

Star maker

“When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers which you have ordained, the moon and the stars that you have established; What are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?... Yet, Thy dost crown us with Thy glory and honor. ” — Psalm 8:3

This Advent settle yourself below the stars or at least imagine yourself there and consider your place. Be nestled below the arch of the sky strung with stars and the deepness of dark. Get a good glimpse of the Holy.

During Advent ponder what an advent is. Advent, adventus simply said, means something is coming. In this case, it is not the advent of the new iPhone or the trendiest fashion. It is the chance for hope, peace, joy and love to break open. We will always think, wonder and wait. Yet, we have a God who wonders with us as far and as deep and as high as we wander and yet, sees our place of importance regardless of our wavering. Way before we got to our wondering, the power of tender kindness and deep compassion swooped, held humanity fast and cradled us all into the infinite bright lights who would somehow become the descendants Abraham dreamed for one ancient starry night. Eugene Peterson describes this as living into life. “Live into this,” he urges. “This is what it looks like to be human in this God-made and God-ruled world; this is what is involved in becoming and maturing as a human being. We don't have to fit into pre-fabricated moral and mental or religious boxes before we are admitted into the company of God. We are taken seriously just as we are and given place in his story — for it is, after all, God's story.”

God’s unfolding narrative is as old as those starry skies. We sometimes have an opportunity to witness to the Creator’s capacity to cast rays on most anyone near the Light of the world. In enters Charles Dickens, an activist who illuminated social reform by reaching a class of prosperous people who at the time viewed poverty as a faulty flaw. For Charles it was not the stillness nor the starry night that caused him to

see God, but the light of strong human faces hanging with the age-old shadows of want and waste of potential.

While strolling the dark streets of London for 15 to 20 miles nightly, Dickens was concerned with plummeting book sales and a fifth child on the way. It’s thought that scenes of A *Christmas Carol* came alive here, among the poorest of the poor. The streets filled with ragged people were real to Dickens as was the injustice. After an 1843 speech, Dickens threw away the idea of using politically charged pamphlets to call for social reform, instead using his imagination. A *Christmas Carol* was printed and intentionally sold where people of means bought hundreds of copies. “Ragged Schools” and a safe house for women opened, Urania Cottage saved women from the streets and child the 1844 Factories Act decreed children 9 to 13 years old would have their work days reduced to 9 hours, 6 days a week. “This was regarded as a humane reform.”

A *Christmas Carol* lights stages even today, shedding light in new places and spotlighting hearts that break open to a gentler world rewritten with hope, peace, joy and love is the advent of Christmas and uniquely God’s. The birth and life of Jesus illuminates the first Advent and as Dickens is quoted, “It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child Himself.” A child who is the founder of humanity, of those mammoth light shows across a night sky and of bold, compassionate ways that shape the very lives we live and pray. “When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers which you have ordained, the moon and the stars that you have established; What are human beings that you are mindful of them? It’s Advent.” Amen. — JJ

Prayer at WBLUMC: One of the ways our church helps to nourish and support the hungers of life is through prayer. If you have a special need or celebration that could use extra care, we invite you to partake in one of these prayer avenues. If your spirit has the need to support others through prayer, we invite you to join in one of the teams. **The Prayer Team:** If you would like to request a prayer of this team, please write it on a prayer request card, or contact Julie Jacot at 651-777-3728, ljjacot@q.com. **The Email Prayer Chain** accepts email requests via a call or email to a pastor or the email prayer chain lead, Ronda Nelson, at rondalauva2@msn.com. **The Phone Prayer Chain** is organized through the UMW. Call Eva Shipley if you would like to request a prayer at 651-429-3570.

STAFF		
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Brooke Heerwald Steiner , Associate Pastor John McBride , Associate Pastor	John Koziol, Jr. Director of Music Matthew Goinz , Chancel Choir Director	



9am Worship Communion Sunday, Dec. 3, 2017

HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE; PLEASE SEE USHERS • PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE

First Sunday in Advent

WORDS FOR MEDITATION

“When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water.

And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light. For a time

I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.”

