



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WORSHIP

Fourth Sunday of Advent • December 21, 2025

WE GATHER

 Service of
Lessons and Carols



WELCOME

Rev. Keri Olsen Paget, Deacon Associate

PRELUDE Away in a Manger (arr. Keith Snell)

Brass Quintet

Based on two traditional versions of the carol.

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN #250 United Methodist Hymnal — Once in Royal David's City

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Emily Payne, Lay Lector

And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way.

To give God's people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of God the dawn from on high shall break upon us.

To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

* CHORAL ACT OF PRAISE

"Noel, Noel, Noel! Today Christ is born. Glory! Glory! Today Christ is Born. Noel! Noel! Noel! Noel!
Noel! Noel! Noel!"

* SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Emily Payne

Please greet those worshipping near you.

**Asterisks indicate standing if you are able.*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Tricia Guerrero, Pastoral Associate

#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

Dena and Eloise Nearing, Amy Bisson

We are here because God loves us.

We are here to receive God's love and share it with others.

We are here to remember that Christ, the Promised One, is with us now.

May we share the love of God with those around us, knowing that God invites us into relationship.

As we light this candle, may we be filled with love, the love of God that overflows into the world.

#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.

Following the Children's Message children (6 months through 7th grade) will be led to Sunday School on the 2nd floor of the Education Building.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Olsen Paget

THE LORD'S PRAYER

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS & OURSELVES

Todd Erlandson, Lay Leadership Team

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.

THE OFFERTORY

The Chancel Choir/Dr. James Smith, Music Director

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (arr. Dan Forrest)

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart. *Choir alone: Come, O Sov'reign Prince of Heaven; come, O wondrous Love Divine. Earth and heaven bow before Thee, everlasting Peace sublime. O Thou Source of joy and wonder, bless us as we seek Thy face. At Thy manger grant us mercy, in Thine Advent grant us grace. Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king, born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.* *(Congregation joins on verses 1 & 3, see insert.)*

*RESPONSE #238 UMH — Angels We Have Heard on High (verse 1)

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains, and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains. Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Todd Erlandson

O God, all the morning stars sang to you at creation. The angels praised you in song at the birth of your Son. May our offering be a true rendering of praise to you, speeding the time of peace on earth and goodwill among all your children. Amen.

Service of Lessons & Carols

INTRODUCTION

Rev. Greg Batson, Senior Minister

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 9:1-2, 6-7

Dan Nessel

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

CAROL #211 UMH – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (verses 1, 2, 6 & 7)

SECOND LESSON Micah 5:2-5a

Todd Erlandson

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

CAROL #230 UMH – O Little Town of Bethlehem

THIRD LESSON Luke 1:26-35, 37-38

Emily Payne

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

CAROL #239 UMH – Silent Night, Holy Night

FOURTH LESSON Luke 2:1-7

Gavin Eddy

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

CAROL #219 UMH – What Child Is This

FIFTH LESSON Luke 2:8-15

Tricia Guerrero

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

CAROL #240 UMH – Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

SIXTH LESSON Matthew 2:1-11

Rev. Olsen Paget

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

CAROL #245 UMH – The First Noel

*SEVENTH LESSON John 1:1-14

Rev. Batson

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

*CAROL #234 UMH – O Come, All Ye Faithful (verses 1, 2, 3 & 6)

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Batson

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE Trumpet Tune in D (David N. Johnson)

Ty Woodward, organ

*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.



—We welcome **Community UMC of Pacific Palisades** each Sunday at 11 a.m. in the chapel with open arms and generous hospitality as they move forward during this time of transition.

—**Welcome Guest Musicians:** We welcome the Brass Quintet: Stephen Billington, Jason Gamer, Rachel Berry, Kaelyn Gima, Bobby Murray.

—**Children and Families on Sundays:** Children meet in the Sanctuary, following the Children's Message children (6 months through 7th grade) will be led to Sunday School in the Education Building on the 2nd floor.

—**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. Available Sundays: January 11/18/25.

—**This Sunday's Flowers:** "In loving memory of Dennis Payne, Frank and Mary Friedrichsen, Chuck and Dee Payne." From Sue Payne and family.

