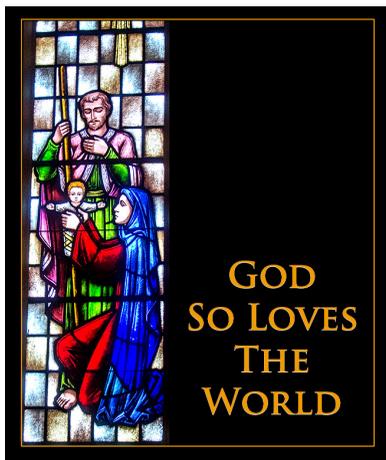


# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH WORSHIP

Watchnight Service of Covenant Renewal • December 31, 2017



God has made everything suitable for  
its time and has put a sense of past and  
future into our minds...

– Ecclesiastes 3:11a

## WE GATHER

WELCOME

Rev. Robert English

PRELUDE Greensleeves (arr. Richard Purvis)

Ty Woodward, Organ

\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN #220 United Methodist Hymnal – Angels from the Realms of Glory

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leslie Nordby, Lay Lector

O God, Searcher of our hearts, you have formed us as a people and claimed us  
for your own.

**We come to acknowledge your sovereignty and grace, and to enter anew into covenant  
with you,**

Let your Spirit impress your truth on our inmost being, and receive us in mercy,  
**for the sake of our Mediator, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity  
of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

\*CHORAL ACT OF PRAISE

“On this day angels sing; with their song earth shall ring, praising Christ, heaven’s King, born on earth to  
save us, peace and love he gave us. Ideo [therefore] Gloria in excelsis deo!”

\*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*Please greet those worshipping near you.*

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

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Tricia Guerrero

#191 UMH – Jesus Loves Me (verse 1)

**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.**

*As the congregation sings, all children are invited to come forward.*

#217 UMH – Away in a Manger (verse 3)

**Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray; bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.**

*As the congregation sings, the children may go to Faith in Action. This will be an opportunity for our children to share God's love and show care for others through making easy, no sew blankets for those in our community who need a warm blanket this winter.*

## OUR MISSION & COMMON LIFE

Rev. English

We thank God for these opportunities for fellowship, for worship, and for service.

**Thanks be to God!**

## LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

Let us give thanks for all God's mercies.

O God, our Covenant Friend,

you have been gracious to us through all the years of our lives.

We thank you for your loving care,

which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.

**We praise your holy name, O God.**

You have given us life and reason,

and set us in a world filled with your glory.

You have comforted us with family and friends,

and ministered to us through the hands of our sisters and brothers.

**We praise your holy name, O God.**

You have filled our hearts with a hunger after you,

and have given us your peace.

You have redeemed us, and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus.

You have given us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit

and the witness of your Church.

**We praise your holy name, O God.**

You have been our light in darkness

and a rock of strength in adversity and temptation.

You have been the very Spirit of joy in our joys

and the all-sufficient reward in all our labors.

**We praise your holy name, O God.**

You remembered us when we forgot you.

You followed us even when we tried to flee from you.

You met us with forgiveness when we returned to you.

For all your patience and overflowing grace.

**We praise your holy name, O God.**

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## WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

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**THE LESSON** Revelation 21:1-6a (Pew Bible page 259, N.T.)

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God!**

Leslie Nordby

**HOMILY**

“God So Loves the World: A New Year with Our Covenant Friend”

Rev. Patricia Farris

**LITANY OF COVENANT RENEWAL**

Brothers and sisters in Christ,  
the Christian life is redeemed from sin and consecrated to God.  
**Through baptism, we have entered this life  
and have been admitted into the new covenant  
of which Jesus Christ is the Mediator.**

On the one side, God promises to give us new life in Christ,  
the Source and Perfecter of our faith.

On the other side, we are pledged  
to live no more for ourselves but only for Jesus Christ,  
who loved us and gave himself for us.

**Today we meet, as the generations before us have met,  
to renew the covenant that binds us to God.  
Let us make this covenant of God our own.**

Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants.  
Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him.  
Christ has many services to be done.  
Some are easy and honorable,  
others are difficult.  
Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests,

others are contrary to both.  
In some we may please Christ and please ourselves.  
But there are other works where we cannot please Christ  
except by denying ourselves.  
It is necessary, therefore,  
that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ.

Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

**Let me be your servant, under your command.  
I will no longer be my own.  
I will give up myself to your will in all things.  
I put myself fully into your hands:  
put me to doing, put me to suffering,  
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,  
let me be full, let me be empty,  
let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and with a willing heart  
give all to your pleasure and disposal.**

To make this covenant a reality in your life, listen to these admonitions:

First, set apart some time, more than once,  
to be spent alone before the Lord;  
in seeking earnestly God's gracious acceptance of you;  
in carefully thinking through all the conditions of the covenant;  
in searching your hearts  
whether you have already freely given your life to Christ.

