

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Rev. Michael Q. Atkinson, Lead Pastor

Rev. Harry Jenkins, Associate Pastor

Brett Miller, Director of Music

"A Holy, Healthy, and Loving Community Striving to Know Christ and to Make Christ Known"



December 24, 2021

11:00 p.m.

A CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE

WORDS OF WELCOME ----- Pastor Michael Atkinson

PRELUDE - - - - - "Prelude on Silent Night" / Samuel Barber - - - Dr. Jessica Scott

CALL TO WORSHIP----- -Rev. Harry Jenkins

Leader: Augustus and Quirinius— ancient names that seem odd to today's ears...

People: characters in an ancient story that we long to hear.

Leader: Nazareth and Bethlehem— distant towns we know little about...

People: places our hearts long for, because of the One who traveled there.

Leader: We gather together to hear once more, a story so ancient
and yet so current, so distant and yet so near.

People: We come to hear the story of God coming to us.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES - - - - - Pastor Atkinson and Rev. Jenkins

The Candle of Hope

Leader: We gather to celebrate the birth of the one who is the light of the world.

People: We are here to worship God – and his Son Jesus –
born this night in Bethlehem of Judea.

Leader: Tonight, we relight the candle of Hope to remind us of the promises
made by all the prophets that God would raise up a savior for his
people Israel.

People: Christ is our hope and our salvation.

He calls us to share our hope in him with each other.

Forgive us for our faithlessness, Lord. Slow us down, and cause us to take time to really consider the wonderful ways you have always worked in our lives. As we have come before you with concerns on our hearts for our families, friends, and world, remind us that your presence is with us and your healing love comforts and restores us. Open our hearts and our ears to the cries of those in need. Let us use our talents and resources to help others. Give us courage, energy, and enthusiasm as we work for you in this world. We ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN

MUSICAL OFFERING - "The Snow Lay On the Ground" /arr. Wm. Cutter

Brett Miller & Don Gardner, singers; Cyndi Shaver, signer; Jessica Scott, organ

*The snow lay on the ground, the star shone bright
when Christ our Lord was born on Christmas night.*

Venite adoremus Dominum.

*'Twas Mary, Virgin pure of holy Anne
That brought into this world the God made man.*

Venite adoremus Dominum.

SCRIPTURE LESSON - - - - - Luke 2:1-20 - - - - - Pastor Atkinson

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

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.

MEDITATION - - - - - “Every Day is Christmas” - - - - - Pastor Atkinson

MUSICAL OFFERING - - - - - “O Holy Night” / Adolphe Adam

*Brett Miller & Don Gardner, singers; Cyndi Shaver, signer; Jessica Scott, organ
“Mary and Joseph”: Katie Shaver and Brandon Kroll*

*O holy night, the stars are brightly shining. It is the night of our dear Savior’s birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining ‘til He appeared and the soul felt it’s worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.*

Fall on your knees, O hear the angel voices!

O night divine! O night when Christ was born. O night divine! O night, o night divine!

Christ is the Lord! Praise, praise His name forever.

His power and glory evermore proclaim.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

CONSECRATION OF ELEMENTS

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.

SHARING OF HOLY COMMUNION

CANDLE LIGHTING

HYMN (*see insert for words*)- - - - - “Silent Night”

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE - “Excerpt from Organ Flourish on Joy to the World” / Michael Dell

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child,
holy infant so tender and mild.
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;
Radiant beams from thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.