

# Asbury United Methodist Church

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Worship Leader: Jan Jones

Chancel: Samantha Dorsey

\* Please rise in body or in spirit

## "King of Kings"

Advent 1<sup>st</sup>

November 30, 2025

### GATHERING

**Prelude** "Oh Come, Oh Come Emmanuel" Hanna Noh

### Greetings and Announcements

#### **We Gather at the Scene**

*(Threshold Moment)*

*Leader:* In 1865, William Chatterton Dix penned a poem that would become the beloved Christmas-time favorite, "What Child is This?" This year for Advent and Christmas, we will be prompted by this carol to ask deeper questions of Jesus' identity, "what child *IS* this?" When we look beyond the lullaby, what we discover is that the answers are much more complicated than the lilting lullaby tune conveys. The time of Jesus' birth was fraught with difficulties. This is the scene into which Jesus was born. We are called, as his disciples, to enter the scene in the midst of our own complicated and difficult time in history, offering Hope as the Christ Child did.

*[the candle-lighters/readers come forward  
to the nativity scene/Advent candles as we sing]*

**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?**

*[underscoring continues as the first Advent candle is lit]*

*Leader:* The nature of humanity seems to point to the need for a “savior,” especially when we feel things are out of control. People in the time of Jesus’ birth were no different. They hoped for a new reality of communal wellbeing in the midst of corruption and violence. Peace only existed by definition of the empire. The collaboration of religious and state authorities for the sake of the rich and the demise of the poor was a hard reality for most.

*Leader:* We light this candle of Hope for those who need it most.

**People: For all who search for a place to belong.**

*Leader:* For all who are frightened by imposing forces.

**People: For all whose future seems uncertain.**

*Leader:* Our question for today at the scene of the nativity is this: “For what do we hope in our time that will be ‘good news for ALL people?’”

**People: What child IS this? This, this, is Christ the King who reigns with hope forever.**

*[sung as the candle lighters/readers return to their seats; you may want to gesture to the congregation to stand as they sing]*

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

### **Prayer of Invocation**

*[unison]*

**Here, at the nativity of your birth,  
give us the courage to face this moment  
with humility and hope.**

**Open us to new understandings of  
the unfolding story of your presence among us.  
Show us the true meaning of the kingdom on earth  
as it is in heaven.**

**We pray in the name of the Child,  
the One Who Reigns in our hearts and lives.  
Amen.**

### **“Bring Him Laud” – Opening Hymn**

*“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name” UMH 154 vs. 1 & 4*

### **Signs of Hope**

*Leader:* Peace be with you!

*People: And also with you!*

*Leader:* I invite you to pass the peace with one another and to those worshipping online,

## **We Hear the Story**

*Reader:* We begin today with a scripture from the Hebrew Bible, Lamentations 3:46-57. In the book, *The First Advent in Palestine*, author Kelley Nikondeha says this, "...grief work is the seedbed for Advent hope. We cannot grasp the fullness of the Advent narratives to come without attending to the brokenness of our world. Lament is how we name and honor what has been lost or taken from us by one empire or another." This lament comes from the time of Babylonian exile.

*Our enemies laugh at us with open mouths.  
The snare and pit of the hunter lie ahead of us—  
devastation and ruin!  
Rivers of water run from my eyes  
because my people are destroyed.  
Tears flow continuously from my eyes,  
refusing all comfort—  
all of this while YHWH watches from the heavens.  
My spirit is grieved as I see the fate of children in my city.  
Those who became my enemies without provocation  
chased and harangued me like a bird.*

*Reader:* Our second reading is from Luke 2:1-5. It places us in the scene before the arrival of the Holy Family when the manger in Bethlehem was simply serving as a place for the animals' feed.

*In those days, Caesar Augustus published a decree ordering a census of the whole Roman world. This first census took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All the people were instructed to go back to the towns of their birth to register. And so Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to "the city of David"—Bethlehem, in Judea, because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David; he went to register with Mary, his espoused wife, who was pregnant.*

## **Choir Anthem "Rejoice! Your Light Has Come"**

### **Sermon**

**"the Child of Hope"**

**Rev. Yohan Go**

### **RESPONDING**

*Our faithful response is to praise God for this story of Emmanuel, God-With-Us, even and especially in the midst of difficulty, for God is indeed with us even still.*

