

# 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"*



November 27, 2022

First Sunday of Advent -- Hope  
A SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE

WORDS OF WELCOME ----- Pastor Michael Atkinson

ORGAN PRELUDE - -"Es Ist ein Ros' Entsprungen" / J. Brahms - Dr. Jessica Scott

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The time is coming when the Lord shall pour his most special blessing  
on the earth.

People: We want to be ready for that time. What should we do?

Leader: Be vigilant. Keep your hearts, minds, and spirits open to God's word.

People: Help us, O Lord, to be aware of all of your blessings.

Leader: Come, let us celebrate God's love for us.

People: Make our hearts ready to receive your Gift of Love, O Lord.

\*HYMN #196 ----- "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE ----- Amy Gardner and Olivia Lipscomb

Leader: Christians around the world await the advent of Christ.

We join with a joyous and hopeful throng in lighting the Advent candles,  
symbols of our faith and signs of God's love.

People: We gather as a people of Hope.

Leader: Christian people around the world stand today in breathless anticipation  
of a miracle that has been repeated for hundreds of years, yet that  
astounds us anew each year.

People: Our hope springs anew from an ancient vision.

Leader: As we light the first Advent candle, it represents hope based not on wishful thinking but on deep conviction. We believe we have seen and received the Promise and the Great Gift; and therefore, in the midst of darkness and imperfection, we hope.

People: We gather expectantly, joyfully, and with deep commitment because we have heard that a special Child is to come, that God is to be among us, and that soon we will see a new creation on earth.

We are a people of hope.

ADVENT HYMN #2090, v. I (Faith We Sing) - - - "Light the Advent Candle"

## CHILDREN'S MOMENTS WITH THE PASTOR

GOSPEL LESSON - - - - -Matthew 24:36-44

But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away.

That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

SERMON - - "Reclaiming Christmas: Waiting & Watching in Hope" - Pastor Atkinson  
*(you are encouraged to use this space for notes)*

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Amazing Surprises, we are rushing headlong into this season of buying, giving, greed, and struggle. We want to think of the holiday as delightful, but we have a tendency to make it a time of the highest stress. We over-schedule our time, overdraw our resources, ignore those moments in which we could just relax and have quiet time with our families and with you. We blame it on everything else but our own decision making. We speak of obligations, of the need to be constantly busy, of the pressure to purchase things to make people happy.

The reality is that your love should be our foundation, the base from which we celebrate. Our watchfulness is not necessarily about what is to happen, but rather should be on the ways in which we order our lives, ways that block out your love and your healing power. Forgive us for our stubborn insistence on maintaining schedule rather than focusing on your love.

Heal us. Strengthen us and make us watchful over our faith in you. For we ask this in Jesus' Name, AMEN.

## SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Watch! Wait! God is bringing to you renewed hope. It is a gift, given especially for you--one that you cannot earn—it's a gift. Praise be to the Giver of All Great Gifts, our Lord. AMEN.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thank to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Leader: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. . . .

...and so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**ALL: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Leader: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. . . .

...and so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**ALL: Christ has died; Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Leader: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

## 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 THE BREAD AND CUP

*Music during Distribution of the Elements - "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" / arr. Lania Smith  
Dr. Scott, piano; Mr. Miller, organ*

**HYMN #626- - - - - "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"**

## BENEDICTION

**ORGAN POSTLUDE - - "Von Himmel Hoch" / J. Pachelbel - - - - - Dr. Scott**



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First United Methodist Church — Clarksburg



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### UPCOMING EVENTS AT FIRST CHURCH

Tues., Nov. 29th -- Monastic Meal -- Parlor

Thur., Dec. 1st -- Drug Court Holiday Luncheon -- Fellowship Hall

Thur., Dec. 1st -- Prayer Shaw Ministry -- Parlor

Sat., Dec. 3rd -- Winter Shelter opens (Through March 17) -- Gym

Sun., Dec. 4th -- "White Gifts Sunday" (see separate notice below)

Tue., Dec. 6th -- Monastic Meal -- Parlor

Tue., Dec. 6th -- Vision Team -- Parlor

Thur. Dec. 8th -- Prayer Shaw Ministry -- Parlor

Thur., Dec. 8th -- 4-H Cooking Class -- Kitchen and Dining Room

Sun., Dec. 11th -- "Celebration of Lessons and Carols"

Twelve-Step Meetings (7 sessions each week) -- Monday through Thursday -- Library



White Gift Sunday

Share the joy

of the season!

### WHITE GIFTS SUNDAY -- DECEMBER 4TH

A legacy from our St. Paul's merger in 1965  
is the White Gifts tradition.

Bring non-perishable food, wrapped or bagged in white,  
for distribution to the needy through the Mustard Seed.

Contact Tammy Matheny at 304-476-2015  
if you would like information about our Prayer Chain.

