



IN JOINT FELLOWSHIP

*Sustaining a vibrant and growing congregation through Christian spiritual transformation,  
making our work and the church relevant and visible.*

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## Angels Among Us: #Do Not Be Afraid



***“#moretrust”***

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November 21, 2021  
Second Sunday of Advent  
*Celebration of Divine Worship*

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WELCOME

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, *Pastor*

INTROIT

“May God Grant You a Blessing”

LMUMC Hand Bells

OPENING PRAYER and SUNG RESPONSE *[responsive]*

Laurel Williams

There are angels among us that may not meet the eye  
There are messages of trust coming from a choir on high  
But don't just look up:  
for the way God works  
is to plant more trust right here on earth  
just like it was with Jesus' birth.  
There are angels among us,  
there are angels among us,  
bringing trust on earth.

Holy Living God, Blessed Jesus, Guiding Spirit,  
*alight within us your flames of trust this day.*

Grant us openness to hear your message.

*Grant us courage to be your messengers in the world,  
creating more trust in the midst of fear.*

(WDS; *Angels Among Us: Do Not Be Afraid*)

Sung Response

He Came Down

TFWS 2085 (adapt.)

*He came down that we may have trust;  
He came down that we may have trust;  
He came down that we may have trust,  
Hallelujah forevermore.*

## A SONG, SCRIPTURE AND A PRAYER

Opening Song

God Almighty, We Are Waiting

W&S 3047

- 1. God Almighty, we are waiting for a savior to appear.  
Meet us in our desert journey; give a sign that you are near:  
burning bushes, parted waters, food aplenty in the wild.  
As we look for signs and wonders, help us see you in a child.*
- 2. God Incarnate, we are waiting for the feast day of your birth.  
Looking back and looking forward to the Christ's return to earth.  
Help us to proclaim the gospel, 'til the world is reconciled.  
Let us set your holy table for each woman, man, and child.*
- 3. God, the Spirit, we are waiting for your presence here and now.  
Humbled by our sinful weakness, at your mercy we will bow.*

*Search our hearts and make us ready, speak in language strong and mild,  
help each one of us, your people, to receive you like a child.*

## Scripture

Genesis 21:9-20 (CEB)

Margaret LeWright

Sarah saw Hagar's son laughing, the one Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham. So, she said to Abraham, "Send this servant away with her son! This servant's son won't share the inheritance with my son Isaac."

This upset Abraham terribly because the boy was his son. God said to Abraham, "Don't be upset about the boy and your servant. Do everything Sarah tells you to do because your descendants will be traced through Isaac. But I will make of your servant's son a great nation too, because he is also your descendant." Abraham got up early in the morning, took some bread and a flask of water, and gave it to Hagar. He put the boy in her shoulder sling and sent her away.

She left and wandered through the desert near Beer-sheba. Finally, the water in the flask ran out, and she put the boy down under one of the desert shrubs. She walked away from him about as far as a bow shot and sat down, telling herself, I can't bear to see the boy die. She sat at a distance, cried out in grief, and wept.

God heard the boy's cries, and God's messenger called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "Hagar! What's wrong? Don't be afraid. God has heard the boy's cries over there. Get up, pick up the boy, and take him by the hand because I will make of him a great nation." Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well. She went over, filled the water flask, and gave the boy a drink. God remained with the boy; he grew up, lived in the desert, and became an expert archer.

## Scriptural Response

*Comfort Ye My People/Every Valley Shall Be Exalted* G.F. Handel

From "Messiah"

Taylor Thompson, Tenor

## Prayers of the People

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, *Pastor*

### The Lord's Prayer

Ecumenical Version (UMH 894)

\*Please feel free to use the name of your choice for God that speaks to your soul.

Our \*Creator in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

## HOLY COMMUNION

### Prayer of Confession and Resolve *[responsive]*

Margaret LeWright & Laurel Williams

We are blessed when we trust in God, but too often we offer our loyalty to idols. We are blessed when we see each other as family, but we prefer to see them as strangers, even enemies. So, let us come with our prayers to the One who loves without reservation and offers compassion without conditions. Join us as we pray, saying,

*We must admit, Loving God, that if faith is a trust which cannot be confirmed, it is easier not to trust. Or if faith is the gut feeling that hope is just around the corner, we prefer to keep our eyes*

*closed. And surely, if faith is to be lived out in difficult moments, we often leave it behind at home.*

*Call us into your backyard, God of wonder, to point up to the stars and remind us that we cannot begin to imagine, or count, how many times you will forgive us. Give us the trust to have faith in you, the faith to hope in you, and the assurance you will surround us with the grace, hope, and wonder shared with us through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.*

*Thom Shuman*

## TIME OF SILENCE FOR PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND HOPE

### Assurance of Grace

Rev. Pamela Kurtz, *Pastor*

Like our grandparents in the faith, we can dare to trust in the promises of God, even without any actual proof staring us in the face. This is the good news of God's love.

We will trust in those things that last, in the grace, which counts, in the mercy no one can take away from us. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

*Thom Shuman*

### Passing the Peace

*As forgiven people Living in the season of waiting,  
let us share peace with our siblings in the world!*

## SHARING IN COMMUNION OF THE BREAD AND CUP

### MESSAGE

#### “Angels Among Us: #moretrust”

Rev. Pamela L. Kurtz, *Pastor*

### RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Surely the Presence of the Lord UMH 328

*Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place;  
I can feel God's mighty power and God's grace.  
I can feel the brush of angels' wings, I see glory on each face;  
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.*

## LIVING AS THE CHURCH, GRATITUDES, OFFERINGS

### Offering Time

### Offering Words

### THANKSGIVING SONG

God is Good, All the Time [Vs. 5]

W&S 3026

*God is good, God is good all the time.  
God is good, God is good all the time.  
As our thanks and our praise now we raise,  
God is good, God is good all the time.*

### CLOSING SONG

View the Present Through the Promise W&S 3048

*1. View the present through the promise, Christ will come again.  
Trust despite the deep'ning darkness, Christ will come again.*

*Lift the world above its grieving, through your watching and believing  
In the hope past faith's conceiving, Christ will come again.*

*2. Probe the present with the promise, Christ will come again.  
Let your daily actions witness, Christ will come again.  
Let your loving and your giving and your justice and forgiving  
Be a sign to all the living, Christ will come again.*

*3. Match the present to the promise, Christ will come again.  
Make this hope your guiding premise, Christ will come again.  
Pattern all your calculating and the world you are creating  
To the advent you are waiting, Christ will come again.*

## CLOSING PRAYER (unison)

*God who sees us and hears us in our times of need, especially when we've been mistreated or we  
find ourselves in the desert and feeling we can't go on; grant us we pray the faith, strength, and  
courage we need to go forward in life with renewed trust, hope, deeper faith, and stronger love.  
We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.*

*Rev. Doug Scalise*

## POSTLUDE

*Fanfare*  
Jim Meredith, *organ*

(from "Watermusic" by G. F. Handel)

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