

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

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

Following the Star...

+ 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 illumination 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 116-year-old radiators bumping and filling with heat for a January morning.

And now, you're here, in church, still celebrating 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 following and walking with Jesus. This Sunday, we make sure that we turn each day toward the God who is turned toward you. This Sunday, we celebrate in Word and song that we are turning toward the God who is 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."

*The Lighting of the Communion Table Candles and all
five candles of the Advent Wreath*

+CALL TO WORSHIP

Responsively

We gather as people looking for the star, a sign that God is at work in the world. We gather as people listening for the whispers of the Spirit, hints of the good news in the least likely places. We gather as people yearning for Love's presence, the assurance that we are not alone and Love will have the last word.

God, help us encounter your glory.

In these moments of worship, may the Light of Love shine among us, revealing divine glory through neighbors known and unknown, vulnerable children, and unexpected gifts.

God, reveal to us anew the glory of your expansive Love that gathers us together and sustains us in loving service to one another.

+HYMN OF PRAISE

UMH 211

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

THE CHURCH IN MOMENTS OF AFFIRMATION

THE PSALTER

Psalm 147:12-20

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Unison

We are Christmas people, a people of hope.

Advent was a time of waiting, and so we waited for the coming of the One who is the fulfillment of God's promise, the fulfillment of hope, the declaration that we have been redeemed.

Even so, we are not naïve people.

We know that the world in which we live will continue to be filled with pain and sorrow. We know that hatred and violence will continue to exist. We know that death and separation will continue to be a part of our lives.

But because we are Christmas people, we know that none of these things will win in the end.

The Holy One makes holy once again, all that was, all that is, and all that ever will be.

And so, as we continue the Christ-mass celebrations, we work and worship, pray and play, in all things looking for that peace, love, joy, and hope will reign in our lives and in our world, today and forever. Amen.

THE CHURCH RESPONDS WITH GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

God's light is present in this world.

Present in the Christ child, born to lead us out of darkness. Present in the star, in all that guides us to love. God's light is in the world, and the darkness did not overcome it. God's grace is in the world, and our missteps will not overcome it. We are loved; we are forgiven. Will you give a portion of your blessings in gratitude of what God has done for you?

PRAYER

Unison

Radiant God, the light of your wisdom and love shines for all who seek you, guiding us with grace. We come bearing gifts in response to the gift of Christ you've given us. Use these offerings to reflect your light into dark places, so that others might be drawn to your love, your justice, and your joy. Keep us faithful in our seeking, generous in our sharing, and willing to be led wherever your star shines next. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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.

THE CHURCH LISTENS FOR THE WORD

A FESTIVAL OF
LESSONS AND CAROLS

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHANCEL CHOIR

Eva Atha

Dr. Daniel Martin

Renee Warner

Director

Organist

Pianist

Once in Royal David's CityUMH 250

Vs. 1

Choir

Vv. 2 & 4

Choir and Congregation

BIDDING PRAYER

Rev. Steven Meadows

HymnUMH 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.

HymnUMH 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.

HymnUMH 242

Love Came Down at Christmas

All sing verses 1 & 3, Choir will sing verse 2

FIFTH LESSON

Luke 1

The Angel Gabriel appears to the Virgin Mary.

HymnUMH 249

There's a Song in the Air, vv. 1, 2, 4

SIXTH LESSON

Luke 2

The birth of Jesus is described by St. Luke

SoloBreath of HeavenRenee Warner

SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2

The shepherds journey to the manger.

Away in a Manger- arr. Thomas Howe

EIGHTH LESSON

John1

John unfolds the mystery of Christ's birth.

+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 SingUMH 240

Carol (With Congregation)

+POSTLUDE

Dan Martin

...and the worship continues.



THE CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION CONTINUES

04 JANUARY 2026

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Buckhannon, WV

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FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH