



**St. Andrew
Presbyterian Church
of Aptos**

Rev. Anne McAnelly, Pastor
Dr. Don Adkins, Music Director

9850 Monroe Avenue
Aptos CA 95003
Phone 831 688-4211
aptospres@gmail.com
www.aptospresbyterianchurch.org

10:30 A.M.

✠ Fourth Sunday of Advent ✠
Bethlehem: A Place of Humility

December 22, 2024

WE SET OFF

** Please stand in body or in spirit.*

*GATHERING SONG

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

GtG 104

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight!
O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast,
to do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me;
your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.
O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace in love,
all loves excelling, our lost and fallen race.

You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill,
to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still.
In patient expectation we live for that great day
when your renewed creation your glory shall display.

A WORD OF WELCOME AND RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP

LIGHT FOR THE JOURNEY (*Sung by all*) Led by

Stan Cowan

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.

The journey continues, and this candle will help light our way.

We are on our way to more love.

So many are in need of grace, in need of loving acceptance.

We are a people who can bring Good News.

Stories of generosity are markers and signs that
goodness is the nature of God.

God's light goes before us, we are not alone.

We re on our way
We re on our way
Dream of the day
When love holds sway
With all the earth
In all our hearts
We re on our way
This is the day.

OPENING PRAYER AND WORDS OF ASSURANCE

THE PEACE

*HYMN

Love Has Come

GtG #110

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.

Love has come and 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!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Sharing Joys and Concerns

Song of prayer: Prepare the Way of the Lord (GtG 95 2x)

Travel the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord.

And all people will see the salvation of our God.

Prayers lifted to God

The Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

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.

ANTHEM

Bethlehem Wind

Choir

THE PLACE AND ITS MESSAGE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (*unison*)

Speak to us, Lord.

Speak to us in the waiting, the watching,

the hoping, the longing,

the sorrow, the sighing, the rejoicing.

Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days,

and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Romans 13:8-11

NT page #162

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet'; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers;

VIDEO JOURNEY

SECOND LESSON

Luke 2:1-14

NT page# 58

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her

child. And 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.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

SERMON

Bethlehem: A Place of Humility

The Rev. Anne McAnelly

WHAT WE SEE CHANGES US

OFFERING: Gifts along the way

Doxology (unison) Tune, Away in a Manger

**Praise God for these gifts that we offer today
and bless them for good in the world, this we pray.
Praise Jesus, the Christ-Child, our Hope and our Stay,
the Spirit, our Keeper, our Guide on the Way.**

MOVING ON

*HYMN

Angels We Have Heard on High

GtG#113

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

BENEDICTION

Choral response after Benediction (*unison*)

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray,
cast our out fear, and draw us near; 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.

We're on our way
We're on our way
Dream of the day
When love holds sway
With all the earth
In all our hearts
We're on our way
This is the day.

The service of worship ends, the service of neighbor and world begins!

Our Advent series was written by Dr. Marcia McFee from Worship Design Studios. It is based on On the Way to Bethlehem, by Rev. Rob Fuquay.

TODAY'S WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

LITURGIST:	Myles Billheimer
GREETER:	Susan Cummins
COFFEE HOST:	Sharon and David Allshouse
COUNTER:	Erik Ottem



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Tuesday, December 24th at 5:30 pm

Our St. Andrew Community invites family and friends to participate in this festive evening of music and worship.

Advent Book Study- On the Way to Bethlehem by Rob Fuquay. Our advent book study will conclude Dec. 23, at 1:00 pm as we discuss Chapter 4: Bethlehem: A Place of Humility and Chapter 5: Persia Place of Return.

The office will be closed Wednesday – Friday this week. Merry Christmas!



We will be starting our next study on January 6 at 1:00 on Zoom. We will be looking at the Horizon's study on Justice. The title is Let Justice Roll Down God's Call to Care For Neighbors and All Creation. The Cost is \$10. Please contact the office to sign up for a Book. I hope you can join us in the new year as we look at ways to care for our world and each other.