound, helping someone in need, doing a good deed

*Please continue to support the church by mailing your offering (checks only) to the church office:

First Presbyterian Church of Marysville – 1900 Ahern St, Suite B, Marysville, CA 95901

You may also off your offering at the church office on Thursdays from 10 am – 3 pm or Fridays from 11 am – 2 pm. (Please do not put anything in the outside mailboxes.)

Online giving is also available! Copy and paste the below link into your browser and follow the prompts:

https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=wWsk24ZWJSTZKsGd1RMKlg0BDvsSG3VIWQCPJNNxD8upkiY7JIDavDsozUE7KG0nFx2NSo8LdUKGuGuF396vbZpZISnR1aL6Jy6aLfiKsLAIYnTg5dP4O6rpX5QvPEWIBhHDN59kLZFffwKfYERpQrqXrEYxb09pApAL3pdNN38=&ver=3

Thank you for your continued support of the church!

THE DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heaven-ly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, A-men.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Offer prayer for the needs of the world, paying particular attention to those who are alone, isolated, or in our community, nation, and the world. May they feel God's tender arms and presence wrapping them in love.

Let us join together in prayer for the following people:

Aurel, Cathy, Betty, Marilyn, Peggy, Joe, Judy, Jackie, Pearl, Shari, Al, Adam, Carrie, Christina, Herm, Huang, Jackie, Jett, Joanne, Joyce, Justin, Kenneth, Luann, Mindy, Raelynn, Ray, Timothy

If you are in need of prayer or assistance, please let Pastor Grace know at fpcmsvlpastor@gmail.com.

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 debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

HYMN: "What Child Is This?" #53 Blue (*words are attached*)

CHARGE

One: Now go forth from this place, knowing that all the places you encounter in the world will contain signs and markers of God's work of love among us.

All: **We keep our senses alert, our perception wide, and our hearts open to new discoveries along the way.**

BENEDICTION:

Song: O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray,
Cast out our fear and draw us near; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

(Extinguish the candle if you lit one at the beginning of worship and allow the smoke to billow as a reminder of Christ's abiding presence.)

OR

You can sing "Surely the Presence of the Lord"
*Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place
I can feel his mighty power and his grace
I can hear the brush of angels' wings
I see glory on each face
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place*

FPCM Contact Information

Pastor Grace Suwabe – fpcmsvlpastor@gmail.com

Church Office – fpcmsvl@comcast.net or (530) 742-5541

Hours during week of Dec. 22nd – Dec. 28th

Thursdays 10 am – 4 pm

Fridays 11 am – 2 pm

Announcements:

Christmas Eve Service – Dec. 24th at 7 pm ~ Hear the Christmas story and celebrate Jesus' birth with songs

Thank you to all who donated food items, books, and presents for our Christmas food boxes. All were blessed!

Christmas Joy Offering is now being collected to assist current and retired church workers in their time of need and develop our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

Pledge cards for 2025 are still being accepted. Please mail them to the church office or drop them in the offering plate. Thank you for your support.

Bible Study is on a break and will start up again on Wednesday, January 8th at 3 pm.

Sunday's worship bulletin and sermon are on our church website! – www.firstpresmarysville.church

The food pantry (1905-C Covillaud St.) is open on Fridays from 10 am – 12 noon. Help is welcomed.

*Items needed – *canned meat, canned beans, jello*

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist Cry

On Jordan's bank the Baptists's cry
 Announces that the Lord is nigh;
 Awake and hearken, for he brings
 Glad tidings of the King of Kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin;
 Make straight the way for God within,
 And let us all our hearts prepare
 For Christ to come and enter there.

We hail You as our Savior, Lord,
 Our refuge, and our great reward;
 O let Your face upon us shine
 And fill the world with love divine.

All praise to You, eternal Son,
 Whose advent has our freedom won,
 Whom with the Father we adore,
 And Holy Spirit, evermore.

Love Divine, All Love's Excelling

Love divine, all loves excelling,
 Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
 Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
 All Thy faithful mercies crown!
 Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
 Pure, unbounded love Thou Art;
 Visit us with Thy salvation,
 Enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
 Into every troubled breast!
 Let us all in Thee inherit,
 Let us find the promised rest;
 Take away the love of sinning;
 Alpha and Omega be;
 End of faith, as its beginning,
 Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver,
 Let us all Thy life receive;
 Suddenly return, and never,
 Never-more Thy temples leave.
 Thee we would be always blessing,
 Serving Thee as Thy hosts above;
 Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
 Glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish, then, Thy new creation;
 Pure and spotless let us be;
 Let us see Thy great salvation
 Perfectly restored in Thee;
 Changed from glory into glory,
 Till in heaven we take our place,
 Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
 Lost in wonder, love and praise.

What Child Is This?

What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
 On Mary's lap is sleeping?
 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
 While shepherds watch are keeping?

Refrain:

This, this is Christ the King,
 Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,
 The Babe, the son of Mary!

Why lies He in such mean estate
 Where ox and ass are feeding?
 Good Christian fear; for sinners here
 The silent Word is pleading.
 (Refrain)

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;
 Come, one and all, to own Him.
 The King of kings salvation brings;
 Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
 (Refrain)