

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH WORSHIP

Third Sunday of Advent • December 15, 2024

WE GATHER



WELCOME

Tricia Guerrero, Pastoral Associate

PRELUDE Savior of the Nations Come (J. S. Bach)

Ty Woodward, organ

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN #203 United Methodist Hymnal — Hail to the Lord's Anointed

*CALL TO WORSHIP

David Mayhan, Lay Lector

God has done great things for us!

God's love is heralded in the promise of Christ.

Holy is God's name!

God's promises are fulfilled in the coming of Christ.

God's mercy extends from generation to generation.

God's salvation is offered in the gift of Christ.

*CHORAL ACT OF PRAISE

"The Lord has done great things for us, we are glad!"

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

David Mayhan

Please greet those worshipping near you.

**Asterisks indicate standing if you are able.*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Jamie Jones, Family Ministries Coordinator

#2233 The Faith We Sing — Where Children Belong

This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshipping throng.

Water, God's word, bread and cup, prayer and song: This is where children belong.

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

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

Dane, Sarah, Dominic, Cavan and Brennan Rold;
Phil and Claudia Flanders

Today, we light the Advent candle of joy, celebrating the unity we find in Christ. In a world filled with division, God calls us to come together in love and joy.

We rejoice in our differences, for they enrich our shared journey.

As we have lit this candle, may it remind us of the joy that comes from our unity.

We will share our joys, support one another, and celebrate together.

#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 Sunday School in Rooms 204 and 206.

OUR MISSION & COMMON LIFE

David Mayhan

We give thanks for God's Creating Spirit that continues to give us life and lead us forward!

Thanks be to God!

*HYMN #215 UMH — To a Maid Engaged to Joseph

SILENT PRAYER AND PASTORAL PRAYER

Tricia Guerrero

THE LORD'S PRAYER

CHORAL RESPONSE

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

THE GOSPEL Luke 1:39-55

Char Smith, Lay Lector

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON "Magnificat – Mary's Song"

Rev. Greg Batson, Senior Minister

WE RESPOND

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS & OURSELVES

Char Smith

Your continued financial support of the church is now more important than ever. You may place gifts of cash or checks made out to "First UMC" in the offering plates as they are passed. You may also mail your gift to the church or drop it into the mail slot of our offices any day of the week. Or, you may also give online at www.santamonicaumc.org/give, or mail checks through your online banking programs. You may continue to earmark gifts for our various mission projects. May God grow in us generous and joyful hearts. Thank you.

OFFERTORY

The Chancel Choir/Dr. James Smith, Music Director

Who But the Lord? (Craig Courtney)

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lowly exile here until the Son of God appear. Who but the Lord can give the shadows light, can break into the dark, draw morning from the night? Who but the Lord will hear our cry and answer, "Here am I?"

Who but the Lord makes blinded eyes to see, brings music to the deaf, sets the lonely captive free? Who but the Lord will by His glory show the paths of peace? Who but the Lord?

O shine on us the brightness of Your face, to earth's remotest end, ev'ry people, ev'ry race.

O shine on us until to each is shown Your saving grace. O shine on us, O shine. Who but the Lord can give the shadows light? None but the Lord.

*RESPONSE #94 UMH – The Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; 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!

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Char Smith

God of grace and wonder, we offer these gifts in response to your call. As Mary responded with faith, we too say, "Here we are, let it be to us." Use these offerings to further your reign on earth. Empower us to be bearers of Christ's presence, bringing hope and love to our community. May our giving reflect the promise of Emmanuel, God with us, and bring light and joy in this Advent season. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

*HYMN #200 UMH – Tell Out, My Soul

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Batson

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE Trumpet Voluntary in E-flat (David N. Johnson)

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.*

—**Welcome New Visitors!** We're happy you're here. You may fill out a Let's Connect Card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate, or sign in online: www.santamonicaumc.org/im-new, or scan this QR code for the online form.



—**Children and Families on Sundays:** Families are invited to begin worship in the Sanctuary. Following the Children's Message, children are guided to Sunday School for ages 12 months through 5th grade in the Education Building. Parents with infants are welcome to worship in the Sanctuary or in the Family Zone in the Narthex.

—**Safe Sanctuaries®:** 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.

—**Flowers:** To order flowers to remember or honor a loved one for Sunday Worship service, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund.

—**Give:** Your gifts help us grow our ministries today and into the future. Thank you for considering giving to the General Church Fund to support everything we do. You may give today during service, or other ways; by mailing payment, dropping by the business office, or securely through the online giving portal located on the website front page. Questions about financial gifts, or gifts of time? Give us a call anytime at the church office.

—**Prayer Quilts:** If there is a Prayer Quilt in worship, you are invited to pray over and tie knots on the quilt on the north wall of the Sanctuary, or call or email Sarah in the church office to request a tie be made on the quilt for you: Sarah Rold (310.393.8258), or s.rolld@santamonicaumc.org. To request a Prayer Quilt for someone in need, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry.

—**Prayer Requests:** The Prayer Chain is a network of persons who pray in response to prayer requests, and treat all requests as confidential. Request a prayer at any time. Go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests.

—**Westside Food Bank:** We collect food weekly for the Westside Food Bank. Bins are located outside the Sanctuary Sunday mornings.

—**Sunday Social Gathering:** Come say "Hello" and help yourself to coffee and donuts after worship in the Courtyard. Stop by the Sunday Welcome Table if you have any questions!

Resident Bishop
Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank
West District Superintendent
Rev. Dr. Siosaia Tu'itahi
Senior Minister
Rev. Greg Batson
g.batson@santamonicaumc.org
Pastoral Associate
Tricia Guerrero
t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org
Deacon Associate for Spiritual Formation
Rev. Keri Olsen Paget
k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org
Business Administrator
Christina Eddy
c.eddy@santamonicaumc.org
Congregation Care Associate
Anne Premer
a.premer@santamonicaumc.org
Music Director
Dr. James Smith
Organist
Ty Woodward
Office Manager
Sarah Rold
s.rolld@santamonicaumc.org
Membership and Facilities Coordinator
David Penson
d.penson@santamonicaumc.org
Communications Director
Tina Gage
t.gage@santamonicaumc.org
Head Custodian
Javier Espinoza
Family Ministries Coordinator
Jamie Jones
j.jones@santamonicaumc.org
Program and Outreach Coordinator
Brandon Searfoss
b.searfoss@santamonicaumc.org
Preschool Director Emerita
Dee Menzies
d.menzies@santamonicaumc.org
Co-Associate Preschool Director
Dane Rold
d.rolld@santamonicaumc.org
Co-Associate Preschool Director
Johanna Holman
j.holman@santamonicaumc.org

God is real. God is love. ■ Together we can change the world.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA

1008 Eleventh Street, Santa Monica, CA 90403 www.santamonicaumc.org · 310-393-8258



Today is the third Sunday of Advent. We invite you to celebrate the season, inviting new life to be born in you at this time when we need it most. It is the gift of God's grace, bringing salvation to all. This year for Advent, we meditate on each of the four Advent Candles: Week 1: Hope; Week 2: Peace; **Week 3: Joy**; Week 4: Love

On the following pages is a list of ways to engage and move through the holiday season. All events may also be found on the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/advent



Today - Alternative Christmas: In-Person and Online

Christmas and gift-giving go together. The tradition started when the Magi came to the manger with gold, myrrh, and frankincense to laud the birth of Jesus. In the present day, gift-giving often seems to exist only for the benefit of retailers and other entrepreneurs. Each Advent, through the Alternative Christmas Fair, Missions Council gives us the chance to take "trade" out of tradition and to return to the spirit of gift-giving that impelled those three very wise men long ago – to rejoice in the birth of the Messiah. Missions Council carefully selects several local and global mission projects each year. You may make a donation as a gift to a friend or loved one, and send a card announcing your gift. View this year's missions at the Alternative Christmas Fair and on the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/alt-christmas24

Sundays, December 15 & 22, after worship in the Alcove



This Afternoon - Blue Christmas: A Contemplative Advent Service

While the Advent/Christmas season is known as a time of joy, merriment, and excited expectation it can also include feelings of grief, loneliness, or maybe just the need to step away from relentless cheer. Our lives are complex. Advent and Christmas can be too. The Blue Christmas service, led by Rev. Keri Olsen Paget, is designed to hold the complexity of the season with gentle grace while in community. Come pray, soak in some lesser known Advent hymns, and light candles during a guided reflection.

