



## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

### Oxford Presbyterian Church

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December 24, 2017

Office Hours: Monday – Friday  
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Oxford Presbyterian Church  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Sunday, December 24, 2017

Liturgist: Jens Bartel

**WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME**

Holy God, Loving Christ, Living Spirit;  
You are present in the everyday occurrences;  
you are revealed in startling and wondrous encounters.  
Let the revelation of your mystery unfold again this day –  
that we may see it together.  
Let the secret of the ages shed new light on our relationship to you,  
and each other, as we praise the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

(Note on image: Inspired by today's Advent theme of Love, photographer Steve Gifford affirms that "Love is a mother Killdeer keeping the kids safe and warm.")

**CHIMES**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**            *"Come Now, O Prince of Peace"*            arr. Roberta Rowland-Raybold

**CHORAL INTROIT**            *"He Came Down"*            Cameroon Song

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: We come to witness a miracle.

**All: We sing the miracle of the Lord's steadfast love.**

New life bursts forth in unexpected ways.

**We shout the good news: God's covenant endures forever!**

**Come, let us bring our love to this time and place,  
celebrating the radical love of Emmanuel that beckons us together.**

**Come, let us listen and speak, sing and discern,  
pray and give, for now is the time to worship.**

**\*HYMN**                            *"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"*                            #132

**\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Mary said, "How can this be?" and opened her heart to mystery and grace.  
**We have said, "We must see it to believe it!"  
trusting only what we can prove and reason.**

She said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord."  
And gave her life over to bearing the child of God,  
even though that could mean the end of her life as she knew it.  
**We have said, "Sorry, can't today, I've got too much work today."**

She said, "My soul magnifies the Lord!"  
and understood herself profoundly as a child and in the image of God.  
**We have said, "I am just one person and  
my life doesn't matter in the big picture."  
We confess, Lord, that we have not opened  
our hearts to the in-breaking of your spirit.**

**Descend upon us today as you did with Mary,  
and help us to know ourselves as agents of your work in this world.  
Forgive us and give us strength, we pray. Amen.**

**\*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

God knows our weakness and our strengths.  
Jesus loves us as we are, knowing we are yet works in progress.  
God keeps all covenants; the Spirit keeps us.  
Receive the anointing love of Christ's grace.  
**We are forgiven! Rejoice!  
Alleluia! Amen.**

**\*SHARING THE PEACE**

**A TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES & LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES**

Advent is the time of waiting and anticipation as we prepare  
to welcome Jesus into our hearts and lives once more.  
Like a family prepares a home for the arrival of a baby,  
we prepare our hearts for the arrival of God's own beloved Child.

People of God, come, for the light of love beckons us together.  
**What love is this? How are we to follow?**

The season has ripened, and the waiting is all but over.  
**God is with us. God is for us.**

Today, we light all four of our Advent candles, celebrating the brightness of God's love. Now is the time when we begin to cross the threshold from Advent journeying into Christmas coming.

(The candles of Faith, Hope, Joy and Love are lit. As we sing "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" #85, the congregation is invited to engage the Scottish liturgical practice of 'Cloth for the Cradle.' In this practice, all who are able are invited to take the strips of cloth you were given as you entered. With a prayer, place your strip in the manger and together we will weave a blanket for Emmanuel. In doing so, we create room to welcome the Christ Child into our hearts.

*Light one candle to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish the darkness.  
He shall bring salvation to Israel, God fulfills the promise.*

*Light two candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish the darkness.  
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd, gently lead them homeward.*

*Light three candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish the darkness.  
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.*

*Light four candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish the darkness.  
He is coming; tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining.*

Children in Preschool through Grade 8 are dismissed to class following the children's message.)

### WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

#### UNISON PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Speak to us, Lord.  
Speak to us in the waiting, the watching,  
the hoping, the longing,  
the sorrow, the sighing, and the rejoicing.  
Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days,  
and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.**

#### SCRIPTURE

A reading from Luke 1:26-38 pg. 53

Homily

Hymn – "My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout" (vs. 1-2) #100

A reading from Luke 1:46-55 pg. 53-54

Homily

\*Hymn – "My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout" (vs. 3-4) #100

### WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD

#### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD'S PRAYER (sins...sin)

#### OFFERING

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM** "Peace, Peace" Rick and Sylvia Powel  
(When indicated by the choir director, the congregation is invited to sing vs. 1 of "Silent Night" #122)

#### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\***HYMN** "Once in Royal David's City" #140

#### \***BLESSING**

Go from this place in peace.  
**Anointed by the Holy Spirit, we go to serve in God's grace.**

