

CELEBRATION OF ADVENT

*Gathering as God's people
to be inspired to live
as a community of Christ*



+ Those who are able are invited to stand.

UMH-United Methodist Hymnal FWS–Faith We Sing

You are invited to respond with the **Bold** responses.

THE CHURCH GATHERS TO CELEBRATE

Before you arrived, this room was silent; there was very little lumination bringing the stained glass windows to Light; the light bulbs on the Chrismon tree were cool and the only sounds in this room were the sounds of 100 year old radiators bumping and filling with heat for a December morning.

And now, you're here, in church, getting ready for Christmas. Just getting up out of bed, getting dressed and coming to church is no big deal, though there are some who are not worshiping with their Church family this morning.

There are Sundays on which the church asks us to perform great, heroic tasks to show that we are walking with Jesus. This Sunday is different. This Sunday, we turn toward the Light, toward the God who is turned toward you. This Sunday, we celebrate in Word and Song that we are turning toward the God who promises to be ever-turned toward us.

Welcome to worship! Thanks be to God!

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

Renee Warner

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HOSPITALITY

PRELUDE

Dan Martin

PROCESSION OF LIGHT

The Acolytes

Jesus said, "I am the Light of the World."

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God. And the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."-Phil. 4:4-7 (NRSV)

(Relight the first two Advent candles.)

Joy is at the heart of the journey through Advent to Christmas: Joy in the knowledge of what God has done throughout the ages, joy in the realization that God is able and that God does change things for the better, joy in the assurance that God can enter into our lives no matter what our situation may be.

The Apostle Paul calls us to a life of rejoicing:

- to live a life full of rejoicing and gentleness
- to put aside worry in the confidence that the Lord is near
- to lift our requests in prayer, with thanksgiving
- to trust that the Peace of God will guard our hearts and minds.

Let us then consider the condition of joy in our lives.

- Do worries sometimes seem larger than our confidence that God is near?
- Does the busy-ness of our lives sometime interfere in our life of prayer?
- Does anxiety over the big things of the world ruin the little joys of life?

Advent is a time when we can clean out the inner stables of our lives so that new life can be born, our spirits may be refreshed, and our lives may be renewed in the joy of salvation.

The Lord your God is in your midst, rejoicing over you with gladness, renewing you in love. I will bring you home and restore your fortunes, says the Lord.

In this new light, we give thanks to the Lord.

With joy you will draw waters from the wells of salvation.

We will rejoice in the Lord always.

We light a third candle to reveal the pathway to faithfulness.

(Here light the third candle.)

As a covenant people, we will seek to live in the joy of the Lord.

+HYMN OF PRAISE

UMH 211

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel vv. 1, 2, 6, & 7

THE CHURCH RESPONDS WITH GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION & PRAYER

OFFERTORY

Dan Martin

DOXOLOGY *In the Bleak Midwinter, v.4* UMH 221

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;

yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

The Children are invited to gather for Wiggletime.

WIGGLETIME

...and then to Children's Church

THE CHURCH LISTENS FOR THE WORD

A FESTIVAL OF

LESSONS AND CAROLS

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHANCEL CHOIR

<i>Eva Atha</i>	<i>Director</i>
<i>Dr. Daniel Martin</i>	<i>Organist</i>
<i>Renee Warner</i>	<i>Pianist</i>

Once in Royal David's City *UMH 250*

Vs. 1 *Choir*

Vv. 2 & 4 *Choir and Congregation*

BIDDING PRAYER *Rev. Steven Meadows*

Hymn *UMH 223*

Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light

Choir: Verse 1; All: 2 & 3

FIRST LESSON *Genesis 3*

In the Garden of Eden, God tells Adam that the serpent will be punished.

Hymn *UMH 210*

All Earth Is Waiting

SECOND LESSON *Genesis 22*

God promises Abraham that his children will be blessed.

Piano Solo *Carolyn Brown*

THIRD LESSON *Isaiah 9*

The prophet Isaiah foretells the birth of Christ.

Will We Know Him? *- Don Besig*

FOURTH LESSON *Isaiah 11*

Isaiah speaks of the peace that Christ will bring to the world.

Carol of the Bells *- arr. Peter Wilhousky*

FIFTH LESSON *Luke 1*

The Angel Gabriel appears to the Virgin Mary.

The Angel Gabriel - arr. Pettman and Willcocks

SIXTH LESSON *Luke 2*

The birth of Jesus is described by St. Luke

Solo *Breath of Heaven* *Renee Warner*

SEVENTH LESSON *Luke 2*

The shepherds journey to the manger.

Away in a Manger *- arr. Thomas Howe*

EIGHTH LESSON *John 1*

John unfolds the mystery of Christ's birth.

O Come, All Ye Faithful

+CLOSING PRAYER AND COLLECT

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage.

Hold fast that which is good;

render to no one evil for evil.

Strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak.

Help the afflicted; honor everyone.

Love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the blessing of God Almighty,

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

Be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

+Hark! The Herald Angels Sing *UMH 240*

Carol (With Congregation)

+POSTLUDE *Dan Martin*

...and the worship continues.

Next Sunday...Children's Nativity Celebration

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion, 7 PM

*Joy in the Assurance that God can
Enter into our Lives*

**LESSONS
AND
CAROLS**

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**FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH**