

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE



December 24, 2024

Christmas Eve Communion Service

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PRELUDE A Medley of Christmas Carols

Thomas Batson, organ

WELCOME

Rev. Greg Batson, Senior Minister

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Michael Lamb

We welcome the Christ Child, the fulfillment of our joy, as we proclaim with the prophet Isaiah, "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Christ our joy has come near. Emmanuel, God with us, has come to dwell with us as a tiny baby.

We light this candle as a sign of Christ coming to live in the neighborhood of humanity as a vulnerable child. We give thanks for the birth of Immanuel, God is with us. We remember the promise of hope and God's fulfillment of that promise.

May the light of Christ warm our hearts and light our way as we share the joy of God's love wherever we go.

HYMN #230 United Methodist Hymnal —O Little Town of Bethlehem

THE NICENE CREED #880 UMH

Wesley Batson

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic* and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

** universal*

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Batson

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SOLO Sussex Carol (Traditional English Carol, arr. David Willcocks)

Tania Batson, Soprano

Thomas Batson

THE GOSPEL John 1:1-14

Daniel Batson

HOMILY "The Light Shines in the Darkness"

Rev. Batson

HYMN #242 UMH – Love Came Down at Christmas

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION #9-10 UMH

Rev. Batson

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

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.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES

HYMN UMH #239 – Silent Night, Holy Night

BENEDICTION

Rev. Batson

(Please depart in silence following the Benediction)

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.

For information about what we offer, or to contact one of our pastors or staff members, visit our church website at **www.santamonicaumc.org**, or call the church office.

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.

We are happy to have you worship with us this evening and we hope you will return often. Weekly **Sunday Sanctuary worship services** are at 10 a.m., in-person and online.