

I wait

Envisioning what might come next is something humanity pursues. While it is purposeful to plan, we envision spring even though it's barely winter, we envision our children grown when they are in the midst of developing and we imagine a life retired because we can't clearly see our contributions. Christmas can coax us into a glossy illusion as we wait for what we individually and collectively see lunging around the calendar corner. The future flops and flips, and life seems like an attempt to mightily push or pull the winter wind.

Advent is a time we wait as well, but for what unique outcome? Is it for one mere day of December 25th; is it for the possibility of peace to finally peek an arrival or, conceivably, for some lofty daydream of a storybook sugar plum? Significantly, *Adventus* simply means something is coming. In this case, it is not the advent of what will come; rather, it is a celebration of what has come or rather who has come to shape brightly covered parcels of an awesome opportunity. What has come is the historically changing "thin place" for hope, peace, joy and love to be opened in our worlds. We can now visualize how the radical ways of Jesus pioneer an expansive, free opening to unwrap whispers of kindness, the touch of tender mercy and ribbons of justice to be woven through the Sacred and us. The Advent of this less secular life is apparent in Joseph's perpetual loyalty, in Mary, who pondered what is sacred in her heart from the birth of the Savior-babe, Jesus, to the looming cross and in the more sacred and less secular lives we live.

The glitch, though, of unwrapping these gifts is that humanity is less acquainted with waiting, even though we recognize time does not belong to us. Sue Monk

Kidd has a wise thought she shares in her book, *When the Heart Waits*: "I had tended to view 'waiting' as mere passivity. When I looked it up in the dictionary however, I found that the words passive and passion come from the same Latin root. Waiting means descending into self, into God, into deeper labyrinths of prayer. It means struggling with the passionate vision of who we really are in God and molding the courage to live that vision." Pierre Teilhard de Chardin writes of a God who we live with and in and have in our being. This philosophy was common in ancient faith traditions. He writes: "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience."

To close, humanity will always think, wonder and wait within our life experience. We might know or have someone important who is wandering this Advent, possibly someone as near as you or me. Waiting holds human doubt. For me, there were times when I was as strewn about as the manger straw. Yet, we have a God who wanders 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 wandering, the Power of deep Compassion swooped, held humanity fast and cradled us. Advent is waiting passionately, "descending into self, into God and into a prayer" coaxing our courage to envision Emmanuel — God in us shaping Brightness. This kind of Brightness begins even today in a life-cuddled manger. Yet, as we have experienced in the living of our own "advents," this Brightness does not stay there, rather it transcends to "a transformation given by the renewing of your mind and soul..." (Romans 12:2). Amen. ~ J. Jacot

Prayer at WBLUMC: One way our church helps 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 from this team, please write it on a prayer request card or contact Julie Jacot at 651-777-3728 or ljjacot@q.com. **The Email Prayer Chain** accepts requests by contacting a pastor or leader Ronda Nelson, rondalauva2@msn.com. **Hospital visits:** If you are hospitalized and would like a pastoral visit, please contact the church at 651-429-9026 or email office@wblumc.org. Because of privacy laws, hospitals no longer notify churches when someone is admitted. Our pastors and BeFrienders are available to anyone who requests a visit or call.

1am Worship ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent, Dec. 23, 2018

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

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

"There are two basic motivating forces: fear and love ... all hopes for a better world rest in the fearlessness and open-hearted vision of people who embrace life."
~ John Lennon

"You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.'
~ Eleanor Roosevelt

"Don't fear, because I am with you; don't be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will surely help you; I will hold you with my righteous strong hand."
~ Isaiah 41:10

PRELUDE	Piano Solo Music	Leilani Lewis
WELCOME		
CALL TO WORSHIP	"In the Bleak Midwinter"	Gustav Holst
+OPENING WORDS		
We gather in preparation, for good news is about to be proclaimed. We gather in expectation for joy is about to break forth in our midst. We gather in celebration, for we are people who say yes to God's love coming in flesh and blood. We are people who say yes to God's universal, timeless love. In preparation and expectation, let us celebrate! Glory to God in the highest!		

