

# *Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

December 24, 2016

PRELUDE – Christmas Music for Harp

Amy Wilkins, Harp

WORDS OF WELCOME

Tricia Lindley

*Please fill out the attendance pad at your pew and pass it to your neighbors, then back down to the end.*

\* PROCESSIONAL HYMN #234 United Methodist Hymnal – O Come, All Ye Faithful (verses 1-3)

\* CALL TO WORSHIP

Michael Lamb, Lay Lector

He came as a baby in a manger.

**O come let us adore him.**

He came in a lowly stable.

**O come let us adore him.**

Shepherds brought their worship.

**O come let us adore him.**

Angels sang his praise.

**O come let us adore him.**

Magi brought their gifts.

**O come let us adore him.**

What shall we do?

**O come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!**

\* CHORAL ACT OF PRAISE

Wolcum, Yole!

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

Dorothy Nichols, Martin, Molly & Meg Smith

*Congregation joins in the prayer after lighting:*

**Great God of love and light, we thank you now for the light of that special star that guided shepherds and wise men to the Christ Child. Lead us now, by the light of your love, that we also may follow you to new life in him. Amen.**

THE LESSON Isaiah 9:2b-4, 6-7

Michael Lamb

ANTHEM

The Chancel Choir/Dr. James Smith, Music Director

Shepherd's Pipe Carol (John Rutter)

A TIME OF PRAYER AND REFLECTION

Rev. Robert English

UNISON PRAYER

**O God our redeemer, when we have strayed from your paths, you light our way home. You send us your Holy One to guide the way. Let us follow in the way of your light, walking faithfully in the paths of justice and peace which lead to abundant life. Let the star of your hope touch our minds and hearts this night with bright beams of mercy and truth. May we find our way home to the fullness of your love for us, and for the whole creation. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

## SILENT PRAYER

## 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.**

CHORAL RESPONSE Nowell, Nowell (Randall Thompson)

The Chancel Choir

THE GOSPEL Luke 2:1-20

Ron Theile, Lay Lector

HYMN #221 UMH – In the Bleak Midwinter

## RECEIVING OUR CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Rev. English

*We thank you for your generous support for the mission and ministries of the congregation. You will find an envelope in the pew rack for your Christmas Offering. The offering plates will be passed to gather our gifts of cash or checks made out to "First UMC." You will find church brochures at the Welcome Table as you leave the service. You may give online or find out more information at [santamonicaumc.org](http://santamonicaumc.org).*

## THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Chancel Choir

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly (arr. Mack Wilberg)

## UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. English

**O Holy God, in whom all hearts find welcome, we worship you this night with the simplest wonder. We are filled with love and hope because you offer us your life and your light. We offer back to you the gift of our hearts and our praise. May the birth of the Christ Child renew our lives and rekindle our hope. Amen.**

HYMN #249 UMH – There's a Song in the Air

SERMON "The Magnificent Bewilderment of Stars"

Rev. Patricia Farris

MOMENTS OF SILENCE AND REFLECTION – Lighting of the Christ Candle

## THE SERVICE OF LIGHT

*The lights in the Sanctuary will be turned out. The minister will light her candle and the ushers will light their candles from hers. The ushers will then light the candle of the first person in each pew, and they in turn will light the candle of their neighbor and so on, until all the candles in the pew are lit. It is requested that no lit candles be tipped. Candles are to be extinguished at the conclusion of the service.*

\* HYMN Silent Night, Holy Night (see insert)

*During the singing of the last stanza, the congregation will stand and hold their candles aloft.*

\* THE RINGING OF THE BELL

\* HYMN Joy to the World (see insert)

\* BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Final from Symphony No. 1 (Louis Vierne)

Ty Woodward, Organ

As a courtesy to others, please silence all cell phones/sound-making devices. \* Asterisks indicate standing if you are able.

Rev. Patricia Farris, Senior Minister  
Rev. Robert English, New & Emerging Ministries  
Tricia Lindley, Director of Children & Youth Ministry  
Rev. Keri Olsen, Chaplain in Residence  
Dr. James Smith, Music Director  
The Chancel Choir  
Ty Woodward, Organ  
Lay Lectors: Michael Lamb, Ron Theile  
Acolytes: Gwen Warren, Jamie Jones  
Crucifer: Tristen Warren  
A/V Engineer: Michael Grothe  
Head Usher: Jocelyn Hicks-Garner

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*An area labeled "Kids Zone" in the narthex is open to all parents with small children during tonight's worship. You may sit or play with your children and still hear the service. A changing station is provided in the restroom in the hallway west of the Fireside Room. Please see one of our ushers if you need assistance.*

**Welcome!** We count it a privilege and a blessing to worship with you on this joyous Christmas Eve. If you come as a guest, we hope you will leave as a friend.

College students are invited to a reception in the Fireside Room following this service. Friends are also welcome!

If there are Prayer Quilts on the north wall of the sanctuary, you are invited to pray over and tie knots on the quilts.

We express our appreciation to Mike Eskridge and the Seasonal Displays Committee for the special floral arrangements and greens that beautify the Sanctuary. If you dedicated poinsettias, you may take them home tonight.

Information about the ministries of our church is available just outside the Sanctuary doors at our Welcome Table. For more information about what we offer, or to contact one of our pastors or staff members, visit our church website at [www.santamonicaumc.org](http://www.santamonicaumc.org), or call the church office.

First UMC takes the care and safety of children very seriously. We are a Safe Sanctuary congregation.

We hope to see you again soon! Christmas Day Family Service is tomorrow at 10 a.m.; Weekly Sunday Sanctuary worship services are at 10 a.m.; simple church meets every Sunday in the Chapel at 5 p.m., and Messy Church is a family worship service held monthly on Saturdays at 4 p.m.

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