

## INVITATION TO NEXT WEEK

I invite you to join us on Christmas Eve as we celebrate the Birth of Jesus.

After worship this morning, you are invited to join us for fellowship time on Zoom. The link to join us is in the email you received with the links to this service. There are also instructions on this screen. We will gather about 10:45

You are also invited to join us on our Facebook Group Whitney United Methodist church group to chat about the service. You can join the conversation anytime.

There are many ways to connect with us even as we are physically distancing.

Our radio program Reach out and Trust broadcasts on KBXL 94.1 FM on Sunday morning at 7:30 am and 11:30 am. Today my sermon from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent will be broadcast and next Sunday it will be the sermon from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent

**May God be with us until we meet again**



*Love*  
*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent*

**WHITNEY  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
December 20, 2020      10:00 a.m.**

**Rev. Christina Thompson**

### **WELCOME**

Welcome to worship today. I am Rev. Christina Thompson, and I am pastor here at Whitney UMC. Today we celebrate the fourth Sunday of Advent, preparing our hearts for Christmas and the coming of the Christ Child. This Christ Child is the light of world that has come down into our world to show us the way of love.

## LIGHTING THE CANDLE

In this season of Advent as we wait the coming of the Christ child, I invite you to light your candle as a reminder that Christ comes as the light of the world.

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Now is the time of watching and waiting.

**People: The time of pregnant expectation of new life.**

Leader: Now is the season of hope unfolding.

**People: The dark winter season when hope is waiting to be born.**

Leader: Let us come before God with receptive and willing spirits.

**People: May our souls magnify God's name and may our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!**

**All: Rejoice! God comes to bring the birthday of life and hope.**

**Amen.**

*(Ruth Duck, Bread for the Journey, Pilgrim Press, 1981, p.18-19.)*

## ADVENT WREATH

**Fourth Sunday in Advent**

**Read Isaiah 2:3,5**

Many peoples shall come and say,  
'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob;  
that he may teach us his ways  
and that we may walk in his paths.'  
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,  
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.  
O house of Jacob,  
come, let us walk  
in the light of the LORD!

## LIGHT ALL FOUR ADVENT CANDLES

**Reader:** We light this candle as a symbol of Christ whose way is love. May the word sent from God through the prophets and to Mary, lead us to the way of Salvation. O come; O come Emmanuel.

**People:** O Come, O Come Emmanuel

response was so simple: "Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be according to your word." May her affirmation of faith and obedience be the gift we offer this day. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

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## CLOSING SONG

*Andy and Svetlana Maddox*

Love Came Down at Christmas #242

CCLI Song # 276338

Christina Georgina Rossetti | David Evans

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Music: Oxford University Press

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### Verse 1

Love came down at Christmas  
Love all lovely Love divine  
Love was born at Christmas  
Star and angels gave the sign

### Verse 2

Worship we the Godhead  
Love incarnate Love divine  
Worship we our Jesus  
But wherewith for sacred sign

### Verse 3

Love shall be our token  
Love be yours and love be mine  
Love to God and all men  
Love for plea and gift and sign

## SENDING FORTH

May we go into these last days of Advent remembering that God has made a home in each of us and we are loved and worthy of that holy presence.

## PASSING THE PEACE

May the Peace of the coming Christ be with you

**And also with you**

For those who do not have a physical house to live in, so sleep on the streets, in back of the church, in shelters, in their cars or on a loved one's couch, may they know that you are present with them wherever they are. Help us to keep working for the needs of the homeless.

**Love has come, a light in our darkness.**

For those whose memories of home are not good ones, who did not feel love from those who were supposed to love them, hold them even closer this Christmas and assure them that they are your children.

**Love has come, a light in our darkness**

For those who are alone for whatever reason. For those who will spend this Christmas without a loved one for the first time, for those who normally spend Christmas with family, but will not because of this pandemic, sit especially close and help us to experience your lovelight.

**Love has come, a light in our darkness.**

For the prayers that we only express in the quiet of our hearts.

**Love has come, a light in our darkness.**

Written by Rev. Christina based on the first line of the Hymn "Love has come".

