

*Tappahannock Memorial
United Methodist Church*

P. O. Box 326
345 Earl Street
Tappahannock, VA 22560

Christ is Born!



*“To all who mourn and need comfort,
to all who are tired and need rest,
to all who are lonely and need companionship,
to all who sin and need a Savior, and to all who will.
This church opens wide its doors.”*

Christmas Eve

“Calm & Bright”

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20
December 24, 2020

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Prelude

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

Welcome & Announcements

Good evening! I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I welcome you to our time of worship today. I welcome those who are present with us in the sanctuary as well as those worshipping online via our Facebook and YouTube pages. We welcome your feedback as we continue offering in person and online worship.

This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!!

Opening Hymn

“What Child Is This”

UMH # 219

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.

1. 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? **{R}**
2. Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading. **{R}**
3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
come, peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings salvation brings,
let loving hearts enthrone him. **{R}**

* Call to Worship:

Christ is here on this night of nights.

Christ is here indeed.

Christ's love has called us here.

Christ's love has bathed us in holy light.

Let's sing with the angels and celebrate with joy.

For Christmas arrives this night.

Call to Worship from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020*, pg. 278. Copyright © 2019 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

* Opening Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Light of the world, shine upon us this night. Shine in our lives, that we may shine with your love. Shine in our world, that your light may overcome all darkness and fear. Shine through our worship, that our souls may be strengthened with the power of your light and love.

In the name of love, we pray. Amen.

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Prayer of Confession

Protect us with your light, when the darkness threatens. Redeem us with your grace, when sin separates us from your presence. Pour your love upon us throughout the world, that hatred may yield to companionship, and apathy may warm to compassion.

In your mighty love, we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Confession from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020*, pp. 278-279. Copyright © 2019 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

The Declaration of Pardon

Hear the good news:

Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;

That proves God's love toward us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

Glory to God. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you!

Registration of Attendance

We are tracking our attendance, so thank you in advance to all who will let us know that you have watched or read our service this morning. Please email Cindy at tappmethodist@gmail.com, with your attendance information.

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

Please See Advent Insert

Children's Time

Scriptures

Isaiah 9:2-7

pg. 638

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Titus 2:11-14

pg. 214

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Isaiah 9:2-7 and Titus 2:11-14 from *New Revised Standard Version Bible*, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

¹O sing to the Lord a new song;

 sing to the Lord, all the earth!

²Sing to the Lord, bless God's name;

proclaim God's salvation from day to day.

³Declare the Lord's glory among the nations,

 the Lord's marvelous works among all the peoples!

⁴For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;

to be feared above all gods.

⁵For all the gods of the peoples are idols;

 but the Lord made the heavens.

⁶Honor and majesty are before the Lord;

in whose sanctuary are strength and beauty.

⁷Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,

 ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

⁸Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name!

Bring an offering, and come into the courts of the Lord!

⁹Worship the Lord in holy splendor;

tremble before the Lord, all the earth!

¹⁰Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!

The Lord has established the world, it shall never be moved.

The Lord will judge the peoples with equity."

¹¹Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

 let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

¹²let the field exult, and everything in it!

Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy

¹³**before the Lord; who comes to judge the earth.**

The Lord will judge the world with righteousness,

and the peoples with his truth.

* The Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,

world without end. Amen. Amen.

* Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

pg. 58

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who

is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Prayer

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O God our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

The Sermon

“Calm & Bright”

The Reverend Rebecca Minor

Last Christmas Eve, I looked upon those gathered in the worship service at my previous church, Heathsville UMC. As the lights were dimmed and the candles were lit, and the voices joyfully sang, “Silent Night, Holy Night. All is calm, all is bright.” the candlelight shimmered on their faces, their eyes twinkled, and their hearts were aglow. We did think that all was calm, and all was bright. Little did we know that the COVID-19 virus was already working its way into all of our lives. Here we are tonight at Christmas Eve worship, and all is so different. We can’t have communion as we normally would. We can’t light the real candles, because we can’t take our masks off to blow them out. And we acknowledge that life is not calm and bright for so many all around the world. So many people are walking in great darkness and are living in fear of if they will get sick, or if they will lose a loved one.