Go from this place in love.  
**Bathed in the light of Christ, we go to proclaim God's joy!  
Amen!**

\***CHORAL RESPONSE** "People Look East" French Folk melody

\***POSTLUDE** "Savior of the Nations, Come" Johann Pachelbel

*\*Please rise in body or in spirit*

**CALENDAR**

**Sunday, December 24**

9:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal  
10:00 Worship  
10:20 Sunday school – only Nursery,  
and Preschool class available  
11:10 Fellowship in the Molyneaux  
**7:00 Christmas Eve Candlelight  
Service**

**Monday, December 25**

***Celebrate Our Savior's Birth  
on Christmas***

**Tuesday, December 26**

**Office Closed**  
10:00 DVD Church Showing (Knolls)

**Wednesday, December 27**

**Regular Office hours resume  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

**Thursday, December 28**

7:00 Youth Group (Youth Room)  
7:30 Chancel Choir (Geneva Room)

**Friday, December 29**

**Saturday, December 30**

10:00 A.A. (Molyneaux)

**Sunday, December 31**

9:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal  
10:00 Worship  
10:20 Sunday school – only Nursery,  
and Preschool class available  
11:10 Fellowship in the Molyneaux

**OXFORD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF**

**Pastor:** Rev. Lawrence H. Bartel  
**Music Director:** Kent Peterson  
**Organist:** Lynn Jacobs  
**Pastor Emeritus:** Dr. Joseph R. Hookey  
**Parish Associate:** Rev. Diane Ziegler  
**Clerk of Session:** Julia R. Fisher  
**Administrative Assistant:**  
Bridgite Dickerson:  
office@oxfordpresbychurch.org  
**Financial Secretary:** Mary Martin  
finance@oxfordpresbychurch.org  
**Director/Teacher C.C.N.S.:** Sarah Mapel:  
ccnsoxfordpreschool@gmail.com  
**Newsletter Editor:** Nancy Moeckel:  
moeckenj@miamioh.edu

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**OFFICERS OF OPC SESSION**

**Class of 2017:** Gwen Fears, Kim Logsdon,  
Mary Jane Roberts,  
Robert Smith, Janet Ziegler  
**Class of 2018:** Carol Klumb, Amy McGoldrick,  
Katie Payne, Deb Sayers,  
David Wilson  
**Class of 2019:** Jenny Bailer, Lynn Cronk,  
Greg Hughes, Nancy Moeckel,  
Johanna Reinhart

**DEACONS**

**Class of 2017:** Danny Cross, Connie Everhart,  
Matt Lykins, Rori Lykins,  
Jean O'Connell  
**Class of 2018:** Lee Fisher, Virginia Layton,  
Joni Marcum, Karen Shearer

**Class of 2019:** Carol Burkhalter,  
Debbie Davidson,  
Janet Holmes, Pat Roberts,  
Diane Young

**TRUSTEES**

**Class of 2017:** Rick Bailey, Lisa Brunckhorst  
**Class of 2018:** Nick Fears, Tom Holmes  
**Class of 2019:** Keith Payne, Joe Simpson

**Oxford Presbyterian Church**  
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**December 24 - December 31, 2017**

Large-print bulletins and hearing assistance units are available from the ushers. **Please sign the friendship pads found at the end of the pew and pass them to your neighbors.**

**WELCOME VISITORS!** We're so glad you're here! As fellow seekers, we welcome all who wish to learn and grow with us. **Serving others...**Following our Servant Savior, we give our time, talent and resources to help bring fullness of life to others. **Sharing Christ's love with all...**Through our words and actions, we proclaim the unconditional love of Christ. Filled with joy and hope, we build relationships across any boundaries that separate us."

**WELCOME MIAMI STUDENTS!** We're so glad you're here! We invite you to make this church your church home away from home during your time at Miami.

**Greeters:** Karen Shearer and Prue Dana

**Acolyte:** Bella Walter

**Advent Wreath Candle Lighters:**  
Jennifer, Austin and Emma Lake

Mission Partners Prayer List:  
**Presbytery of the Miami Valley:**  
First United Presbyterian Church  
**Sister Churches:** The First Church of Zlatoust, Russia and The Seventh Church of Barranquilla, Colombia

**Congregational Prayer Concerns:**  
Betty Barnhart, Pris Berry, Tracy DeGood, Bob Douglass, Nancy Gates, Genee Hesse, Tom Holmes, Breanna Kinneman, Betty Reinhart, Jan Reinhart, Marilyn Rettig, Sarah Soika, Dave Wilson, Stacey Winn

Email prayer requests to Jean O'Connell, [connelljm17@yahoo.com](mailto:connelljm17@yahoo.com), call Pat Roberts, 513-255-0549 or email the church office, [office@oxfordpresbychurch.org](mailto:office@oxfordpresbychurch.org)

Fellowship hour following worship hosted by the Deacons.