## LORD'S PRAYER

*Rev. Dewey Knowles*

## OFFERING

Joining Mary's joyful response, our souls proclaim the greatness of the Lord, and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior. With humble and grateful hearts, let us bring our offerings to God.

The ways to give are listed there on your screen. You can mail in a check to the church or give electronically through our website. We are also collecting an advent offering, that will be split evenly between Whitey's good Samaritan fund, Interfaith Sanctuary, UMCOR and Whitney Elementary. You can contribute to this second mile giving, by writing a check to the church marked Advent giving, or on the website—use the additional principal donate button. Let us pray over the gifts that will be given.

Gracious and Generous God: We offer our gifts to you, knowing full well we have devoted so much more energy into finding the gifts for our families and much less on the gifts we offer to you. You gave Mary, an unmarried girl, a Son so the world might have a Savior. Her

## OPENING SONG

*Andy & Svetlana Maddox*

People look East 202 v.1, 2, 3

CCLI Song # 3011380

John Ferguson | Eleanor Farjeon

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### Verse 1

People look east the time is near  
Of the crowning of the year  
Make your house fair as you are able  
Trim the hearth and set the table  
People look east and sing today  
Love the guest is on the way

### Verse 2

Furrows be glad though earth is bare  
One more seed is planted there  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish  
That, in course the flower may flourish  
People look east and sing today  
Love the rose is on the way

### Verse 3

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim  
One more light the bowl shall brim  
Shining beyond the frosty weather  
bright as sun and moon together  
People look east and sing today  
Love the star is on the way

## OPENING PRAYER

(Let us pray for God to be with us. [silence])

Eternal God of heaven and earth, rivers and seas, forests and glen, mountains and valleys, but also God of city and village, freeways and highways, shopping malls, retail and online shops, time clocks and zoom meetings, classrooms, both in person and online, hospital rooms, living rooms and kitchens: There is no place where you are not, because you have come to live with us. You are here. Today. With us. Emmanuel. Amen

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## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy Child, loving Savior, we sense the coming of your birth. And yet, even in this pandemic, we feel the creeping hustle and bustle that pushes you to the side. We feel the burden of lists and obligations that drain our joy and dull our spirit. We see the flurry of holiday bargains that know not of the holy day that is to come. So, we join with the prophet Isaiah and pray, “Tear the heavens open and come down” and we pray for your forgiveness. Come and make your presence known and felt. Come and guide us through this wondrous and hectic season. Come and enter our hearts to the unexpected moments of joy. Come and bring your peace into our troubled world. Come and fill us with your patient love. Holy Child, loving Savior, come.

Hear these words of assurance of forgiveness.

The gift of Christmas is that God is coming to make the holy presence known. God has entered our hearts so that we might experience joy. Holy Child, loving savior, thank you.

## CHILDREN’S MOMENT

### SCRIPTURE

*Luke 1:26-38*

### SERMON

*Rev Christina*

‘Light of the world has come down into darkness like a candle’ This hymn sung to the tune of Bring a Torch Jeanette, Isabella, calls us to sing with joy the reminder Love has come! A light in the darkness. Love has come and will never leave us.

### SONG

*Andy and Svetlana Maddox*

Love has Come 3059 (Green Book)

CCLI Song # 2060820

Ken Bible

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### Verse 1

Love has come a light in the darkness  
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies  
See all heaven has come to proclaim it  
Hear how their song of joy arises  
Love love  
Born unto you a Savior  
Love love  
Glory to God on high

### Verse 2

Love is born come share in the wonder  
Love is God now asleep in the hay  
See the glow in the eyes of His mother  
What is the name her heart is saying  
Love love  
Love is the name she whispers  
Love love  
Jesus Immanuel

### Verse 3

Love has come He never will leave us  
Love is life everlasting and free  
Love is Jesus within and among us  
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking  
Love love  
Love is the gift of Christmas  
Love love  
Praise to You God on high

## PASTORAL PRAYER

**Love has come, a light in our darkness.**

O holy God, thank you that you have moved into our lives so that we would not have to go find you. Help us to always know that you are present.

**Love has come, a light in our darkness.**

For those who are sure that they are not worthy to have you live in their lives, fill them with the assurance of your love and mercy.

**Love has come, a light in our darkness.**