Sunday, December 15, 3 p.m. in Simkins Hall



Poinsettia Dedications - Order Now

Beautiful poinsettias will grace our sanctuary for the December 24, 3 p.m. Christmas Eve Family service, and the 7 p.m. Candlelight Service. Order at the Sunday Welcome Table, in the church office, or online: www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund Each plant is \$15, and may be picked up after the 7 p.m. Christmas Eve service.

Deadline to order is Tuesday, December 17

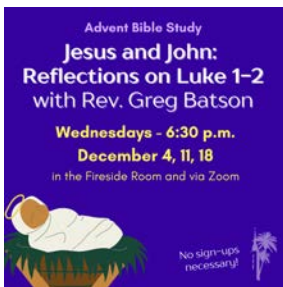
First UMC's ADVENT GUIDE



Today - Angel Tree Project concludes

Angel Tree Project is concluding today in the Alcove, chaired by church member, Chris Ruud. This church/community project provides new household items to families of Family Place/Upward Bound House with new things for Christmas. Thank you to all who have donated!

Today after worship in the Alcove (gifts due)



Advent Bible Study with Rev. Greg Batson continues

One more session: Join Rev. Greg Batson for an in-person and online Advent Bible Study: **Jesus and John: Reflections on Luke 1-2.** Luke weaves the birth stories of John the Baptist and Jesus together, including the beautiful poetry of Mary's song (the Magnificat) and Zechariah's song (the Benedictus). The scripture runs parallel to the scripture of the Sundays in Advent during 10 a.m. worship. No sign-ups necessary. *Doors open at 6 p.m., grab your coffee and snack before class begins promptly at 6:30 p.m.*

Wednesday, December 18, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room, or Zoom

Zoom link on the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/advent-bible-study



Next Sunday - Advent Brunch

Stay after the service of Lessons and Carols next Sunday, for the Advent Brunch hosted by Fellowship and Events. Activities will include seasonal crafts, caroling, and a special visit from Santa. Let's celebrate the season together! We also take time to highlight the Missions featured in the Alternative Christmas Fair, happening in the Alcove.

Sunday, December 22, after worship in Simkins Hall



December Mid-Week Recital - Watch Anytime!

Listen to beautiful music this Advent Season! **Seraphour** (Emma Grace Roche, Melissa Birch, Dana Rouse, and Heidi Valencia Vass) is dedicated to the preservation and proliferation of the unaccompanied Sacred Music Canon - celebrating the female voice seeking that which is true, beautiful and good. Read quartet's bios and watch the performance: www.santamonicaumc.org/mid-week-recital-series; or on the First UMC YouTube Channel: @SantaMonicaUMC.

ADVENT SERVICES

Sunday, December 15: 3 p.m. Blue Christmas: A Contemplative Advent Service

Designed to hold the complexity of the season with gentle grace. Come pray, soak in some lesser known Advent hymns, and light candles during a guided reflection. Led by Rev. Keri Olsen Paget. In Simkins Hall.

Sunday, December 22: 10 a.m. Service of Lessons and Carols

The annual worship service that tells the story of Christmas through Bible readings, carols, and hymns. In the Sanctuary. *(In-person and online.)*

Tuesday, December 24: Christmas Eve

- 3 p.m. Christmas Eve Family Service

A “No Muss, No Fuss” Christmas Pageant for all ages. Costumes will be available at the door for all children to participate. In the Sanctuary. *(In-person and online)*

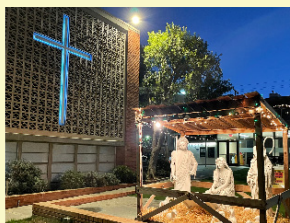
- 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Choir, Organ, Harp & Candlelight. In the Sanctuary. *(In-person and online)*