+OPENING HYMN	"The First Noel"	No. 245
	1-4	

UNISON PRAYER

Compassionate God, always with us, always coming: teach us to put our hope in you. Help us not to be distracted by all the busyness of this season. Give us the simple wonder of the shepherds, willing to hear a heavenly song that calls us to leave behind our ordinary living that we might find the good news of a child born for us. Now, in the quiet of our hearts, we ask you to make us ready for his coming. Amen.

ANTHEM “Little Lamb” David M. Cherwien
Chancel Choir

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Kathy and Steve Lukin and Chris, Torrie, Leila and Luca Johnson

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE
After this message, children and youth through 9th grade are invited to leave for Sunday school.

MORNING PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER
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, forever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:8-18 *from The Message* Reader: Wanda Erikson
There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God’s angel stood among them and God’s glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, “Don’t be afraid. I’m here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, world-wide: A Savior has just been born in David’s town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you’re to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger.”

At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God’s praises: “Glory to God in the heavenly heights, peace to all men and women on earth who please him.”

As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. “Let’s get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us.” They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. All who heard the shepherders were impressed.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD
Leader: For the word of God in Scripture,
for the word of God among us,
for the word of God within us.
All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON **The Messages of Advent:** The Message of the Shepherds
Lori McBride, Minister of Missions and Faith Development

CONNECTION CARDS

Please take time now to fill out your green connection cards to help us track attendance. After the prayer of dedication, you may place them in the offering plates as they are passed to you.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

OFFERING “Il Est Ne” (He is Born) Jason Krug
Alleluia Ringers with Gerald Gurss, Hand Drum

ANNOUNCEMENTS

+CLOSING HYMN A Christmas Carol Collage See below
Congregation, Choir & Alleluia Ringers
Directed by Gerald Gurss

+BENEDICTION

+POSTLUDE “Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine” arr. Lori Line

A Christmas Carol Collage

“O Christmas Tree” “Silent Night”
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, Silent night, holy night all is calm all is bright.
How lovely are your branches. (repeat) ‘Round yon virgin, mother and child.
Not only green in summertime, Holy infant so tender and mild.
But also in cold winter’s clime. Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
How lovely are your branches.

“What Child is This?” “Go Tell It On the Mountain”
What child is this, who laid to rest on Mary’s lap Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills
is sleeping. and everywhere;
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.
while shepherds watch are keeping. (repeat)
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds watch While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent flocks
and angels sing. by night,
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, Behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.
the son of Mary. Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills
and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”
I heard the bells on Christmas Day their old familiar
carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat of peace on earth
good will to all.

“God’s Greatest Gift” magic show *today*

Children, come celebrate the last day of Sunday School for 2018 with a seasonal show by Christian magician Brian Richards in the theater downstairs during the 9am and 10:45am education hours.
Bonus: Kids take home their own magic trick!

Sunday, Dec. 23

9-10am—Worship; Sunday School & nursery
10-10:45am—Coffee, tea, and treats, Fellowship Hall;
prayer room is open
10:45-11:30am—Worship; Children’s Church & nursery

Christmas Eve, Monday, Dec. 24: OFFICE CLOSED

3pm—Family worship
5pm—Contemporary music worship
10pm—Candle-lighting worship

Tuesday-Wednesday, Dec. 25-26: OFFICE CLOSED

No scheduled activities.

Thursday, Dec. 27

7:10am—Men’s Breakfast Group, library
10am—Pages of Wisdom AA, room 107

Friday, Dec. 28: OFFICE CLOSED

No scheduled activities.

Saturday, Dec. 29

7:30am—Men’s Prayer Group, room 200
10am—WBL Sat. Morning Women’s Group, 200/206

Sunday, Dec. 30: One service

10-11am—Worship & nursery;
Sunday school resumes Jan. 6
11am—Coffee, tea, and treats, Fellowship Hall;
prayer room is open

New Year’s Eve, Monday, Dec. 31: OFFICE CLOSED

No scheduled activities.

New Year’s Day, Tuesday, Jan. 1: OFFICE CLOSED

No scheduled activities.

