

Banning United Methodist Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2024

GATHERING

SPECIAL MUSIC AND FELLOWSHIP

Cathy Mauge

WELCOMING FRIENDS AND NEWCOMERS

Myrle Petty

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Myrle Petty

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Pastor Doug

WORSHIP OF GOD

PRELUDE

Cathy Mauge

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

CALL TO WORSHIP

Myrle Petty

L: Christ's love has called us here.

P: Our Spirits rejoice in God, our Savior.

L: Christ's love is transforming the world.

P: In joy, we'll give thanks and sing.

L: Christ's love calls us to justice and peace.

P: In faith, we'll answer the call. Amen.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Jack & Penny Holstad

Love Candle

Light the first, second and third (pink/rose) candle of the Advent wreath.

Reader: When the people were looking for deliverance, the prophet Micah declared, "But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah...from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient day." (Micah 5:2). But what if Micah is also talking to us, proclaiming, "But you, O Banning United Methodist Church, from you shall come forth for me..." What? What might God be calling forth from us?

Congregation: God invites us to receive the promise of God's salvation and the sustenance of God's mercy and grace, enabling us to live the promise as God-bearers to the world. As Christ was born in Bethlehem, so too we answer God's invitation to have Christ born among us today and every day.

Reader: We light this candle of love as a sign of our commitment to live as people of God's promise, a promise of salvation and flourishing for all people that springs forth from God's love for all creation.

Light the fourth candle of the Advent wreath.

†OPENING HYMN

"Joy to The World"

UMH #246

†OPENING PRAYER

Myrle Petty

God of ancient days and future visions, we come into Your presence to celebrate the joy of Your Holy Spirit and the blessing of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit, as You filled Elizabeth long ago. Sing through our songs of joy as You sang through Mary. Speak through our words and thoughts so we may grow closer to the justice and the peace of Christ Jesus, who calls us here today. In Christ's holy and blessed name, we pray. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Myrle Petty

Micah 5:2-5 NRSV

²But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; ⁵and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

SUNDAY ENSEMBLE

GOSPEL LESSON

Pastor Doug

Luke 1:39-55 NRSV

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." ⁴⁶And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"The Song of Faith"

Pastor Doug

PRAYERS

Pastor Doug

CHILDREN IN PRAYER (After each slide: In Your mercy, Lord, hear our prayer)

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL 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 as we forgive 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.**

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Myrle Petty

OFFERTORY

Cathy Mauge

†DOXOLOGY

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

†PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Myrle Petty

May these gifts glorify Your name, Holy One. May the ministries we support bring justice and peace to the world. May they offer faith and hope to Your people. In grateful joy, we pray. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

†CLOSING HYMN "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

UMH #230

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

†BENEDICTION

Pastor Doug

CARRYING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST OUT INTO THE WORLD

POSTLUDE