~ Wendell Berry, “The Peace of Wild Things” in *The Selected Poems of Wendell Berry*

PRELUDE

“I’ll Go Tell Elizabeth”
by Ken Medema
Carrie Sinclair & John Koziol

“Breath of Heaven”
by Amy Grant
Jenny Ekman, Lisa Draves & John Koziol

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP
“Christmas Pasticcio”
arr. by Boude Moore
Bell Trio: Joy Ballou, Rick Flynn, Carrie Sinclair

+OPENING WORDS (responsively)
Let us hear the invitation of the prophet Isaiah:
Come, let us go up to God’s holy mountain,
that we may learn to walk in all God’s ways,
for God will judge between the nations,
and shall decide for many peoples,
and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.
Let us come before God to learn the ways of peace. Amen.

+OPENING HYMN
“People Look East”

Winter welcome

“Green is the color of the world, and that from which its loveliness arises.” ~ Pedro Calderon de la Barca

The south urns are given in honor of Oliver Walkingstick by friends who love Connie Catlin and remember Oliver. Might the loveliness of this memorable man and friendship arise.

Sunday, Dec. 3

9-10am—Worship; Sunday school and nursery

10am—Coffee, tea and treats, Fellowship Hall

Individual prayer, prayer room

10:45-11:30am—Worship; nursery

2-6pm—Holiday Breads class, Fellowship Hall

Monday, Dec. 4

10am—Hang Loose Women’s Al-Anon, room 206

3:30-5pm—Bell Trio rehearsal, sanctuary

6:30-8pm—Redemption of Scrooge class, room 200

Tuesday, Dec. 5

10:30am-noon—Staff meeting, room 206

6pm—Yoga Devotion, Fellowship Hall

6pm—Worship Committee meeting, library

Wednesday, Dec. 6

6-6:30pm—Children’s Choir, room 205

6-7:15pm—Alleluia Ringers, sanctuary

6-7:15pm—Youth Solid Ground shopping, offsite

6:30pm—Children & Youth activities

7:30-9pm—Chancel Choir rehearsal

Thursday, Dec. 7

7:10am—Men’s Breakfast Group, library

10am—Pages of Wisdom, room 107

10:30am—Open the Door class, library

11:30am-1pm—Up All Night meeting, room 200

Saturday, Dec. 9

7:30am—Men’s Prayer Group, room 200

9:30am-12pm—UMW: Ornaments We Remember,
Fellowship Hall

10am—Women’s Breakfast group, room 200

Sunday, Dec. 10:

9-10am—Worship; Sunday school and nursery

10am—Coffee, tea and treats, Fellowship Hall

Individual prayer, prayer room

10:45-11:30am—Worship; nursery

WHITE BEAR LAKE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Visit wblumc.org for weekly sermon podcasts, the church calendar and programming details.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Sunday:	9am to 12pm
Monday:	9am to 3pm
Tuesday:	9am to 3pm
Wednesday:	9am to 3pm
Thursday:	9am to 3pm
Friday:	9am to 12pm
Saturday:	CLOSED

SUNDAY BULLETIN

Please email information to office@wblumc.org by **noon on Tuesdays**. Most events require a two-week lead time, but the earlier you get us the information, the more time we have to get the word out.

WEEKLY E-BLAST

To receive our weekly email update, call 651-429-9026 or email office@wblumc.org. Please submit church-related events or announcements by **3pm Wednesdays**. All e-blast and bulletin information is subject to staff approval.

LIFESOURCE

If you’re part of a group or ministry that plans to hold a church event this in 2018, we want to help you spread the word. Photos from repeating events would be great! Please email info and photos to Lauri at office@wblumc.org.

'Tis the season to gather & celebrate!

Lessons & Carols

WBLUMC INVITES
YOU TO A SPECIAL
MUSICAL EVENT

Sunday, Dec. 17

Peter Mayer, nationally known folk singer & songwriter, will perform music focused on Advent, Solstice and New Year at the 10:45am service — with a special appearance at 9am, singing with the Children’s and Chancel choirs!

All are welcome, please bring a guest.

Sunday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve worship

Donations of non-perishable food for the White Bear Area Emergency Food Shelf are encouraged at all four of our Christmas Eve services. We’ll also take a special Christmas offering to support the programs and resources at the food shelf.

10am: Worship unplugged — A simple service with carol singing accompanied by piano and guitar.

3pm: Family worship will be a shorter service of carols and visuals for our most wiggly and energetic friends.

5pm: A service of carols led by the music team.

10pm: A traditional service of carols and candle-lighting featuring the choir.

New Year’s Eve worship

We’ll have one service at 10am on **Sunday, Dec. 31**. Featuring the children’s storybook *The Cloud Spinner* by Michael Catchpool, our morning message will talk about how we can make 2018 a year of healing and hope.





Advent Sundays Sermon Series

Transforming our *Bah! Humbug!* world into one of peace, love, joy and hope this Advent.

Dec. 3 — The Remembrance of Christmas Past

Dec. 10 — The Life of Christmas Present

Dec. 17 — Lessons & Carols with Peter Mayer

Dec. 24 — The Hope of Christmas Future

Adult Faith Advent Class

6:30-8pm Mondays, Nov. 27-Dec. 18

Discover the teachings of Jesus in the words of the Charles Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol*. Rediscover and reinvigorate your faith this Advent and Christmas season and look at this familiar classic through the lens of faith. Class will meet in room 200, led by Pastor John McBride.

Solid Ground shopping

Students in grades 6-12, their families and mentors are invited to shop for Solid Ground's Santa Shop **Wednesday, Dec. 6**, 6:15-7:30pm. Deadline is today to sign up with Linnea Uhler.

ASP 2018

Appalachia Service Project will be **July 21-29** in Kentucky. Students completing grades 9-12 and college students are invited to serve. Register at wblumc.org/ministries/youth. First meeting will be at the end of January.

Stories, Songs & Sparkles

Pre-K through fifth-graders will meet in the kids' theater downstairs for songs, stories of the Nativity, and sparkly ornament crafts for 9am Sunday school starting today.

December break

Remember, there will be no Wednesday night activities for children and youth — including Children's Choir — on Dec. 20 and 27, resuming on Jan. 3. Also, after a break on Sundays Dec. 24 and 31, Sunday school will return on Dec. 7.

Pledge card reminder

If you missed Pledge Day, you can still turn in your card. You'll find them in your pew or on the welcome table. We use the card to help track giving, so we need yours even if you've already pledged online. Thank you for your generous commitment so we can continue to provide nourishment for the hungers of life.

Thank you

From Connie Catlin: "Thank you for all of your support — your presence, prayers, kind words, hugs, cards, texts, calls, visits, food, memorials, memories —surrounding Oliver's death. I am so blessed by this amazing community."

UMW WINTER PROGRAM: The Ornaments We Remember

Childhood memories of Christmas often revolve around the tree and its ornaments. Each year we take out ornaments that remind us of special memories and stories of Christmases past. This year's UMW Winter Program will bring those memories to life on **Saturday, Dec. 9, at 9:30am**, starting with brunch followed by stories of your favorite or most memorable Christmas ornament or decora-



tion. All are welcome —bring an ornament and share your story, if you wish. Please bring new socks and underwear (men, women,

children, in all sizes) to donate to God's Closet. Instead of an auction this year, crafts from the 2017 Harvest Market will be available for free-will donations that will go to the White Bear Area Emergency Food Shelf.

Sign up in the Narthex or contact Eva Shipley for more information at shipley.41@comcast.net.



Thank-you and bookmark sale

Feedback from staff during the recent book fair at Willow Lane Elementary commented on the joy of students holding a book of their own for the first time, several needing reminders that it was time to "stop reading for now."

Today is Faith in Action's third annual bookmark sale, before and between services. Bookmarks are available for a free-will offering. Please remember that each donation represents a book in a child's hand. More than 225 students and 13 classes were served at our recent book fair. Thanks to each of you for supporting this program that encourages young children to read.

42nd Wild Game dinner

The 2018 Men's Club Wild Game Dinner will be **Monday, Jan. 15**. Join us for delicious and interesting dishes prepared by WBLUMC members. The event will start at 6pm with appetizers, followed by the main dishes and speaker Chris Niskanen, DNR communications director. Chris was previously the outdoor writer for the St. Paul Pioneer Press and published articles for numerous other outdoors publications and has published two outdoors-related books. Chris also organizes fishing river trips in Alaska, which he'll talk about in addition to current conservation issues.

The dinner depends on the donations of fish and game from our members and friends. There will be sign-up sheets in Fellowship Hall by early December for fish and game donations and attendance at this fun event. Please contact Paul Dickson, Al Rausch or Jeff Olson if you have any questions.