

**Introit**      *Go to Him in Bethlehem*      Pepper Choplin

## Welcome and Announcements

|                |                |         |
|----------------|----------------|---------|
| <b>Prelude</b> | <i>Prelude</i> | Ellison |
|----------------|----------------|---------|

## Lighting the Christ Candle

*The congregation responds in bold.*

When the angel Gabriel announced God's plan that Mary would give birth to the Messiah, "Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'" (Luke 1:34). And yet, only a few months later, Mary sings to Elizabeth, "My spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed (Luke 1:46-49).

*We, like Mary, hear God's call to be part of making God's dream for salvation a reality; yet we question, "How can this be? I am only..." Yet, like Mary, the "onlys" that make us hesitate are gifts God can and will use as God's love transforms us into bearers of good news.*

**We wait as people who have encountered divine Love that disrupts the status quo and ushers us into abundant life marked by mutual love and peace that flows from the flourishing of all people.**

We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, and the love that transforms us. May love transform us into bold witnesses of God's salvation with our voices and our lives. Amen.

## Prayer of Invocation

**God our Savior, with the apostles, prophets, and saints,  
save us, restore us, and lead us in the way of love that  
we may bear your promise into the world. Amen.**

**\*Hymn**                      *Advent Carol*                      17<sup>th</sup>c/Tim Harvey

**Children's Time** Lynette Harvey

## Offering

*To make an online contribution,  
scan the QR code on the back of the bulletin.*

**Offertory Hymn** *The virgin Mary had a baby boy* # 202

## Hearing from God's Word

**Scripture** Luke 1:46-55 (NT, p. 57)  
Luke 2:17-19 (NT, p. 58)

**Song** *God rest ye merry, Gentlemen*

**Message**      *The Very Good Gospel: Transforming Love*

## Sharing Joys and Concerns

## Pastoral Prayer, with the Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom  
come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as  
we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into  
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the  
kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

\* **Hymn**      *Good Christian friends, rejoice*      # 201

|                     |                      |       |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------|
| <b>*Benediction</b> | <i>Bring a Torch</i> | Blaha |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------|

## \*Postlude

\* Please stand as you are able.

Today                      7:00 p.m.      Christmas Eve Service

*The church office is Monday, December 25-Tuesday, December 26 for Christmas.*

|        |            |                        |
|--------|------------|------------------------|
| Sunday | 9:45 a.m.  | Sunday School          |
|        | 11:00 a.m. | Worship                |
|        |            | Harvey Leddy preaching |

*Pastor Tim is on vacation through December 31<sup>st</sup>.*

Rachel Mabe, battling cancer  
Ralph Petcher, long term chemo for Leukemia  
Betty Phillips, rehab at Friendship Manor South  
Emma Jean Woodard, recovering from surgery  
Dennis Shearer, prayers for treatment  
Dennis Ferguson, recovering from surgery

Sunday School- 38  
Worship- 105 (in person); 19 (online) = 124  
Offering- \$ 5,006.00; \$ 671.00 (online) = \$ 5,677.00

## CHURCH STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Pastor Tim Harvey  
pastortim@oakgrovecob.org

Minister of Nurture and Music Carol Elmore  
elmores24153@gmail.com

Advent readers Connie Bierly and Betty Wills

Nursery workers Ellen & Laura Phillips  
Nursery workers (12/31) Alli Yingling & Rena' Brown

Head Usher Bill Hall

Sound Booth Don Pizzullo, Evan Jacobs & Eli Raymond

### Instrumentalists

Stephen Wills organ  
Joe Blaha piano

## CONNECTING WITH OAK GROVE



Find us on Facebook:  
Oak Grove Church of the Brethren



Interested in supporting our mission and ministry financially? Scan this QR code to contribute to via Tithely.



We have a limited number of spaces reserved for those with mobility challenges. If you are able, please park in the spaces farther away from the church.



Pews and chairs marked with this logo are reserved for persons with mobility challenges and their companions.



Our Meditation Garden is available for prayer in the side yard of our church property.



Need a hearing device, wheelchair, cushion, or have a question? Our head usher will be glad to be of assistance.



Childcare is available during the worship service for children birth to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.



Hospitality is an important part of our life together—we want to know your name! If you're new here, we'd be glad to make a nametag for you. If you've been here a while, we'd love to provide a permanent nametag.



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**OAK GROVE**  
**CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**  
**DECEMBER 24, 2023**  
**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

God rest you mer-ry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dis-may, To save us all from  
For Je-sus Christ our Sa-vi-our Was born up-on this day,

Satan's power When we were gone a-stray: O tid-ings of com-fort and  
joy, comfort and joy, O tid-ings of com-fort and joy.

2. Now to the Lord sing praises,  
All you within this place,  
And with true love and brotherhood  
Each other now embrace;  
This holy tide of Christmas  
All other doth deface.[\[28\]](#)  
O tidings ...

### Advent Carol

17th Century Carol  
Tim Harvey

Capo 2

D (C) Bm (Am) Em (Dm) A7 (G7)

1. Come, now Chris-tians and re-tell the sto-ry  
2. In-to mad-ness, di-vi-sion, and ha-tred,  
3. Hold-ing frag-ments of dreams, plans, and wish-es,  
4. Im-age of God made new with-in each one,

5 D (C) Bm (Am) A7 (G7) D (C)

of the time that our God came near  
Christ has come to make the two one  
pulled a part by things out of con-trol  
earth and hea-ven's re-new-al comes soon!

9 D (C) Bm (Am) G (F) A (G)

Christ is born Cre-a-tor is com-ing  
Swords in-to plow-shares, seed-ing new see-ing  
Yet look up! for God's ho-ly rose blos-soms,  
Christ, the on-ly Be-got-ten Son of-fers

13 G (F) D (C) Em (Dm) A7 (G7)

in-to our dark-ness light for all  
heal-ing the breach, his gift to all  
Je-sus ar-rives, mends pie-ces whole with  
lives re-made new, hearts made to sing with

17 Bm (Am) A (G) D (C) A (G) D (C)

Hope! Hope! Liv-ing a-mong us, bring-ing  
Peace! Peace! An-gels pro-claim on earth is  
Joy! Joy! Hopes are re-sewn; life clothed with  
Love! Love! Share the good news for we know

22 Bm (Am) A (G) D (C) A7 (G7) D (C)

Hope! Hope!  
Peace! Peace!  
Joy! Joy!  
Love! Love!

Born in a man-ger stall