

First United Methodist Church

Welcome! We are a Congregation Caring For and About God's Community

December 24, 2024 - 7:30pm

Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols



GATHERING AND PRAISE

Christmas Carol Selections for an Extended Prelude

Welcome and Invocation — *Pastor Amy Terhune*

***Opening Carol UMH #234: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" (vs. 1, 2, 3, 6)**

1) O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him,
born the King of angels;

Refrain: O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

2) True God of true God,
Light from Light Eternal,

Lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created;
[Refrain]

3) Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
[Refrain]

6) Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born on Christmas morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing: *[Refrain]*

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

***The Lighting of the Advent Wreath** — *The Sharrow Family*

One: Tonight, we celebrate the one moment, the one birth, the one life that forever changed the world!

All: O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

One: Because you came to us, we have witnessed the fullness of love and experienced the ultimate hope to weather even our darkest moments.

All: O Come, Wonderful Counselor, our Mighty God

One: Because you have come to us, we have a deep joy residing in us that trials cannot shake, for we have seen the face of peace in pure form.

All: O Come, Everlasting Father, our Prince of Peace!

** Please stand if you are able*

One: Tonight, we hear again the song of the angels: Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, peace and goodwill to all people!

All: O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

One: Tonight is the night for which we have been waiting. We celebrate Jesus coming into the world as we light all five candles: first, the candle of hope; second, the candle of love; next, the candle of peace; and then the candle of joy. Finally, we light the Christ candle, which reminds us that in the moment when that fragile infant drew his very first breath in Bethlehem, God intervened in human life and history for all time, taking on our flesh, our temptations, and our illnesses in order to free us from them. As the Christ candle shines forth at the center of our wreath and our lives, we remember how he told us: “Lo, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Glory to God!

All: Gracious God, your spirit has led us through this Advent journey. Thank you for opening our eyes to see more of your presence in our world and our lives. We rejoice in your ultimate gift of sending a Savior, who taught us the fullness of what hope, love, joy, and peace are all about. O Come, let us adore Him, Christ our Lord! Amen.

SONG: God comes to us at Christmas. Light birthed to heal our souls. See now enfleshed among us, one to make what’s broken whole. As we look on yonder stable, in the darkness, glad and grateful, for the sacred in our midst, for wonder and delight, Christ is born in us this night.



God comes to us at Christ – mas. Light birthed to heal our souls. See now en –



fleshed a – mong us, one to make what’s bro – ken whole. As we look on



yon – der sta – ble, in the dark – ness, glad & grate – ful, for the sa – cred in our midst, for



won – der and de – light, Christ is born in us this night.

Choral Anthem:

“Christmas Peace”

by Joel Raney

Time of Silent Meditation

The Pastoral Prayer for Christmas Eve

The Lord’s Prayer – Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Living Our Gratitude

♪ *Please continue to support your church family. Enjoy the musical selection as a time to give thanks to God for all with which you have been blessed. Use the QR code to the right or give online here:*

<https://www.firstumcsaginaw.org/give>



Offertory:

Variants on “Joy to the World”

arr. Raymond H. Haan

***The Doxology:**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

UMH #94

Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

***The Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving:** Giving God, as we recount the birth of a Savior long ago, we remember there were some who said, “There’s no room”, while others found ways to make room. As we bring our gifts to your altar, help us give with a heart of abundance and not one of scarcity, knowing that there is indeed room for all at your manger. In the name of our Savior and Redeemer, we pray. Amen.



Scripture Lesson One:

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Bill Cowdry

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined... ⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. And the zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Choral Anthem:*“Christmas Lullaby”**by John Rutter***Scripture Lesson Two:**

Micah 5:2-5a

Peg Wilken

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth, ⁵ and he shall be the one of peace.

