



*CHRISTMAS EVE*  
*December 24, 2020 | 7:00 PM*  
*Newnan Presbyterian Church*  
*Newnan, Georgia*

PRELUDE

Cliff Brock

WELCOME

Rev. David Jones

A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING Froo & Tyler Brock, Jariana Cummings

Good news of great joy, the angel said, for to you a Savior is born.

Peace on earth, the choir sang, for God reigns in the highest.

Follow me, the star beckoned, for Hope was born in Bethlehem.

As we light the Christ Candle,

**We watch for the Christmas story around us.**

Emmanuel has come and is coming.

**Come, all ye faithful, and worship.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam

Winn Wise, soloist

*O holy night, the stars are brightly shining, it is the night of the dear Saviour'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 world rejoices, 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.*

*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, evermore proclaim! His pow'r and glory, evermore proclaim!*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Tyler Brock

Friends, the grace of Christ educates us so that we can live sensible, ethical, and godly lives. On this eve of his birth, we confess that we struggle to receive him still.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Great and glorious God, through Jesus Christ our Savior  
you have shown us that the blessed age of grace has  
appeared and the hoped-for time of salvation has come.**

**Yet we cling to the glories of the present age—  
worldly passions and impious pursuits, self-indulgent,  
crooked, and ungodly ways.**

**We choose to walk in darkness,  
unwilling to see the evil your light exposes.**

**Cleanse us and free us;  
break the yoke we choose to carry through Christ,  
who gave himself for us, so that we might be your people,  
holy and whole...**

*We keep a moment of silence for personal confession.*

## DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Hear this good news of great joy: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God!**

Glory to God in the highest,  
**and peace to God's people on earth.**

CAROL 112 On Christmas Night All Christians Sing, vv. 1 & 4

*On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring;  
on Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring,  
news of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.*

*All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night;  
all out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night:  
"Glory to God in highest heaven; peace on earth and goodwill. Amen!"*

## RECEIVING OF THE PEACE

Isaiah reminds us 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.

May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you!**

## A TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

Rev. Darcie Jones

## OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Isaiah 9:2-7

## GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:1-20

## CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

Hope. Peace. Joy. Love.

And today, Christ. We've been lighting these candles since December 1st in anticipation of today. And today, Christ. We light this candle tonight in celebration of a baby in a manger, born not in the throne room of the palace or even in a comfortable home in the suburbs—a baby born to a couple mired in scandal and on the run from the government. The least likely parents, in the least likely setting, and yet God chose to make the impossible possible. God decided at the beginning of creation to join us on earth that God might send a message. A message that we might not be afraid of the Emperor, or of the world around us, or of the glory of God. Instead, that we might come to understand that this vulnerable bundle of joy in this entirely unremarkable setting was a sign of how God's love would function. It would not function with military might; it would not function through intimidation or ultimatums; it would not function as it had with rules and regulations, but with grace and wonder. This infant holy, infant lowly promises an unexpected message. That God's love is available, not just for the self-proclaimed sinless or for the self-righteous rulers, but open and available even to work-weary shepherds and road-weary parents. As the light of the Christ candle shines in the darkness, it is clear to us all that no matter how much the dark surrounds us, the light cuts through to light the way.

As I was preparing for tonight, I thought about what it must have been like to witness those angels lighting up the pasture where my sheep were grazing. How terrifying it must have been at first to see the heavenly host trumpeting the good news of great joy. I mean, I remember the very first night I spent in Newnan. Our family stayed with a church member the night before the family retreat, and when we arrived in town, it was already late, but we went out in the backyard for a few minutes, and the moon shone down on us in such an awe inspiring fashion. It was enough to make us stand, slack-jawed, staring into this giant night sky, and we pondered our very place in the cosmos.

Can you imagine, if on a similar night, amid your typical job description, angels showed up with a message? That kind of fear and trembling should be reserved for children who are afraid of the dark, and yet the shepherds quaked. And even as they quaked, the angels began to speak and to comfort them - do not be afraid! God is even now making the impossible possible. Do not fear, the love of God has arrived - go and see, revel in the glory of the babe, born on this silent night to change the world that God's love might be shared with all.

Fear is a weird thing in 2020. Are we afraid of catching COVID? Just as likely, are we worried that we might spread COVID to someone we love or to someone more vulnerable? Perhaps we aren't afraid of COVID at all, but more fearful of the potential social anarchy that seems possible as we witness our American brothers and sisters hoard basic staples such as toilet paper and cleaning supplies. Or if not the fear of social niceties like enough TP to go around, we may find ourselves afraid of other people - avoiding them, pardon the pun - as if they had the plague. Many of us have seen videos of folks intentionally coughing or sneezing on others in an effort to exhibit strength or violence. For once, our fears seem to be grounded in more reality than usual. My sermons this year feel like one long rant against fear and in favor of hope. But what does hope look like when we are waiting for the medicine to make being around each other safe again?

The well-known pastor and preacher, Tom Long, tells a story of a Christmas pageant where one of the boys not known for his acting or speaking abilities was cast, somewhat reluctantly as the innkeeper. But the pastor assured the director that this boy needed simply a chance to shine. And so it was that the innkeeper's parts were adjusted just a bit to make it a little easier for the young man to memorize the lines...or should I say the line: "There is no room in the inn" was all the young man would have to internalize. And as his part in the play drew ever closer, the director could tell that fear was settling in on the boy. A stage fright that was common to most of the children, but she reminded him of his line, and he recited it backstage and seemed to calm down. The time came for the young Mary and Joseph to knock on the makeshift cardboard door of the church stage production, and the boy turned innkeeper bellowed out confidently: There is no room at the inn.

