

# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## *Christmas Eve • Service of Holy Communion*

FIVE-THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE AFTERNOON & SEVEN-THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

### *Acolytes*

*Trevor Cox, Landry Hobson (5:30), William Peacock, Henry Peacock (7:30)*

### *Crucifers*

*Grant Reagan(5:30), Dixon Poirier (7:30)*

### *Banner Bearers*

*Carter Cox (5:30), Russell Peacock (7:30)*

*You may wish to prepare your heart and mind for worship in silent prayer,  
meditation, or the reading of scriptures or hymns.*

PRELUDE.....*Fantasia on Greensleeves*..... Laura Crawford, violin  
R. Vaughan Williams E. Ray Peebles, organ

INTROIT .....*Christmas Intrada*.....Chancel Choir  
David Lantz

CALL TO WORSHIP & INVOCATION .....Dr. Goad

† HYMN .....“O Come, All Ye Faithful” ..... No. 234  
(Stanzas 1-3 & 6)

† CHRISTMAS GREETING (said *responsively*) ..... Dr. Rhoads

The angel appeared to the shepherds telling them not to be afraid,  
because they had good news which would bring great joy to all people.

*This very day, in David's town, a Savior was born, Christ the Lord. Hallelujah!*

We, too, come together to experience the joy of Christ's birth.

May this joy continue in our hearts.

*Let us rejoice! Let us rejoice and share the good news of His birth. Glory to God in  
the highest and on earth, peace, goodwill toward all through Jesus Christ. Amen.*

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

(5:30).....Dr. Pat and Sheri Day & Ryan and Danae Day, Adeline and Camilla

(7:30).....Dr. Ashley Goad & Family

*The white candle signifies the pure life of Christ;  
the flame is the symbol of Christ, the light of the world.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in Unison).....Rev. Wilkinson

*O Father, we yearn for the simple beauty of Christmas. We are not worthy to be the receivers of your greatest gift, the Christ Child. We take this time to humble ourselves before you. We confess our love and devotion to you has not always been as warm or sincere or real as it should have been. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes and our failure to follow you. But now, on this Christmas Eve, we ask your blessings, that we might experience anew the birth of your Son. Amen.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON.....LUKE 2:1-14.....Dr. Goad /Rev. Wilkinson

† HYMN.....“O Little Town of Bethlehem” ..... No. 230

PASTORAL PRAYER ..... Rev. Joyce

SCRIPTURE LESSON.....MATTHEW 2:3-12 .....Dr. Day

MESSAGE.....THE BEST GIFT EVER.....Dr. Day

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION ..... Dr. Day

WORDS OF ASSURANCE AND GREAT THANKSGIVING (said responsively)

The Lord be with you.

*And also with you.*

Lift up your hearts.

*We lift them up to the Lord.*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*It is right to give Him thanks and praise.*

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

## BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND BLESSING OF THE CUP

*Please come to the Communion Table as you are directed by the ushers. If you are unable to come forward, please notify an usher and Communion will be brought to you. ✠ There are no spoken dismissals; you may leave the altar after you have received Communion, so that others may come. ✠ As you take the Sacrament, pause for a moment to pray for the peace of the world and those less-fortunate than ourselves. ✠ It is customary, in churches of the Methodist tradition, to leave a “thank offering” when taking Communion. You may leave a gift for the Christmas Offering, which helps support the ministries of our church.*

*As the congregation comes to the altar, the choir, instrumentalists and soloists will present various inspirational selections. There will be a gluten-free station at the altar table.*

## MUSIC FOR COMMUNION

*O Holy Night*.....Adolphe Adam.....Sarah Wilkerson, soprano

*Wexford Carol with The First Noel*.....arr. Alison Beck.....Elizabeth Beck, violin  
Alison Beck, piano

*Sweet, Little Jesus Boy*.....Robert MacGimsey.....Janet Coughlin, alto

*Gesu Bambino*.....Pietro Yon.....John-Henry Crawford, cello  
Laura Crawford, violin  
E. Ray Peebles, organ

*What Sweeter Music*.....John Rutter.....Chancel Choir

*Away in the Manger*.....arr. Mack Wilberg.....Chancel Choir

*Still, Still, Still*.....arr. Norman Luboff.....Chancel Choir

## CONGREGATIONAL CAROLS (*sing the first and last stanza of each, as needed*)

“Away in a Manger” ..... NO. 217

“What Child is This” ..... NO. 219

“Angels from the Realms of Glory” ..... NO. 220

“Angels We Have Heard on High” ..... NO. 238

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” ..... NO. 240

“The First Noel” ..... NO. 245

“Joy to the World” ..... NO. 246

“There’s a Song in the Air!” ..... NO. 249

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES..... Dr. Day  
*As we sing Silent Night together, we will dim the lights and Dr. Day will light the candles of the ushers gathered at the Altar. The ushers will then light the candles of those nearest the aisle in each row. The first person in each row will light the person's candle next to them, and so on, until all the candles have been lit. PLEASE REMEMBER: keep the lighted candle upright to prevent spilling hot wax, and tip the unlighted candle towards it to light it. Please extinguish the lit candles and place them in the receptacles as you leave.*

“Silent Night” (stand for the singing of the last stanza)..... NO. 239

† BENEDICTION ..... Rev. Joyce

† CHORAL BENEDICTION.....“Hallelujah” from *Messiah*.....Chancel Choir  
George Frideric Handel

POSTLUDE.....“Toccatà” from *Symphony No. 5*.....E. Ray Peebles  
Charles-Marie Widor



THE LITURGICAL BANNER FOR CHRISTMAS is given to the glory of God and in memory of Vivian Taylor Rees Pullen by Friends and Family.

THE WHITE POINSETTIAS UNDER THE CROSS are given in memory of Mary Edna Adams Brossette and Dianne Rose McCollum Brossette by their families.

† *Those who are able may stand.*

### OUR CHRISTMAS WISH FOR YOU

*May the joy of Christmas bless you with peace and contentment and His everlasting presence.*

*May the spirit of Christmas so fill your hearts that He will guide you in your every way  
and give you strength for your every burden.*

*May His love so touch your lives that you will love all of His children.*

*May the Good Lord bless you, everyone, and those whom you love everywhere!*

Senior Pastor: Dr. R. Pat Day + Executive Pastor: Rev. Derek Joyce + Associate Pastor: Rev. Caroline Wilkinson

Associate Pastor, Global Missions & Women's Ministry: Dr. Ashley Goad

Pastor of Senior Adult Ministry: Dr. Carl E. Rhoads Director of Music: Dr. David Hobson

Director of Fine Arts: Dr. Will K. Andress + Principal Organist: E. Ray Peebles + Scholar-in-Residence: Dr. Donald Webb