Welcome

WHITE BEAR LAKE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world.
Our vision is to provide nourishment
for the hungers of life.

REGULAR CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Sunday:	9am to 12pm
Monday-Thursday	9am to 3pm
Friday and Saturday	CLOSED

SUNDAY BULLETIN/WEEKLY E-BLAST
Have a church-related event you’d like to appear in the Sunday bulletin or the weekly e-blast? Please email all pertinent information, including contact information, to office@wblumc.org no later than **1pm Tuesday** for the bulletin and **10am Wednesday** for the e-blast.
All information is subject to staff approval. Thank you!

To receive the weekly email update — sent every Thursday — call the office at 651-429-9026, email your request to office@wblumc.org or indicate it on a connection card.

Visit ***wblumc.org*** for sermon podcasts, PDFs of the 9am bulletins, the church calendar and programming info.

Bill Eaves , Senior Pastor bill.eaves@wblumc.org , 763-355-7825 mobile	John Koziol, Jr. Director of Music
John McBride , Associate Pastor	Gerald Gurs , Chancel Choir Director
Missie Aberle , Next Generation Minister	Patricia Kytola , Director of Operations
Lori McBride , Missions & Faith Development Minister	Lauri Hopple , Administrative Assistant
Joan Hartman , Director of Children & Family Ministries	Lori Hughes , Website & Social Media
Peteria Cochran Routt , Director of Traditional Music	Carol Houghtby , Treasurer
	Carolyn Keith , Financial Secretary
	Ron Houde , Housekeeper

WBLUMC STAFF

Christmas flowers

Thanks to all who purchased flowers to decorate our church.

- Gloria Anderson**
Karl and Jill Anderson
Sheila and Dave Bennett, in loving memory of our parents
Ruth and Dick Brink, in honor of our families
Bev Campbell, in memory of family members
Judy and Roger Cheatham, in celebration of our children and grandchildren
Sandy and Don Craighead, our son Jim
Mary Cripe, in celebration of our grandson, Charlie
Paul and Connie Dickson
Dorene Fischer, in celebration of Sam and Emily
Dan and Holly Huntwork, in memory of Rev. Daniel and Mrs. Gladys Huntwork and Mr. Cleve and Mrs. Mila Sorensen.
Dale and Jan Johnson, to our family
Liz, Dave and Eleanor Kaufenberg
John and Sue Kenyon, to our children — Dave, Susie, Jeanna, Denise and Peter (in honor of)
Denise and Larry Kerr
David and Dawn Kittleson, in memory of Marilyn Kittleson, Barb Klein and David Perbix
Dean, Derek and Jared Klein, in memory of Barbara Klein
Randy LaFoy
Emma Melin, in memory of my parents, Ernest and Johanna
Glenn and Merrilee Oliphant, our loving family
Pete and Judy Pedersen, in loving memory of Jill



- Steve Peterson**, to honor the joy of WBLUMC’s music program!
Karen Quaday, in honor of Phyllis Stratis
Ray and Tracy Rockholt, in honor of Marilyn Rockholt
Bob and Barb Sawyer, Robert Thomas Sawyer
Phyllis Stratis
Susan Torgerson, to the love of my life, Don
Luke and Emily Wendlandt, for all God’s people who are fighting a battle against chemical dependency
Mike and Rita Wiersma, for Alvin and Margaret Wiersma, Goldie Rudlong and Geneva Bossart
Nancy Willson
Ruth Zieper, in remembrance of loved ones

*You may take home your plants after the 10pm service on Christmas Eve.
Any plants not picked up by Sunday, Dec. 30, will be donated.*

Bread Ministry updates



Your generous donations from December's Baking with a Purpose allowed WBLUMC bread team leaders Glenn Oliphant, John Schmidt and Bob Knutson to present a check for \$500 to Second Harvest Heartland recently. Thank you!

Also, the office received this email last week: "Just before lunch Saturday our door bell rang. It was Bob from your church with a bag of welcome-ings, including a loaf of bread. Delicious bread. We enjoyed it immediately. Thank you for your greetings. Bob was a terrific messenger from WBLUMC! Merry Christmas!!" Bob got a similar thank-you during worship on Sunday from guest musicians Joe Cruz and Jennifer Grimm, whose house he happened to visit last Saturday.

