

**MAPLEWOOD
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**



LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH CANDLE OF ADVENT

Congregational Response:

Teach us to love, O Lord. May we always know your love and show it to others. As we prepare for our celebration of Jesus' birth, fill our hearts with love for the world, that all may know of your love and the One whom you have sent, your son, our Savior. Amen.

HYMN *Love Has Come*

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!

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, Emmanuel.

O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

Love has come, and 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!

INVITATION TO REFLECTION

Prepare the way of the Lord!
Let every heart prepare him room!
Let us open our lives to the coming of the Lord.



ADVENT PRAYER OF PREPARATION

**Gracious God of love,
our hearts desire the warmth of your love,
and our minds are searching
for the light of your Word—
to us personally, and to the world.
Increase our longing for Christ, our Savior,
and give us the strength to grow in love,
that the dawn of his coming may find us
rejoicing in his presence
and welcoming
the light of his truth.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord.**

(time for silent prayer and reflection)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE—from Isaiah 40:1

*Comfort, comfort now my people, says your God.
Beloved, know this:
Your sins are forgiven.
The Lord, Emmanuel, abides with you.
The peace announced by the angels is at hand.*

Thanks be to God!

PRAYERS OF PEACE

Pray the peace of Christ for family and loved ones,
neighbors and acquaintances,
friends and enemies,
people and places around the world.

RESPONSE *Christ, Be Our Light*

Refrain:

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts,
shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine on your church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

[Refrain]

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

[Refrain]

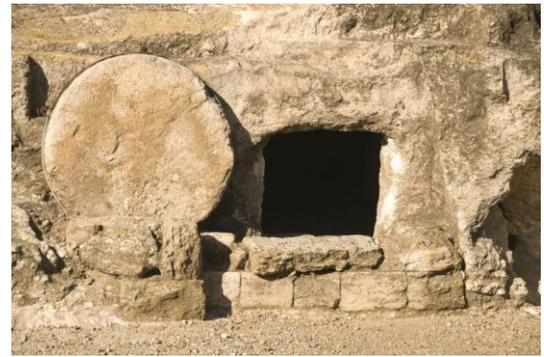
Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.

[Refrain]

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

[Refrain]

MESSAGE *Salvation by Surprise*



HYMN *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary
And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to all on earth!

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given.
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!



**PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE
AND THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Let us pray for all in need this day, and for our world,
especially at this time of coronavirus pandemic...

OFFERING

DOXOLOGY

*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 DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

In this moment of prayer, we proclaim again your kingdom purpose for the world, loving God, and we offer to you our resources. Use us—all that we have and all that we are—to touch the world with the Christmas message: God is love. God is with us. God will never leave us. Through Christ the Lord. Amen.

CAROL *Lift up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
behold, the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near;
the Savior of the world is here!

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come! I open wide
My heart to thee; here, Lord, abide.
Let me thy inner presence feel;
thy grace and love in me reveal.

BENEDICTION

May the grace of Christ attend you,
The love of God surround you,
And the Holy Spirit keep you,
That you may live in faith,
Abound in hope,
And grow in love,
Now and forevermore.
And all of God's people said, Amen!



*"As the Father has sent me, so I send you."
- John 20:21*

Abraham the father of Isaac,
Isaac the father of Jacob,
Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,
Judah the father of Perez and Zerah,
whose mother was Tamar,
Perez the father of Hezron,
Hezron the father of Ram,
Ram the father of Amminadab,
Amminadab the father of Nahshon,
Nahshon the father of Salmon,
Salmon the father of Boaz,
whose mother was Rahab,
Boaz the father of Obed,
whose mother was Ruth,
Obed the father of Jesse,
Jesse the father of King David.
David the the father of Solomon,
whose mother had been Uriah's wife,
Solomon the father of Rehoboam,
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,
Abijah the father of Asa,
Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,
Jehoram the father of Uzziah,
Uzziah the father of Jotham,
Jotham the father of Ahaz,
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,
Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,
Manasseh the father of Amon,
Amon the father of Josiah,
Josiah the father of Jeconiah
Jeconiah the father of Shealtiel,
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,
Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,
Abihud the father of Eliakim,
Eliakim the father of Azor,
Azor the father of Zadok,
Zadok the father of Akim,
Akim the father of Elihud,
Elihud the father of Eleazar,
Eleazar the father of Matthan,
Matthan the father of Jacob,
Jacob the father of Joseph,
the husband of Mary,
Mary the mother of Jesus,
who is called the Messiah.