The story of Christmas is what we all need in our lives right now. We need to be reminded that we are not alone, and that God loves us so much that he gave his only begotten son. God has given us the greatest gift we can ever receive. Mary gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger. I know we love to sing that beloved him, but I’m sure that night of Jesus’s birth was not silent or calm. I’m sure that Mary and Joseph had their own fears or worries of how they would raise the Son of God. Mary would have been crying out as the birth pangs began, and through all of her contractions until Jesus was born. I think Jesus made a first cry like all babies do as they take their first breath outside of the womb. I would guess they were also not calm, giving birth in a cave or barn and having to lay the Son of God in a manger – a feeding trough for animals.

But still in spite of all of that, the birth of Christ brought to us all peace and joy, as Jesus Christ shines light in the darkness. As Isaiah says, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.” The Shepherds were literally watching over their flocks by night. They were surrounded by darkness when the angel of the Lord stood before them, and the Glory of the Lord shone around them. They were startled and terrified by this light that appeared in their darkness. But the angel of the Lord says, “Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” This is the message that we all need to

hear this Christmas. Do not be afraid. Don't lose hope. Don't let this virus steal the Joy that Christ brings us. The birth of Jesus ushered in redemption and salvation. Jesus Christ brings us the good news of forgiveness, mercy, and everlasting life. And this good news is not just for some. As the Angel of the Lord said, "I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people." This is good news for people of every nation, people of every race, people of all the various economic levels, and this is good news is for the righteous and the unrighteous.

I know that this virus has changed all of our lives. We are suffering. We are fearful, or anxious. There are people who are sick and are dying. There are those who will be alone tomorrow. There are thousands who will receive the news that their sibling, parent, child, or grandparent, etc. has died. To them all we pray they may sleep in heavenly peace. This Christmas might be smaller and more somber because of all of this. But I pray that our hearts will hear the good news of Jesus Christ our Savior, the Messiah of the world, and in spite of the darkness see the great light of Christ shining on us to light the way.

Every Sunday in Advent we lit a candle of the Advent wreath. We lit them to remind us that from Christ, we receive, Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. Tonight, receive that hope, love, joy and peace. But as you leave this sanctuary and go home and out into the world, be the hope, love, joy, and peace of Christ for others. After the shepherds found Jesus in the manger wrapped in bands of cloth like the angel told them they would, and after they spoke to Mary, they returned to their fields glorifying and praising God. We are invited to glorify and praise God as we receive the good news of Christ as well. As the words of "O Holy Night" say "Til he appears and the soul felt its worth, a thrill of hope the weary world rejoices." We are a weary world, but we rejoice. We rejoice and give thanks to God for all that he has done for us. It is through Christ that all is made calm and bright. He is the Son of God, loves pure light, and his birth was the dawn of redeeming grace. Receive the gift of Christ this night and receive eternal peace. Amen.

Hymn of Response

"Joy to the World"

UMH # 246

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| <p>1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.</p> <p>3. No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.</p> | <p>2. Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.</p> <p>4. He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, and wonders of his love.</p> |
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Affirmation of Faith

Apostles' Creed

UMH # 881

**I believe in God the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only son our Lord:
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.**

**the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Sharing of Our Joys & Concerns

We want to continue to pray for the healing of the nations through this pandemic. Remember those who have been in the hospital for treatments and surgeries as well as recovery from COVID 19. Remember those who are isolated with no one to interface with. Please continue to remember praying for your prayer partners, our home bound folks and those in the nursing, rehab, and assisted living facilities, for those on the front lines and doing the most necessary work. Please let us know of other prayer concerns and needs. We do have folks who are willing and able to pick up & deliver groceries and medicine.

Pastoral Prayer

{Please be sure to let the church office know of updates to our prayer list. Also insert your own prayers and let me know of ones we need to add to our prayer list.}

Holy God who brought joy to the world through the gift of your son. Tonight, we praise your name and rejoice for all that you have given to us. We know that there is nothing impossible with you, O God. We give thanks for the redemption and salvation that is offered to all people through Christ. In the midst of the pain, darkness, suffering, and death from the pandemic, we know that we are not alone. You are with us.

We pray tonight for all who are alone. We pray for those deep in grief. We pray for those without shelter. We pray for those suffering and fighting to live. We pray for the dying. We pray for the peace, healing and comfort of all of these. God open our minds and hearts to receive the gift that is Jesus Christ our Savior. Help us to celebrate the true reason for the season. Help us to be like Mary and follow in faith. Help us to be like Joseph who trusts God rather than societal norms. Help us be like the shepherds who continually praise and glorify you. And help us to be like Jesus, that we may truly love one another. Fill us with the light of Christ and use us to bring hope, love, joy, and peace to others. Hear our prayers tonight, in the name of the babe in the manger, Jesus Christ, we pray.
AMEN.