Next Baking with a Purpose pick-up is Sunday, Jan. 6, after each service. Selections will be oatmeal and sour-dough craisin walnut. Donations will go to Solid Ground.

Adopt-a-Pot gratitude

Thank you for our seasonal greetings: The arrangements in the urns at the church's south entrance are given by **Don and Verna Sonsalla**. They hold evergreens to represent the mission carried by service members, along with bursts of red and clusters of blue juniper berries and glass bells to ring out liberty and peace.

The east urns, given by **Phil and Kathy Siegle**, hold a large glass apple, symbol of a Biblical proverb telling us we are precious and beloved. The apple of the eye, or pupil, allows for light and reflection. Christmas is a reflective time when we celebrate the beloved birth of Love and God's keeping.

42nd Wild Game Dinner

The featured speaker at this year's Wild Game Dinner will be our own Kurt Johnson, who will talk about his adventures hunting big game around the world.

This is the 42nd anniversary of the Men's Club dinner, which will be held on **Monday, Jan. 21, 2019**. Everyone is invited to join us for delicious and interesting dishes prepared by members of WBLUMC. We'll start with appetizers at 6pm followed by main dishes and Kurt's presentation.

As always, this dinner depends on the donations of fish and game from our members and friends. We never have a shortage, and we appreciate your support in donating fish and game for the dinner. It can be straight from the field or freezer, or you can bring in dishes you prepare at home. Look for the sign-up sheets in Fellowship Hall to donate fish and game or just to attend this fun event.

Contact Paul Dickson, Al Rausch or Jeff Olson if you have any questions. Please join us!

January book club

January's reading will be a double selection! We'll read *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge* by Erica Armstrong Dunbar and *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi. Book club will meet at 7-8:15pm on **Monday, Jan. 28**, in the church library. Everyone is welcome, even if you haven't attended before.



Christmas Eve worship

**Please join us Monday, Dec. 24, 2018,
at any of our three services**

3pm: A shorter family service with carols and the Christmas story told through the ABCs, with the Children's and Cherub choirs.

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

10pm: A traditional service of carols and candle-lighting featuring the Chancel Choir and handbells.

Christmas offering: Sending love and bringing hope to wildfire survivors

This Christmas we will have a special offering for United Methodist Committee on Relief and the California-Nevada Annual Conference Disaster Response Recovery Fund. The UMC has boots on the ground to help those struggling to recover from the devastating wildfires that have ravaged lives and property across California.

UMCOR is the humanitarian

relief and development arm of the UMC, helping survivors with hands-on services as well as monetary support. One hundred percent of what UMCOR receives goes to the field to help individuals and churches affected by tragic events. The Cal-Nevada Conference is home to a number of UMC congregations severely affected by the fires — some facing church

property damage as well as the loss of homes and businesses of congregation members.

Watch for more details about what is happening through the United Methodist Church in California. And remember, God has richly blessed each of us, and we are called to give back. We hope you'll plan to give generously this Christmas Eve.

Stewardship update

From Paul Dickson's stewardship message during worship on Sunday, Dec. 16:

"Last week we reported that 156 giving plan cards had been received, totaling \$610,258, about two-thirds of our \$880,000 goal.

"Things continue to move along well, and we are now approaching 80 percent of our \$880,000 goal with 171 cards received as of the Dec. 11. If you haven't turned in your pledge card — and we understand it is a BUSY time of year for all of us — please consider doing so before Christmas so we can move ahead with finalizing our 2019 budget.

"We have 45 people who pledged last year but have not done so at this point, so we have a good shot at reaching our goal, and for that we are thankful.

"We are also very pleased to report that of the 171 giving plans received to date, 44 percent have increased their contribution plan an average of 13 percent, and 14 percent are new pledging units.

"Please join me in giving yourselves a round of applause for your strong support of our Church and the important role it plays in our families and our community. Thank you!"