



First United Methodist Church

*Welcome! We're glad that you are here.
To all who need comfort; all who need friendship;
all who are lonely and need companionship;
all who want sheltering love, all who sin
and need a Savior; and whosoever will
—we open wide our doors and say,
“Come; let us worship together.”*

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24, 2021 7 pm

Today's candles exemplify the Christ as "light of the world" (John 8:12), as the light is gradually spread during the service from the Advent Wreath to candles throughout the church.

PRELUDE Vivian Eaton
**LIGHTING OF ALTAR CANDLES, ADVENT
CANDLES & CHRIST CANDLE**

Liturgist: Molly Andersen
We light this Christ Candle as a sign of Love, Peace, Joy and Hope in our lives. The true light is shining in the world. It is the Light of our beloved Savior Jesus Christ. We light this Christ candle and remember how much Jesus loves us and the world.

HYMN: #191 "Jesus loves me, this I know. For the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong. They are weak but He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so!"

WELCOME

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

L: The Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Beloved in Christ, we are gathered together on this Eve of Christmas to prepare ourselves for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; to meditate upon the mystery of that Incarnation by which our nature is redeemed, and to receive with joy the message of our salvation.

A: "Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation may spring up, and let it cause righteousness to sprout up also; I the Lord have created it." (Isaiah 45:8)

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Christ is born; give him glory!

P: Christ has come down from heaven; receive him!

L: Christ is now on earth; exalt him!

P: O you earth, sing to the Lord!

All: O you nations, praise him in joy, for he has been glorified! Alleluia!

HYMN #234 “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (verse 1 and 3 only)

CHRISTMAS AFFIRMATION (In Unison): We believe in God, the creator and giver of life, who brought all creation to birth, who mothers us and fathers us, protecting, nurturing, and cherishing us. We believe in Jesus Christ: God born among us as a fragile baby, embodying both love and the need for love, and calling us to rest in God as trustingly as a tiny child. We believe in the Holy Spirit, breathed into us at our birth, always drawing us on to be born again, encouraging, exhorting, comforting, nourishing our growth and inspiring our living. And we believe that each new child is a glimpse of the face of God, a sign of the life to come, and a call to live in peace and celebrate living together. Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Amen.

HYMN #245 "The First Noel"

OFFERING OURSELVES

OFFERTORY PRAYER (In Unison): Blessed Lord, you have given us your greatest gift—your very Word come to earth, to live with us and through us; you have filled us with your grace and truth—your holy child

sent to free us from our bonds. How can we repay such divine generosity? Receive our thanks and praise. As you have given to us, so now we share your gifts and your grace with a world in need. May this offering help bring your light and love to those who still wander in darkness. Accept these gifts for the sake of your Son who was born to us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Titus 2:11-14 (NRSV)

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

HYMN #251 “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 2:8-20 (NRSV)

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this,

they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HYMN #246 “Joy to the World” (v.1,3,4 only)
the glories of his righteousness,

CHRISTMAS DEVOTION AND COMMUNION

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST FILLS OUR HEARTS

The Sanctuary lights will be dimmed, and the ushers will come forward to the Christ Candle with the lighters to get the flame while we are singing ‘Emmanuel, Emmanuel.’ The ushers will pass the flames to the first person in every pew, and that person will pass it to the next, and so on. May we all take care to assure that we do this safely. Then, we will be singing “Silent Night, Holy Night” all together.

HYMN #239 “Silent Night, Holy Night”
Please, raise your candle carefully during the third stanza as a tribute to God’s Wondrous Light, Jesus Christ, shining in our lives and through us to the world.

BLESSING

All candles are to be snuffed after blessing.

POSTLUDE
Vivian Eaton

Thank you for joining our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service!

May the Birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, fill your heart with hope, your life with joy, your spirit with peace, and the world with love!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Thank you for decorating the sanctuary with your Poinsettia! You can take them home today after service.

Kids Kards will be decorating 100 bags for the food pantry on Sunday, December 26. Pizza will be provided. All are invited. Please join us!



First United Methodist Church
Friday, Christmas Eve 7 pm
December 24, 2021

Vision 2021 – “Love God!”
Inward Focused Ministry during the Pandemic
(to build up strong and vital church)
Strong in Worship, Strong in Fellowship, Strong in Resources

*“Be strong and courageous;
do not be frightened or dismayed,
for the Lord your God is with you
wherever you go
(Joshua 1:9)*

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