**Christmas at  
Oxford Presbyterian Church**



Celebrate the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ this Christmas season with your church family through these worship opportunities:

**Candlelight Christmas Eve Service  
this evening - 7:00 p.m.**

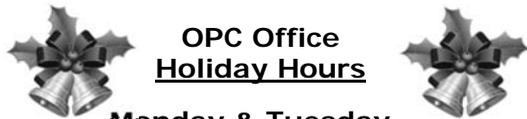
First Sunday of Christmas  
December 31 - 10:00 a.m.

**Flower Calendar 2018**

A new calendar for Altar Flowers for 2018 has been placed near the water fountain next to the Molyneaux Lounge and is ready for entries. Thank you for a great 2017 year. People were so generous to help when we needed altar flowers.



**NO SUNDAY SCHOOL:** Children's Bulletins, Nativity Word Search, Coloring Books, Bible Stories and Activities Books, and bags are available in the Narthex.



**OPC Office  
Holiday Hours**

**Monday & Tuesday  
December 25 & 26  
CLOSED**

**Wednesday, December 27  
Resume Regular Hours  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

**Church Service at The Knolls**



If you've missed any of our recent church services, join us in The Knolls Country Kitchen on Tuesday, December 26 at 10:00 a.m. All are welcome. If anyone needs a ride, please call Becky Quay at 523-5747.



Last minute gifts of Fair Trade Coffee, bean soup, chocolate and spices are available in the Lounge during Fellowship Time.

**Alternative Christmas Gifts**

What Christmas gift do you get the person who already has everything? A gift that will help the person who has nearly nothing! Donate to the Bethesda Christian



Community Center in your friends or family member's name. Your donation will help furnish the newly completed Center so that their mission can continue and expand to provide services for the displaced women and children in Barranquilla, Colombia, Beautiful handmade cards are available for Alternate Giving Donations in the Molyneaux each Sunday in December following service.

**2017 Pledging Reminder**

For the past several weeks we have been focused on pledging for the coming year. We have had an encouraging response to date and are currently building a budget to reflect projected income for 2018. At this time, we also need to address pledging for the current year. We are within the final month of 2017 and are operating on a budget built on the basis of last year's pledging. Just a reminder, if you are able, please complete those pledged 2017 donations by the end of December.



**The Mitten Tree**

With your help a donation of \$2,380.00 was given to the Family Resource Center for the purchase gifts for needy children in the Oxford Community. Thank you for your generosity!



**The Deacon's Advent Food Drive**



The Deacons request your donations of food and money for the Advent Food Drive. Food and Monetary donations may continuously be given throughout Advent.

Please leave bags of food in the Narthex and if you prefer to make a monetary donation, please make a check out to the Oxford Presbyterian Church with Advent Food Drive in the note field or if cash, mark pew envelope Advent Food Drive. The Deacon's will use the money to purchase food for the Oxford Choice Food Pantry.

Oxford Choice Food Pantry needs canned fruit, canned vegetables; spaghetti sauce, cereal, and peanut butter. **One specific item is meals in a can (e.g. Chef Boy-Ar-Dee-type food like ravioli and others, including Kroger brand).** We always put them in the bags and for some reason have not been getting as many as in past years in food drives. Toilet paper, personal care items like body wash, deodorant, shampoo and hair conditioner. **New: We are collecting plastic bags for use in the Oxford Choice Food Pantry. Please leave bags in the food pantry box in the hallway past the offices.**

**Journey Through the Bible**

Last week's Questions and Answers

- In Micah we read what God considers good - what the Lord requires of us - is essentially three things. What are they? (To do justice, to live kindness and to walk humbly with God. Micah 6:8)
- According to John's vision in Revelation, people will be forced to bear a number if they wish to participate in trade and commerce. What is that number? (666 - Rev. 13:18)

Next week's Questions

- Which book of the prophets is the source of the quotation used by Paul, "The righteous live by their faith"?
- Why will there be no temple in the new Jerusalem according to John's vision in Revelation?

**Consider A Special Gift  
at the End of the Year**

During the past year we have been grateful for those individuals who chose to make a special gift to the Oxford Presbyterian Church. These gifts address needs not routinely supported via the operating budget. As we approach the end of 2017, it is a good time to consider supporting additional special funding needs while benefiting from an associated tax deduction.



A complete listing of opportunities available can be obtained in the church office or contact Bill King (513-720-7345) for a personal consultation.