Special Music:

“A Baby Just Like You”
Dr. Robert Miller, soloist

*by John Denver***Scripture Lesson Three:**

Luke 2:1-7

Rev. Brad Terhune

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered for the tax. ²This was the first registration taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went register with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Carol UMH #219:*“What Child Is This?” (vs 1-2)*

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| 1) What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping? | 2) Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading. |
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Chorus: This, this is Christ, the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!

Scripture Lesson Four:

Luke 2:8-14

Catharine Terhune

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people: ¹¹for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³Then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, singing, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and goodwill to all people!”

*** Carol UMH #240:** *“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”*

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| 1) Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!" | Hail th' incarnate Deity,
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!" |
| 2) Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; | 3) Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth,
Born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!" |

Scripture Lesson Five:

Luke 2:15-20

Cal Mott

¹⁵ 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." ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told to them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

*** Carol UMH #249:** *“There’s A Song In The Air” (vs. 1, 3, 4)*

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| 1) There's a song in the air!
There's a star in the sky!
There's a mother's deep prayer
And a baby's low cry!
And the star rains its fire
While the beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem
Cradles a King! | Every hearth is aflame,
And the beautiful sing
In the homes of the nations
That Jesus is King! |
| 3) In the light of that star
Lie the ages impearled;
And that song from afar
Has swept over the world. | 4) We rejoice in the light,
And we echo the song
That comes down through the night
From the heavenly throng.
Ay! We shout to the lovely
Evangel they bring,
And we greet in his cradle
Our Savior and King! |

Christmas Meditation

AMBASSADORS OF LIGHT

Pastor Amy Terhune

Choral Anthem:

“The Christmas Cradle”

by Gilbert M. Martin

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORSHIP WITH US every Sunday Morning at 10:00am

PLEASE HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS: Marilyn Ashmall, Ed Babinski, David Barker, Barry Brown, Tom Brubaker, Bernie Buggia, Myrna Cammin, Judy Dawe, Bonnie Dole, Esther Cavendish Fisher, Don Hammond, Wayne Henney, Dr. Kirk Herrick, Marion Hoffman, Sue Johnson, Sharon Ketcham, ZoAnn Kraynak, Barb Kropp, Mark Leffler, Joyce Maltman, Bonnie Markley, Kay Mertz, Merlyn Mondol, Bob & Sharon Mueller, Madge Richmond, Eugenia Shek, Noreen Southgate, Kathy Winkowski, and Dorothy Woods. Also, please pray for UMCOR, and for war to end in Ukraine and in Israel/Gaza.

TAIZÉ MEDITATIVE WORSHIP – 7:00pm on Wednesday, January 1, 2025. Start the new year with a time of song, prayer, and meditative silence.

FREE COMMUNITY MEALS are on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, continuing Tuesday, January 14, 2025 from 5:30-6:30pm. On the menu next month: Chili!!! Volunteer to work here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B044DAFAC2BA0FD0-community>

THE BACKPACK PROGRAM for children struggling with food insecurity continues each week. Sponsor a child for \$150/year. Sign up to pack food and help deliver to area schools at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B044DAFAC2BA0FD0-44603782-backpack>

COUNTERS NEEDED to count the offering after worship beginning in January. Counters work in teams of 2, and the task generally takes 20-30 minutes. Light record-keeping also involved. A training will be held after worship on January 5, 2025. This work helps us maintain fiscal safety protocols. Please speak with Dina Draper or Pastor Amy at (989) 799-0131 if you're willing and able to help. Thank You!

BIBLE EXCHANGE – We now have a bookshelf in the lobby area with copies of Scripture available for free. If you need a bible, or see a translation you've not studied before, please feel free to take a bible. If you have extra copies of Scripture around your home that aren't being read/used, please consider donating them for others who don't own a copy of the Bible, or want to study more in depth.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Be sure to check in on Facebook! The more of us that do, the more people learn about who we are!
YouTube: **Saginaw First UMC** Facebook: **@firstumcofsaginaw** Instagram: **saginawfumc**

Wishing you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!