Now what happened next was unexpected, for the young girl and boy playing the natal family instead of heading right over to the barn scene ad-libbed the lines: but we have no other place to stay. The young innkeeper, not prepared for this, looked around for assistance, but none was to be found. What should he say, what should he do? True to their casting, Mary and Joseph were good actors, and the sadness on their faces was not lost on the amateur innkeeper, and as they walked away, their heads bowed dramatically, the young, fearful innkeeper blurted out: "don't go away, you can sleep in my room."

There is plenty to fear in this world. Our closest friends might do worse by us than our unknown neighbors, our savings might go away forever, and the political process might threaten our security, we might get COVID, or we might give it to someone we love, but in the face of that fear, what will we do and what will we say? Friends, we must remember that there is good news as well. While the need for charity is up this year, so is the willingness to give among non-profit contributors all over the country. Even here in Newnan, our participation in helping our neighbors eat, drink, and stay warm is alive and well. Just this month, our congregation, despite most of us not entering the church building, donated almost \$3000 to support the girls at Angel's house. And in November, we raised over \$5000 to give to One Roof for Thanksgiving meals. The good news of Christmas Eve is that even unexpected situations can be approached with a trembling grace that began in a manger so long ago. May we not be afraid of the world around us, but rather inspired in the face of whatever fears do exist, to reach out and offer the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. Merry Christmas.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Sweet Little Jesus Boy  
Lynn Huffstickler, soloist

Robert MacGimsey

*Sweet little Jesus boy, born in a manger. Sweet little Holy child, we didn't know who you were.  
Long time ago it seems you were born; born in a manger Lord, sweet little Jesus boy.*

*Didn't know You'd come to save us all to take our sins away.  
Our eyes were blind we did not see we didn't know who You were.*

*You have shown us how and we are trying; Master you have shown us how even as you were dying.  
This world treats you mean Lord, treats me mean too,  
but that's how things are done down here. We didn't know it was you.*

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

On this silent night, God is with you.

**God is also with you.**

On this holy night, God's grace comes to us.

**Our hearts rejoice in his becoming one of us,  
That we might become one with God.**

On this Night of nights, the shadows of the world  
Melt away before God's light.

**We join the choirs of angels in singing to the universe  
The good news of the birth of Jesus.**

Sanctus

...and with your people in every time and place, caroling the good news which is ours:

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing...  
Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy...*

Memorial Acclamation

...we also speak of that mystery we call faith:

**Christ was born, that we might have life with you.  
Christ came, that we might find our way back to you.  
Christ became one of us, so we might become more like him.**

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 debts as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,  
for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Carol 146 Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

*Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;  
there he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.  
Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?  
Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.*

*Angels sang about his birth; wise men sought and found him;  
heaven's star shone brightly forth, glory all around him.  
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;  
all the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ringing.*

*Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;  
he is still the undefiled, but no more a stranger.  
Son of God, of humble birth, beautiful the story;  
praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!*

Post Communion Prayer

CAROL 122 Silent Night, Holy Night!

*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.*

*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.*

*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

*Worship Participants*  
Rev. David Jones, Pastor  
Rev. Tyler Brock, Associate Pastor  
Rev. Darcie Jones, Children's Coordinator  
Cliff Brock, Choirmaster  
Lalla McGee, Cantor  
Winn Wise, Soloist  
Lynn Huffstickler, Soloist  
Worship AV Support Team

*The poinsettias in the sanctuary are given  
to the Glory of God  
and in loving honor and memory of the following people:*

**In Memory**

Our parents  
Barbara & Sam Killebrew and  
Vera & Van Richardson  
Our son Nathan Bailey  
J.L. Weddington, III,  
Jamie & Jim Weddington,  
Helen & Laren Anderson  
Granny & Sally  
Mr. & Mrs. Gordon W. Thomas  
Mona Swindlehurst  
  
Tinha Anderson, Doris McGee and  
Paul Bailey Suggett  
Our parents,  
Mrs. Regina Lee  
Wingo Avery  
William and Marjorie Lumm and  
Ed and Barbara Flannigan  
David Allen Jones, Sr.

**In Honor**

Mary Weddington  
Rev. Tyler Brock and Cliff Brock  
My parents Jannie & Gene Kohen  
Diana Alverson  
Jane & Bill Berry and  
Millie & Bob Coggin

**Given By:**

Pat & Steve Williams  
Marianne & Van Richardson  
  
Melinda & Michael Bailey  
Jane & Andy Anderson  
  
Sophia McCracken & Harry Camp  
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Camp  
Erik Swindlehurst, Greg Shivers  
and Abby Shivers  
Lalla & John McGee  
  
Millie & Bob Coggin  
  
Jackie Avery  
Carol & Buzz Flannigan  
  
Darcie, David, Laney & Trey Jones

**Given By:**

Jane & Andy Anderson  
The Craver Family  
Kay Huffstickler  
Millie & Bob Coggin  
Jackie Avery

*\*Please plan to pick up poinsettias from the Church Office, Monday-Wednesday of next week. Thank you.*

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[www.newnanpres.org](http://www.newnanpres.org)

*Organized in 1828  
Surrounded by so great  
a cloud of witnesses.*