Second, be serious and in a spirit of holy awe and reverence.

Third, claim God's covenant,  
rely upon God's promise of giving grace and strength,  
so you can keep your promise.

Fourth, resolve to be faithful.  
You have given to the Lord your hearts,  
you have opened your mouths to the Lord,  
and you have dedicated yourself to God.  
With God's power, never go back.

And last, be then prepared to renew your covenant with the Lord.

Let us pray:

**O God, you know that I make this covenant with you today  
without reservation.**

**If any falsehood should be in it, guide me and help me to set it aright.**

**O mighty God, Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit,  
you have now become my Covenant Friend.**

**And I, through your infinite grace, have become your covenant servant.**

**So be it.**

**And let the covenant I have made on earth be ratified in heaven.**

**Amen.**

## WE OFFER OUR GIFTS & OURSELVES

*Your generous gifts support the ministries and outreach of the church. You may place gifts of cash or checks made out to "First UMC" in the offering plates as they are passed. You may also place your Let's Connect/Let Us Pray card in the offering plate. Give online at any time at [www.santamonicaumc.org](http://www.santamonicaumc.org). Credit cards are now accepted at the Sunday Hospitality Table during Coffee Fellowship. Thank you. May God grow in us generous and joyful hearts.*

## THE OFFERTORY

The Chancel Choir/Dr. James Smith, Music Director  
Barbara Smith & Alexandra Grabarchuk, Soloists

Glory to God in the Highest (Giovanni Pergolesi)

Glory to God in the highest. And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!

\*RESPONSE #94 UMH – The Doxology

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. English

**With all reverence, may the covenant we make this day always be a reminder of  
the holy agreement between us and God, our Covenant Friend. In this New Year,  
may we live as those pledged to God in our every word, thought and deed. In  
Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

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## WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

\*HYMN #246 UMH – Joy to the World

\*BENEDICTION

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE Good King Wenceslas (arr. Robert MacDonald)

Ty Woodward

*Worship concludes with the Postlude music which prepares us to transition from worship to life in the world.*

*You are invited to remain seated until the Postlude concludes, or to exit quietly.*

FAMILY INFO

—Nursery Care is available at 9 a.m. in Room 204 in the Education Building. Parents with young children are welcome to worship in the sanctuary or in the Kids Zone in the narthex.

—A changing table is provided in the restroom located in the hallway west of the Fireside Room.

—First UMC takes the safety of the children and youth very seriously. We follow Safe Sanctuaries® practices, which is our commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth, and adults.

—Please see an usher if you need information or assistance.

—Flowers at the Reredos: “In appreciation for Marilyn Hedges and her cookie crew who’ve provided the fresh-baked gourmet cookies at the Christmas Concert reception for many years.” From the Choir.

—Flowers in the Narthex: “In memory of our mother Connie Casillas.” From the Casillas Family.

—To request prayers, fill in a Let’s Connect/Let Us Pray card and place it in the offering plate during worship.

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

—Stop by the Hospitality Table in Simkins Hall in The Shelby Center during Coffee Fellowship for information or to ask whatever might be on your mind! We’re here to serve you.

—Visit the Fireside Room to view *Shining Through: Photographs of First UMC Sanctuary Stained Glass Windows*, by photographer Fabian Lewkowicz.

—Next Sunday: Epiphany Sunday; Holy Communion; Rev. Patricia Farris will preach “God So Loves the World: Our Eyes Are Open”

WORSHIP INFO

MISSIONS

—We collect food weekly for the Westside Food Bank. In January, please bring nutritional bars: protein, granola, energy or breakfast bars.

—Habitat for Humanity: We are still accepting volunteers for the build days of Patience House. Stop by the Hospitality Table for more information, or go to: [www.santamonicaumc.org/habitat](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/habitat).

—In the wake of recent disasters in the United States and abroad, the United Methodist Committee On Relief (UMCOR) is working to fulfill unmet food, clean water, temporary shelter, hygiene supplies, and non-food item needs. To learn more and to donate, go to: [www.santamonicaumc.org/umcor](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/umcor).

*Resident Bishop*

**Bishop Grant J. Hagiya**

*West District Superintendent*

**Rev. Mark M. Nakagawa**

*Senior Minister*

**Rev. Patricia Farris**

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*New & Emerging Ministries*

**Rev. Robert English**

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*Chaplain in Residence*

**Rev. Keri Olsen**

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**Dr. James Smith**

*Organist*

**Ty Woodward**

*Lead Coordinator*

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*Head Custodian*

**Javier Espinosa**

God is real. God is love. ■ Every person matters. You matter. ■ Together we can change the world.

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA**

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