

Bible Reading for December 27

Luke 2:22-40 Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Psalm 148

Discussion Questions

• *High expectations at Christmas time are common. Sometimes we are disappointed or let down when things don't turn out as we had hoped. There is still so much to celebrate, but life feels like it must return to "normal." Reading the passage from Luke, do you bear the joy in the words of Simeon? What expectations did he have for God?*

As you ponder these things in preparation for Sunday, I would love to hear what God is saying to you. Call me in the church office at 256-353-6941 or email me at miriam@centralunitedmethodist.com.



Love GOD



Love OTHERS



SERVE the World



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More Love

Matthew 1:18-25
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

December 20, 2020
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Musical Gift

Welcome and Announcements

Advent Wreath

Richard and Susan Bedsole

*O come, Desire of nations bind
all peoples in one heart and mind.
From dust thou brought us forth to life;
deliver us from earthly strife.*

"Our souls magnify the Lord and our spirits rejoice in God for God has looked with favor on us, God's servants." "God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly. God has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty." God of Love, God of Peace, we open our hearts to you. Give us grace to be instruments of your righteousness. Give us courage to turn away from distractions and distortions and turn toward the home you have made, are making, and will complete through Christ.

We, God's people, sing songs of joy with the prophet, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God." (Isaiah 61:10, NRSV)

On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we light this candle of love, turning with courage toward the One who makes a home among us.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Prayers of the People

Rev. Miriam Smith

**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 for ever. Amen.**

Anthem

Away in a Manger (Cradle Song)

Bible Reading — Matthew 1:18-25

Rev. Miriam Smith

—[Prayer]

**Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit,
that, as the Scriptures are read and your Word proclaimed,
we may hear with joy what you say to us today. Amen.**

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Message — “More Love”

Rev. Miriam Smith

Closing Hymn #240

Brooks

- 1.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.**
- 2.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!**
- 3.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.**

Benediction

Musical Gift

† *Away in a Manger (Cradle Song)* arranged by WJ Kirkpatrick.

CCLI # 2306531

Welcome!

We are so happy to be here together! Here are a few guidelines for how we can worship safely together:

Please stay seated until the ushers come to guide you out of the Sanctuary. If you would like to make your offering while you are here today, there is an offering plate by the door. You may also continue to give using our website or by mailing a check.

In order to help keep everyone safe, please take your bulletins and any trash with you when you leave.

This service will be livestreamed on YouTube and a recording will be posted on social media for watching at a later time.