

Tuesday, December 24, 2024 Christmas Eve 5:30 pm Family Worship



48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585) 223-0634 ~ www.blcfairport.org

#### **PRELUDE**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Christ's birth makes the vastness of God personal. The God who made the seas and the stars is also the God who made our beautiful hair and your striking eyes. The God of creation takes on flesh, which means you are fully known. When the angels visit the shepherds in the fields, their message is global but also personal: "To you . . . a savior is born." This birth is good news for everyone, especially for those who are ignored or disenfranchised. On this night, God is born, and this God of love knows your name.

#### **GATHERING**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start? Let us begin with hope. Let us begin with peace. Let us begin with joy. Let us begin with love.

Yes, let us begin with love, for surely love knows your name. Surely God is in this place. Surely the Spirit is near.

Surely love knows our name. May we rest in that good news. Unto us a child is born. A light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it. Glory to God in the highest heaven! Amen.

#### **GATHERING HYMN**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

**ELW 283** 

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant! O come ye, o come ye to Bethlehem; come and behold him, born the king of angels:

Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal he comes; Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain* 

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain* 

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n! Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *Refrain* 

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace—We always long for you, but on this holy Christmas Eve, we long for you to feel as close as possible. So as we prepare to hear this ancient story once again, we ask that you would awaken something new in us. Awaken in us a fire for your Word. Awaken in us proof of your proximity. Awaken in us your love, which is bigger than the sky, and as close as our very breath. We are listening. We give thanks.

Amen.

#### **ANTHEM**

Welcome the Babe

Natalie Sleeth

#### BLC Children's Choir

#### **HEARING GOD'S WORD**

We want to share a story with you. It's a story you might know well; one you may have heard before. Tonight, we want to tell you this story with something else we know well, our alphabet.

**A** is for an angel, Gabriel, who began the story with a greeting:

"Good evening! You're beautiful with God's beauty, Beautiful inside and out! God be with you!" (*Luke 1.28, The Message*)

**B** is for Bethlehem, where our story takes place. People traveled from far and wide to arrive in the city; it was a very busy place.

C is for a census (that's a counting of all the people) the reason so many people filled the city of Bethlehem.

**D** is for the donkey that carried a family on their long journey to Bethlehem to be counted.

**E** is for exhausted, that's how everyone felt when they arrived – tired from all the travelling.

**F** is for family: Mary and Joseph and their new baby Jesus, who was born that night in Bethlehem.

#### CAROL

#### O Little Town of Bethlehem

**ELW 279** 

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.

For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love. O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth, and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n. No ear may hear his coming; but, in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; oh, come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!

**G** is for the Good News about to be shared with all the earth.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

#### **GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20**

In those days a decree went out from Caesar 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.

#### Shepherds: Let us go now to Bethlehem!

[Joseph] 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 in the guest room.

#### Angels: Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth!

Now in that same region there were <u>shepherds</u> living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an <u>angel</u> of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the <u>angel</u> 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 Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

#### Shepherds: Let us go now to Bethlehem!

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 <u>angel</u> a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

#### Angels: Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth!

When the <u>angels</u> had left them and gone into heaven, the <u>shepherds</u> said to one another,

# Shepherds: Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the <u>shepherds</u> told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The <u>shepherds</u> returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Angels: Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth!

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

**H** is for herds, all the animals that were present in the stable, and the flocks of sheep in the field with the shepherds when they heard the good news.

I is for our imaginations, stirred by this story!

#### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

CAROL

Go Tell It on the Mountain

ELW 290

*Refrain:* Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere; go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night, behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain* 

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain* 

Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born; and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain* 

**J** is for joy the excitement and happiness that a new baby, and now, this special night brings.

**K** is for kindness, shown by the innkeeper that night, allowing a tired family to stay in the stable when there was no room in the inn.

L is for the love we share with one another all through the year and especially at Christmas.

**M** is for the manger, usually used to hold food for animals, but this time it held the baby because he had no crib.

#### **CAROL**

#### Away in a Manger

**ELW 277** 

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes. I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in your tender care and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

**N** is for Noel, another word for Christmas. It means new birth, that's what happened in our story, and it happens every year.

O is for offering, there were many gifts for the baby; we even have some to share now!

#### **OFFERING**

Offering plates are placed at each entrance to the sanctuary. Information about supporting Bethlehem's ministry with your offerings is available in the Welcome insert in your pew rack or by visiting <u>blcfairport.org/support-our-ministry</u>.