The Offering

Please remember to keep your tithes and offerings up so that the ministry of our church can continue. You may mail it to P. O. Box 326, Tappahannock, VA 22560, or use the E-Giving link available on our website at www.tappahannockmethodist.org. Again, thank you for your continued support!

The Offertory

“O Holy Night”

1. O holy night, the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary soul rejoices,
2. Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here come the wise men from the Orient land.
The King of kings lay in lowly manger,

For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees, Oh, hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!

In all our trials born to be our friend.
He knows our need, To our weakness no stranger.
Behold your King! Before the lowly bend!
Behold your King! Your King! Before him bend!

3. Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother,
And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord, Then ever, ever praise we;
His pow'r and glory ever more proclaim,
His Pow'r and glory evermore proclaim.

“O Holy Night” by John Sullivan Dwight, Kurtis Parks, and Placide Cappeau. Words: Public Domain. Music © 2014 Songs of 714 (Admin. by Moon & Musky Music). CCLI Song #7018955. CCLI License #2350408.

* **Doxology**

UMH # 95

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

A Service of Word and Table III

UMH # 15-16

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty (almighty God), creator of heaven and earth. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. In the fullness of time, you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior, and at his birth the angels sang glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem and there found no room, so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected. As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born, so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

As your Word became flesh, born of woman, on that night long ago, so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples,

and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father (God), now and for ever.

AMEN.

And now with the confidence of children of God, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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.**

The Breaking of the Bread and Offering of the Cup and Sharing in the Feast

For those gathered here in worship, we are unable to receive the elements as we normally would. After the benediction I will carry out to the narthex these blessed pre-packaged communion elements for you to take on your way out. As you receive them outside, or in your car or even if you wait until you are home, remember the life-giving sacrifice of our Lord and Savior and be prayer for unity of all believers.

I invite you that are at home to take and receive now.

The Body of Christ broken for you.

The Blood of Christ shed for you.

Amen.

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The Prayer after Communion

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us.

Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Closing Hymn

“Silent Night”

UMH # 239

1. Silent night, holy night,
all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!
3. Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.
4. Silent night, holy night,
wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

Benediction

Go to be Light.

Go to be love.

Go to bring Christmas hope to the world.

Benediction from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020*, pg. 280. Copyright © 2019 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

Postlude

“Silent Night”



Thank you for joining us in worship!

Please email the office tappmethodist@gmail.com and let us know if you listened to or read the full service, and if anyone joined you, so we may include you in our attendance count. We are also extremely interested in your feedback, including from those who attended in-person this morning.

SERVICE AND OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Today:	5:00 pm	In-Person & Live on Facebook and YouTube
	7:00 pm	In-person Only
Sun, Dec. 27:	10:00 am	1st Sunday after Christmas
		A Celebration of Carols
Wed, Dec. 30:	10:30 am	Wednesday Morning Group – Bible Study
Thu, Dec. 31:	Watch Night – New Year’s Eve	
Fri, Jan. 1:	Happy New Year!	
Sun, Jan. 3:	10:00 am	Epiphany Sunday

Pastor: The Reverend Rebecca Minor, Cell Phone: 757-870-8265

Minister of Congregational Life: The Reverend Barbara M. Jacobs

Co-Music Directors: Rob & Kelly Wright

Administrative Assistant: Cindy Huber, Cell Phone (949) 522-5204

Church: 804-443-2278 / **Church Administrative Email:** tappmethodist@gmail.com

Worship Registration Email: TMUMCWorship@gmail.com

Pastor’s Office Hours: Tue, Wed, Thu: 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Administrative Assistant’s Hours (Off Site): Mon, Wed, Fri: 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Today’s Leaders:

5 p.m. Service

Lector: Alan Jacobs

Ushers: John Harvey & Alan Jacobs

Videographer: Rodney Minor

Worship Registrar: Carol Smith

7 p.m. Service

Lector: Jeanie Loser

Ushers: John Harvey & Alan Jacobs

Videographer: N/A

Worship Registrar: Liz Russell

Special thanks to our pianist, Beth Harvey, and our soloist, Kelly Wright!