- 11 p.m. Christmas Eve Communion Service

Join us in the Chapel for a contemplative Christmas Eve Service as we celebrate the arrival of Jesus Christ, the light of the world. We will reflect upon the mystery of the Incarnation, the Word made flesh, in song, prayer, and the sharing of Holy Communion. Led by Rev. Greg Batson, with Tania Batson, solo; Thomas Batson, organ; and Wesley and Daniel Batson reading. *(In-person only)*

If you're celebrating with family and friends on Christmas morning, remember that you can access the worship services LIVE, or through the week ahead on these platforms: YouTube: [@SantaMonicaUMC](https://www.youtube.com/@SantaMonicaUMC) Website: www.santamonicaumc.org Facebook: www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc First UMC App: App Store, search FirstUMC_SM.



First UMC Creche & Santa Monica Nativity Scenes

We invite you to our courtyard to view our Nativity scene, or creche, with the Holy Family—Joseph and Mary, and the animals that shared their shelter and warmth. We celebrate God's love that comes to be with us, bringing peace, hope and joy for all. The display is on view through December. We thank Dan Nessel and Todd Erlandson for setting up the display.



The Santa Monica Nativity Scenes telling the life of Jesus Christ are on display now through the holidays at **2311 Main Street**. First UMC has been a part of the 70-year-old tradition for many years. We thank Chuck Kearsley, Jon Ward and Adam Guerrero for setting up the First UMC scene.

THIS WEEK'S FEATURED ARTWORK

Visitation, by Rogier van der Weyden, approx 22" x 14" c. 1445

Shortly after the Annunciation, Mary visits her cousin Elisabeth, who despite her advanced age has miraculously become pregnant, and has been carrying the future John the Baptist for six months. The picture illustrates the circumstances of the meeting described in St. Luke's Gospel much more clearly than many other earlier depictions. For example, the landscape divided up by paths behind the Virgin Mary, show that she has traveled a long way to visit her cousin. Elisabeth lives in hilly country, represented by the hill with the complex of fortress-like buildings outside which her husband Zecharias is playing with a dog. The pregnant older woman has hurried respectfully to meet the young girl as Mary takes the last few steps. Each of them acknowledges the miracle of pregnancy and is laying a hand on the other's belly, while Elisabeth's outstretched arm and pale hand, shown against Mary's dark blue dress, leave us in no doubt which is the more important child.



Welcome to First UMC of Santa Monica!

Welcome to the worship, service, and fellowship of Santa Monica First United Methodist Church. First UMC is committed to a ministry that touches the lives of people in many significant ways. Through our worship and music, study opportunities, social groups, mission involvement and ministries of care, we proclaim the good news of God's love for all people. We also work to help make the world a better place in which to live, here in the communities of the Westside and around the world, and eagerly invite your participation in this beloved community. Our church has been a significant presence in the larger Santa Monica community for nearly 150 years.

Stay Connected

To join in fellowship and ministry online, here's how to connect online. (QR code to website)



First UMC website: www.santamonicaumc.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc

Instagram: @santamonicaumc

YouTube: @SantaMonicaUMC

The First UMC App: Go to the App Store, search FirstUMC_SM.

Giving Matters

There are many ways to contribute to the mission and ministry of First UMC. You may give online via the QR code on the right (Point your phone camera at the QR code and click on yellow link), via mail, or onsite through the church office mail slot. To learn more about ways to give, including the annual Stewardship campaign, Planned Giving, Tree of Life, support for the Music Program, and the flower fund, visit: www.santamonicaumc.org/give



Today - Blood Pressure Screenings

The Health Ministry Council continues to offer free monthly blood pressure screenings during Sunday coffee hour. We encourage everyone to stop by and check in for a free blood pressure screening and discussion of healthy lifestyle habits for maintaining optimal blood pressure levels. **Today, after worship in the Alcove**

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA
1008 Eleventh Street, Santa Monica, CA 90403 • 310-393-8258
www.santamonicaumc.org • info@santamonicaumc.org   @santamonicaumc