#### **OFFERING OF MUSIC**

What Child Is This?

English ballad, 16th cent. arr. Melody Bober

#### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Let us pray. God of new beginnings,

As we prepare to come to this Table, pour out your spirit in this room. Bless our offerings. Make this meal a new beginning of faith, hope, and love. Allow us to experience welcome here. Allow for all to be fed here. Allow for all to sense your presence here. With hope we gather. With hope we begin again. Amen.

**P** is for prayer and praise and pondering, all different ways people reacted the amazing thing that happened. We pray and praise and ponder together...

#### THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Our prayers are always offered on behalf of the whole community.

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

A brief silence.

Glory to you, God, for the song of the angels, proclaiming to the world Christ's holy birth. Give your church a joyful song to sing, that we bring the good news of peace and salvation to all people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, God, for the stars that shine in the depth of the night. Provoke awe in our hearts at the expansive mystery of the cosmos. Open us to find beauty in the clear darkness of night and in the first glimmers of dawn. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.** 

Glory to you, God, for the child born to us who establishes a kingdom of justice and righteousness. Break bonds of oppression, bring reconciliation to warring lands, and establish peace from this time onward and forevermore. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, God, for the faithfulness of the shepherds in their vocation. Grant rest to any who feel exhausted from their work during this season: parents and all who bring Christmas to life for others, retail and restaurant workers, church musicians and staff, organizers of charitable-giving events, and service workers doing essential tasks. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, God, for Mary's loving care. Lead us to tend to one another in time of need. Share the comfort of your presence with all people tonight who are alone or separated from loved ones due to estrangement, incarceration, or illness, especially those we name before you silently or out loud.

Silence for individual prayer.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

Amen.

**Q** is for quiet, the deep peace that Christmas brings – knowing that God is with us.

**R** is for revelation, God showing us who God is (in a little baby born one night)

**S** is for one special star that shone bright in the night showing wise ones the way to Jesus.

T is for trust, the confidence we have in God.

U is for unity, all different people brought together tonight to celebrate God's love!

#### **SHARING GOD'S MEAL**

#### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

#### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

With this bread and wine

Build us into a lasting community of hope, peace, joy and love.

Be among us in this meal.

And form us to be your presence in the world today.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

With joy and hope, we weave our voices together to pray the words your Son taught us:

Our Father 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

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Jesus. **Thanks be to God.** 

#### **DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION**

Please come forward at the direction of the ushers. All are welcome to share in Christ's meal of forgiveness and grace. Children who do not yet commune are welcome to come forward for a blessing. Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are available; please indicate your need to the pastor or communion assistant.

#### THE COMMUNION

#### **COMMUNION HYMN**

Angels We Have Heard on High

**ELW 289** 

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

Refrain: 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 heav'nly song? *Refrain* 

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing; come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain* 

#### **COMMUNION HYMN**

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

**ELW 276** 

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall; oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the child is Lord of all. Swiftly winging, angels singing, bells are ringing, tidings bringing: Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.

Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow: Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping? This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing; haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding? Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading. Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you; hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him. The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him. Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby; joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

#### TABLE BLESSING

V is for vulnerable, a little child needs to be cared for, protected-that's our job.

W is for wonder—our amazement at the beauty of how much God loves us.

#### **POST COMMUNION HYMN**

Love Has Come

**ELW 292** 

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. Immanuel. 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!

X is for Xmas, the x is actually the symbol for Christ – it is the first letter of the Greek word for Christ.

Y is for You! here to celebrate and worship.

**Z** is for zeal, the passion with which we share the Good News and God's love, tonight.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF THE LIGHT

The pastor will light a candle from the Christ Candle and share the flame with ushers who will begin to move down the aisle lighting the candles of the congregation in this manner: the worshiper nearest the center aisle will receive the light and in turn give the light to the one by their side. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when passing the light to another so that the hot wax will not be spilled.

#### **CHRISTMAS CAROL**

Silent Night, Holy Night!

**ELW 281** 

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright round you virgin mother and child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight; glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia! Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

(Hum fourth stanza)

#### THE PRAYER

Gracious God, bathe us always in the light of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

#### **LEAVING TO SERVE**

#### **BENEDICTION**

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

#### Amen.

(Candles may be extinguished. Please return your candles to an usher as you leave the sanctuary.)