—**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: www.santamonicaumc.org/give.

—**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:** After worship today, come say "Hello" for Coffee Hour in Simkins Hall. Stop by the Sunday Welcome Table if you have any questions.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA
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Congregation

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley

HYFRYDOL

Rowland H. Prichard (1830)

Arranged by DAN FORREST
(ASCAP)

Sing when directed, verses 1 and 3



1. Come, thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to
3. Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a



set thy peo - ple free; _____ from our fears _____ and
child and yet _____ a king, _____ born to reign _____ in



sins re - lease _____ us; let us find our rest _____ in thee. _____
us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring. _____



_____ Is - rael's strength _____ and con - so - la - tion, hope of
_____ By thine own _____ e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in



all _____ the earth _____ thou art; dear _____ de - sire _____ of ev - 'ry
all _____ our hearts _____ a - lone; by _____ thine all _____ suf - fi - cient



na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart. _____
mer - it, raise us to _____ thy glo - rious throne. _____

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2025

These Poinsettia Plants are presented to the glory of God and
in celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ by:

Anonymous: In celebration of Tania Batson's birthday today.

Linda Diane Anderson: In loving memory of James Evan Anderson, Jr. who always kept Christmas in his heart; Mary Christian Anderson who kept it in the home; and Lisa Annette Le Fors, beloved cousin and lifelong friend.

Greg and Tania Batson: In memory of Tom & Gania Trotter; In honor of our sons Tom, Dan, and Wes.

Amy Bisson: In loving memory of mom, Patti Nearing, and like-parents Leslie & Jamie Talt; In honor of daughters Madelyn and Brooklyn and niece Ellie.

Jerry and Bianca Coker: In memory of Cristina Coker.

Mary Crawford: In honor of all the Devotional writers; In celebration of the birthday of our son Matthew.

Kendra Gorlitsky: Pam, my faithful older sister; Linda Diane for her presence; Anne Premier for her diligence.

Carol Greenwood: In honor of my family.

Keri Olsen Paget: In memory of Dave & Diane Paget; In memory of Bob & Ruth Brown.

Titilayomi Osoba: In memory of my parents Emmanuel & Elizabeth Dosumu and husband George Osoba.

Emily Payne: In honor of Sue Payne and in loving memory of Dennis Payne.

Sue Payne: In loving memory of Dennis Payne.

Dane and Sarah Rold: In celebration of our three boys Dominic, Cavan and Brennan.

Char Smith: In thankfulness for my family and friends.

Diana Stumpf: In loving memory of Christine & Larry Stumpf and of Ted & Lois Gehringer.

Caprice Walker: With loving remembrance of my husband Allan Walker and my mother Florence Workman.

Robert & Pastor Dorothy Worley: In memory of our parents: Jeanette & Harry Bimber and Judge O. Benton & Evalynne Worley; In memory of our siblings: Harry Bimber, Janet Bimber and Carol Worley Noll; In memory of our son: Ofc. Thomas B. Worley.

Poinsettias may be picked up after any of the Christmas Eve services.



Today is the fourth 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 do a deeper meditation on the first candle - Hope.** 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



Last in-person day! 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 carefully selects several local and global mission projects each year, giving us the chance to take "trade" out of tradition and to return to the spirit of gift. **Today is the last day where you may make a donation in-person as a gift to a friend or loved one, and send a card announcing your gift.** To donate and view this year's missions at the Alternative Christmas Fair on the website, visit : www.santamonicaumc.org/alt-christmas25

After worship in Simkins Hall, and through December on the website



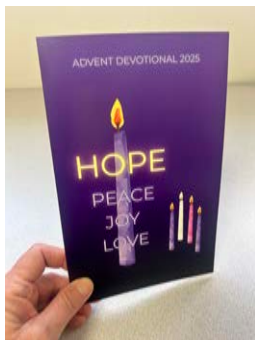
Today! Advent Brunch

Following the Service of Lessons and Carols today, everyone is warmly invited to our Advent Brunch, hosted by Fellowship and Events. Enjoy seasonal crafts, joyful caroling with members of All Community Theater, and a special visit from Santa! Come share in the fun and celebrate the spirit of the season together. A light brunch will be served.

