

# Dare To Imagine God's Humanity

## Advent 4

First Mennonite Church

December 19, 2021

### Gathering

Welcome and Announcements Chris Moser  
Prelude Laura Hartzler  
Invocation  
\*Opening Hymn VT 143 Come Now, O God

#### \*Confession and Assurance

One: We notice, O God, that when you feed people, everyone has enough.  
**Many: We notice that in our world, when we feed people, some have more than enough, and many are still hungry.**  
One: Teach us to love.  
**Many: We notice, O God, that in your social, economic, racial, and gender orders, no one is greater, and no one is left behind.**  
One: We notice that in our world there are many ladders, and many are climbing.  
**Many: Re-orientate us to your vision of equality.**  
One: God of mercy, lower us, raise us, empty us, and fill us. Like an empty manger, we want to be ready to receive Emmanuel.

Words of Assurance (*adapted from Luke 1:46-49*)

**All: Our souls magnify the Lord, our spirits rejoice in God our Savior. God has looked with favor on our lowliness. The Mighty One has done great things for us, and holy is God's name.**

### Telling God's Story

Conversation with Children Kendra Nickel

Hymn VT 510 *Today Earth Is Singing* (sing as children come forward and return to their seats – use “children” in the blank text)

### Candle Litany

One: We light a candle of love, and imagine  
**Many: the lowly lifted, fear met with love.**  
One: We light the candle and pray for God's humanity to shine on us, to save us, restore us.  
**Many: Imagine that . . . we are God's wonders, blessed wonders.**

Scripture Micah 5:2-5a LOGOS

Special Music *How Unto Bethlehem* (arr. Parker/Shaw)

How unto Bethlehem this pilgrimage of Kings?  
What wonder your arrival brings, How strange the royal diadem in Bethlehem.  
Seek we a King, and honor bear him from afar,  
His birth proclaimed by a star. Tis surely near, Oh tell us, pray, Is this the way?  
Ah, but the child ye seek so richly to adorn of lowly maid is lowly born,  
His palace but a stable bare, No crown lies there.  
Seek we the stable, then, for though in manger laid, And lowly born of lowly maid,  
This day a Kingdom is begun And His the one. Then hail Him, King of Wisdom,  
King of love and Bliss, for King in truth this baby is. The savior of mankind is He  
Eternally Chancel Choir

Community Prayer Ruth Naylor

Special Music *Silent Night* (arr by Sandra Eithun) Adult Bells

Scripture Luke 1:39-55 LOGOS

Message *Born in Human Likeness* Janeen Bertsche Johnson

### Living God's Story

\*Hymn of Response VT 268 *Helpless and Hungry* & VT 267 *What Child Is This*  
(Helpless-v.1 / What Child-v.1 / Helpless-v.2 / What Child-v.2 / both simultaneously on v.3 [piano side - Helpless & organ side - What Child])

#### Offering

Words of Invitation

Offertory

Dedication Prayer

### Sending

\*Hymn of Sending VT 261 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*  
\*Benediction  
Postlude

*In response to God's unconditional love for all people, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome you to join us on our journey of faith in Jesus Christ. We are committed to breaking down dividing walls and building community where all are loved and accepted. We believe in active inclusion and invite each one to participate in the life and ministry of our congregation.*

**First Mennonite Church, 101 S. Jackson St., Bluffton, Ohio 45817  
419-358-5766 | [fmcbluffton.org](http://fmcbluffton.org)**

#### **Church Staff**

- **Pastor Jeff Boehr** –419-236-9150, [jeff@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:jeff@fmcbluffton.org)
- **Director of Music/Interim Church Administrator** –  
**Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368, [sudermanme@bluffton.edu](mailto:sudermanme@bluffton.edu)**
- **Children and Youth Ministry Director** – **Carrie Mast,**  
**419-230-1568, [mastc@bluffton.edu](mailto:mastc@bluffton.edu)**
- **Administrative Assistant** – **Trustworthy Schumacher,**  
**419-358-5766; [fmc@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:fmc@fmcbluffton.org)**
- **Custodian** – **Don Burris, 419-788-6157, [dcburris58@gmail.com](mailto:dcburris58@gmail.com)**

#### **Office Hours**

- **Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 9:00am-3:30pm**
- **Tuesday & Thursday 9:00am-4:30pm**

#### **Pastor Jeff Boehr**

- **Wednesday 9:00am-12:00pm**

**Video:** Ray Raeburn

**Sound:** Kevin Cluts

**Chancel:** Carolyn Rich

**Nursery Care:**

*First Mennonite Church is affiliated with the Central District Conference of Mennonite Church USA. The Mennonites are named after Menno Simons, one of our early church leaders, and are rooted historically in the "Anabaptist" movement, which began in 1525, with origins in Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands now reaching around the world. Some primary Anabaptist convictions then and now are following Jesus Christ in service to others, rejection of violence and war, and joyful community life.*

**12/5/21 - 12/12/21 Reported Volunteer hours: 58**