#### **SENDING HYMN**

Joy to the World

**ELW 267** 

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground; he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

#### **DISMISSAL**

Christ is born! Go in joy and peace! **Thanks be to God.** 

#### **POSTLUDE**

Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella

French carol arr. Keith Chapman

#### **BLC Pastors**

The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman and The Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson, co-Pastors

#### **BLC Musicians**

Raelynn Clare, Director of Music and Organist Chrisanne Gates, Chancel Choir Director Rich Towsley, Director of The Folk Group and BLC Dulcimers Additional musical leadership provided by:

Phyllis Stock, piano
Delaney Allen, percussion/vocals
Madeleine Hoffman, piano/percussion/vocals

**Today's altar flowers** are given by Bob Anderson in joyful celebration of Cathy Anderson's birthday.

#### Merry Christmas!

We wish you and yours a blessed Christmas!

Enjoy hot cocoa and cookies on Perrin Street as you leave worship tonight!

**Worship:** We worship each Sunday at 8:55 am (both in-person and livestream). Visit our website – blcfairport.org – for information on how to share in worship with Bethlehem!

Learn about upcoming events and activities... please sign-up to receive communication from Bethlehem, including Between Sundays (Mondays), the Weekly Star (Thursdays) and Ready for Worship (Saturdays). To subscribe, go to www.blcfairport.org and scroll down to sign up for reminders and special announcements. Contact the Church Office if you would prefer a hard copy of the Weekly Star.

# Christmas Poinsettia Donations were made to the glory of God by the following:

**Tom Allen** in honor of Karen Allen.

Bill and Gunnar Antell in memory of all our loved ones who have passed.

Sherry and Jim Cook in honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and in memory of our parents Jane & Rod Johnson and Myrtle & Howard Cook.

Nancy Fehse in memory of Frank & Anna Steuerwald and Connie & Erich Helbig.

**Kathleen Forney** in honor of Charles Forney and in memory of my parents Ralph and Betty Deuel.

In honor of Sandy Joyce.

Judy Lohr in memory of Bob Lohr.

Rolf Maxa in memory of Erich & Anna Maxa and William & Margaret Walsh.

Kathy and Jim Moragne in memory of our parents.

Gabriele and Frank Nardozzi in memory of Gerhard & Erna Schlueter, Irene Cortini, and Frank Nardozzi.

Patricia Olson in memory of Gerard Van Hassent.

**Janet and Howard Sharp** in memory of our parents Gene & Grace Garvey and Irving & June Sharp.

GerryAnn and Wayne Westcott in memory of our parents.

# Contributions to Zimbabwe Ambulances were made to the glory of God by the following:

Sherry and Jim Cook in honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and in memory of our parents Jane & Rod Johnson and Myrtle & Howard Cook.

Ruth and Andy Gates in memory of family members.

Ruth and Jeff Hedin in honor of our family.

Judy Lohr in memory of Bob Lohr.

Sandra and David Moczarski in memory of Dr. Paul Moczarski.

Kathy and Jim Moragne in memory of our parents.

**Janet and Howard Sharp** in memory of our parents Gene & Grace Garvey and Irving & June Sharp.

Marjorie Yeager in honor of family and friends.

Amy and Hans Walter-Peterson in honor of children, youth and young adults in the BLC community.

Anonymous in honor of her LYLAS Pastor Amy.

#### Christmas Wreaths

The wreaths which decorate the doors are given in memory of Karen Bigenwald by Brian and Bev Edwards.

The wreaths which decorate the sanctuary are given in memory of Tom and Gert Edwards and Morey and Ann Rasbeck by Brian and Bev Edwards.

Our Christmas tree is given to the glory of God by Jim and Donna Berner in honor of their family, with extra thanks to Dave Wideman and to Rich Towsley for years of support in setting up the tree and donning it with lights!

Adapted ABC's of Christmas by Erin Klassen, https://youngclergywomen.org/the-abcs-of-christmas-a-worship-service/
Pastorale from the 'Christmas' Concerto, (Concerto Grosso op. 6, no. 8, 'fatto per la notte di natale')
Music: Archangelo Corelli, © Oxford University Press 1995Augsburg
Chorale Prelude on 'In dulci jubilo', Music: Johann Michael Bach, © Oxford University Press 1995
"Away in a Manger", Music: James Murray, Arranger: Margaret Goldston
from Duets for Christmas Lovers, Book 3, © 1993 Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.
"Silent Night", Music: Franz Grüber, Arranger: Margaret Goldston
from Duets for Christmas Lovers, Book 3, © 1993 Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.
"Noël provençal", Tune: French carol, Music: Michael Corrette , © 1985 Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.
"Welcome the Babe, Text and Music: Natalie Sleeth, © 1978 Choristers Guild (adm. The Lorenz Corporation)
"What Child Is This?", Tune: English ballad, 16th cent., Arranger: Melody Bober, from Christmas Memories, Book 3, © 2007 Alfred Music
"Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella", Tune: French carol, Arranger: Keith Chapman, © 1979 (1996) McAfee Music Corp.

# Baptism Celebration Splash Party

Sunday, January 12th
1pm - 3pm
at the Perinton Rec Center

See the STAR for details!

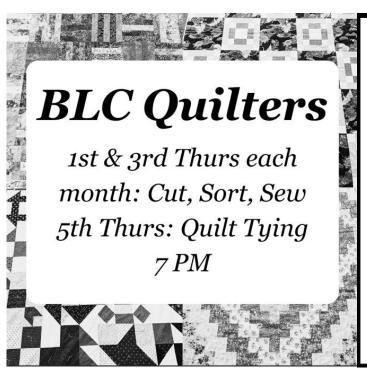
And what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Micah 6:8 NRSV

Mission and Social Concerns Team

monthly meetings hybrid in-person and through Zoom

Contact Julie Owen (jowen@heritagechristianservices.org) to learn more!



# Women's Fellowship

Meets one Tuesday each month at 7:00 pm in the BLC



Living Room



Chancel Choir- Wednesdays at 7:30pm Dulcimers- Fridays at 3pm

## Hat Ministry

Knit, crochet, loom made, or store purchased are all appreciated. Yarn & patterns available in Narthex or use your own.

Please find donation bins in the Narthex.



**1ST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH!** 

### BLC MEN'S BREAKFAST!

8 AM AT THE LANDMARK RESTAURANT IN EAST ROCHESTER



# PROPERTY COMMITTEE TITTITTITTIT

New members are always welcome to help maintain our church building and grounds!

No major time commitment required, help as you are able! Contact the church office or Bob Stolze to get involved! Join BLC's email list to receive our weekly STAR e-newsletter and other announcements!





# **Second Sunday Dinner Ministry**

BLC prepares and delivers hot meals on the 2nd Sunday each month to those in need in our community.



Contact the church office to help with cooking or deliveries!

### **Altar Flowers**

Order by calling the church office at 223-0634 or order online here:



# Support Groups

Next meeting January 14





GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP, 11 AM CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP, 2 PM

Meet every two Tuesdays

# Check out BLC's ONLINE DIRECTORY!



Find full details and instructions to get started here!





# Midweek Bible Study

Wednesdays at 9:30 am

In-person in the BLC Hybrid Conference Room & via Zoom



(join here)

# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

SAVE THE DATE: JULY 28-31, 2025 AT BLC

BLC is partnering with St. Paul's, Pittsford again for this summer's VBS program!

More details to come!

#### **Taking Christmas Home**

For many of us, the season of Advent is full of preparation, excitement and anticipation of Christmas. And now, it's finally here! Christ is born! But Christmas is more than just one day – it's a season of 12 days. This year, try bringing the celebration of this special night home with you, to savor over the next two weeks. Here are several ideas to help you take Christmas home:

- Take this bulletin home with you. The words to some of the most beloved carols are printed here. Pick one carol to sing together in your house over the next few days.
- Pick a prayer from tonight's service to repeat several times during the 12 days. Or pick different prayers from the service and pray them over several days.
- Look up the lessons from tonight in your Bible at home. Help a child or young person find them in their Bibles. Read them together.
- The theme of tonight's service is, "Love Knows Your Name." Tell each other stories of the names of the people in your house. What makes them special? What is their history? End by blessing each other with these words: "(Person's Name), God knows you and loves you."
- Try a breath prayer. Inhale and exhale as you pray these words either silently or aloud: Inhale: Time after time; Exhale: You call me by name.
   Repeat a few times, until these words rest in your heart.
- If you have an Advent wreath, light all four candles at dinner or before bed. Try saying grace or bedtime prayers by candlelight.
- If you have a nativity scene, move the three wisemen far away from the manager. Every day, move them closer to the manger until the 12th day, when they reach Baby Jesus.
- Instead of putting the star quilt ornament on your Christmas tree right away, carry it in your pocket. Touch it when you find yourself needing a reminder that God knows you completely and loves you fully.