

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Celebration of Worship – Christmas Eve Services – 12.24.17

Christmas Eve • Service of Holy Communion

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

Acolytes

Sarah Margaret Foreman, Kate Foreman (5:30), Henry Peacock, Dixon Poirier (7:30)

Crucifers

Madalyn Byrd (5:30), William Peacock (7:30)

Banner Bearers

Benjamin Foreman (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
Ralph 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 Day & Family

(7:30)..... Rev. Caroline & Brett Wilkinson, Jake and Ben

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).....Dr. Goad

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*.....Rev. Wilkinson

† HYMN.....“Away in a Manger” No. 217

PASTORAL PRAYER Rev. Joyce

SCRIPTURE LESSON.....*John 3:16*Dr. Day

MESSAGE.....OPEN BEFORE CHRISTMAS.....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.....Rebecca Vacha, soprano

In The Bleak Midwinter.....arr. Alison Beck.....Elizabeth Beck, violin
Alison Beck, piano

HYFRYDOL.....Pritchard/arr. Paul Jones.....John-Henry Crawford, cello
[Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus] Laura Crawford, violin
E. Ray Peebles, organ

Still, Still, Still.....arr. Catherine McMichael.....John-Henry Crawford, cello
[Austrian Carol played on an Austrian Cello]

Scarborough Carol.....arr. Kirby Shaw.....Sarah Wilkerson, soprano
Chancel Choir

What Child is This?.....arr. Keith Christopher.....Chancel Choir

Joy to the World!.....arr. John RutterChancel Choir

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

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear” NO. 218

“Angels from the Realms of Glory” NO. 220

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” NO. 230

“Angels We Have Heard on High” NO. 238

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” NO. 240

“The First Noel” NO. 245

“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.

HYMN.....“Silent Night” (*please stand for 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.

THE ALTAR WREATH AND FLOWERS are presented each Sunday in Advent to the Glory of God and in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hamiter and Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Andress by their family.

† *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

Bishop-in-Residence: William W. Hutchinson