## Sharing Joy and Concerns

### “We Keep Watch” – Prayers

*“Great Holy One”*

*by Brian Wren and Susan Heafield*

*[sung by congregation and/or choir]*

**Great, Holy One, spreading time and space,  
show us who You are in a human face.**

*[underscoring continues]*

*Leader:*

*Leader: In this moment of silent contemplation, we lift up our hopes for the world, for all people, and for the kind of kin-dom embodied by the child who became the Christ. As we pray, hold a word or phrase of hope in your heart.*

*Time of Silent Contemplation*

*Together*

*Hidden one, how can we find you,  
when our world is filled with pain,  
and our praying is in vain?  
If we knock and get no answer,  
and we cannot cope, help us still to hope.*

**Great, Holy One, spreading time and space,  
show us who You are in a human face.**

*Leader: Holy Living One, Child of Hope, Spirit of Benevolence,  
we come to you today weary of the rulers of history,  
weary of continued misguided power,  
and the tenuous peace heralded through control  
and perpetrated by violence.  
We know you are with us,  
for you came to our human story when we needed your message so much.  
We still do.*

*We ask, “what child is this that we follow, and who are we  
in the scene of this unfolding story?”*

*As the manger waits for your arrival surrounded by the daily needs of family and flock,  
we again plead for your presence to break into our lives  
and show us the light of hope.  
And we ask for the courage to step into the scene,*

preparing the way for your reign.

**Pastoral Prayer    Rev. Yohan Go**

Be with us as we seek to be the Body of Christ in the world.  
We pray this in the way you taught us, saying...

***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, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

**"So Bring Him..."**

*(Offering)*

What gifts are adequate for the King of Kings, the Child of Hope? Our theme song says, "so bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come peasant, king, to own him." Whether what we have to give is simply the gift of our presence and gratitude, or if we are privileged with coffers of precious resources, we give what we can. In this way we "take ownership" of our role in the scene, in the unfolding story of Hope.

**Offering/Offertory "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"**

***Doxology***

**Praise God of hope, Emmanuel,  
Whose saving love with us will dwell.  
Praise God, who hears our longing cry;  
Praise Christ, whose dawn is drawing nigh. Amen.**

***Baptism of Leandro Emmanuel Hanke & Livia Grace Iavarone***  
**(Please see the screen for the baptism liturgy.)**

**SENDING FORTH**

*Just as our theme carol asks, "what child is this?" we, too, have come with our questions this day. We go into the world with answers of Good News, being the Body of Christ through our words and deeds.*

**We Ask, We Answer**

As we prepare to go into the world,  
let us ask and answer the question we came with.

**What child IS this?**

This is the one born into a time when

hope was hard.  
**What child IS this?**  
This is the one whose lowly status would send a message of hope  
that alleviation of oppression is a holy endeavor.  
**What child IS this?**  
This, this is the “King of Kings”  
who shows us the way of true hope for all people.

### **Closing Hymn/Song**

*“Take the Name of Jesus With You” UMH 536*

### **Benediction**

May the Sovereign of All,  
the Child of Hope,  
the Spirit of Resistance to Injustice  
be with you now and as you go.  
**Amen.**

### **Sung Response (Sung Together)**

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

**Postlude** “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

### **Announcements**

1. Next Sunday’s Worship Leader is Patricia Smith-Disu.
2. The Advent book study begins on Dec. 2 (Tuesday Book Group) and Dec. 3 (Wednesday Book Group). We will read *A Child Is Born* by Amy-Jill Levine. See Pastor Yohan.
3. November is our Thanksgiving Month. Throughout the month, we are collecting hats, mittens, and socks for those in need. Please bring your donations and place them in the baskets.
4. The Christmas Family Concert at Haven UMC will be on Sunday, December 7, at 3pm. This year's concert will benefit House of Hope, a local organization that works to eliminate homelessness in our communities. There will be performances featuring

a variety of instruments, as well as beautiful ensemble and choral pieces. Help us fill the pews and support this incredible organization as it works with some of the most vulnerable in our community.

5. Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> from 9AM to 2PM is Open Table of Christ UMC'S Holiday Bazaar. Located at 1520 Broad St. Providence RI. Santa Claus will be there from 10 AM-12 Noon. They have a craft table for kids, a bake sale, holiday treasures, and a wish table. They also offer lunch for \$10.00 from 11am-1pm, consisting of sandwiches, salads, dessert and beverages.

### **Birthdays**

December    2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley Anderson Williams  
                  3<sup>rd</sup> Kevin Quinn  
                  6<sup>th</sup> Amy Quinn Morin

**Flowers**    The flowers on the altar this week are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of My grandmother, Emma Paydon, whose birthday is Christmas Day, by Marian Styles-McClintock.