Today after worship in Simkins Hall

Advent Devotional

It's not too late to read this year's Advent Devotional booklet, available in the Narthex and at the Welcome table, and daily emails are underway. This year we examine scriptures and we do a deeper meditation on the first candle - Hope. The collection of writings is offered as a framework for your own Advent ponderings. The writers are a diverse group of people, though all are from this congregation. To sign up to receive Advent Devotion daily emails, visit the website and click the Subscribe button: www.santamonicaumc.org/advent. Audio devotions as read by the writers will be included in the emails starting today, December 21 thru Thursday, December 25.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

- 4 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)*

- 8 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Join us for a traditional candlelight service, accompanied by the Chancel Choir, organ, and harp. This meaningful worship offers a serene moment of beauty and reverence during the Christmas season. In the Sanctuary. *(In-person and online)*

- 11 p.m. Christmas Eve Communion Service

Join us 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 Daniel and Wesley Batson reading. In the Sanctuary. *(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.



MID-WEEK
RECITALS
2025



MEAGAN MARTIN
MEZZO SOPRANO

JANE AUSTEN AT
250:
A MUSICAL
CELEBRATION

WED, DEC 10
12:10 P.M.

...then view anytime!



VICTORIA KIRSCH
PIANO



www.santamonicaumc.org

December Mid-Week Recital - **Watch Anytime!**

Listen to beautiful music this Advent Season! The Online December 2025 Mid-Week Recital features the program **Jane Austen at 250: A Musical Celebration**. Mezzo-soprano **Meagan Martin** and pianist **Victoria Kirsch** presented a musical celebration of the beloved British author Jane Austen, who was born nearly 250 years ago on December 16, 1775. A highlight of the program will be “Marianne Dashwood: Songs of Love and Misery,” a song cycle by composer Aferdian and librettist Marella Martin Koch that is inspired by one of the sisters at the heart of Austen’s first published novel, *Sense and Sensibility*. The program also features selected Lieder by Franz Schubert. Read the musician’s bios and watch the performance: www.santamonicaumc.org/mid-week-recital-series; or on the First UMC YouTube Channel: @SantaMonicaUMC.

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City of Santa Monica Nativity Scenes

The City of Santa Monica is once again presenting 14 Nativity scenes depicting the story of Jesus’ birth, on display at **2311 Main Street** through December. This tradition began in 1953, and First UMC has participated for many decades—including winning a Nativity Scene Award in 1977. To view a photo of that display and learn more about the history of the Santa Monica Nativity Scenes, visit their website:

<https://santamonicanativityscenes.org>



LOOKING FORWARD TO JANUARY



Baptismal Renewal

Each year as a new year begins, we enjoy the renewing of our baptismal vows as a time to recommit our lives in the example of Christ Jesus and receive a fresh out-pouring of the Holy Spirit. We invite you to prayerfully prepare for worship on January 11 together, in-person and online. If you are participating online, prepare a small cup or bowl of water which will become for us a source of new life. This is the water that refreshes life, nurtures growth, and offers new birth.

January 11, 10 a.m. in-person and online worship

January Online Mid-Week Recital

First UMC is pleased to present the Online January Mid-Week Recital, featuring **Noah Sonderling, piano**. Noah is a piano fellow with New World Symphony and studies with Anton Nel. Awards include second place in the 2022 Sidney Wright Accompanying Competition, and first place in the 2018 Indiana University Concerto Competition. He has also appeared with the National Repertory Orchestra.

To read full bio, and to view past recitals, visit the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/mid-week-recital-series

Wednesday, January 14, 12:10 p.m.

ONLINE: Facebook: [@santamonicaumc](https://www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc) • YouTube Channel: [@SantaMonicaUMC](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

• Website: www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream • The First UMC App: (Go to the App Store, search FirstUMC_SM)



Kids Night Out

While parents enjoy a well-deserved night out, children are provided a safe and fun evening of games, activities and crafts, pizza dinner, and a movie with our trained childcare team. \$40/child + \$20 for each additional sibling, 2 years – 5th grade.

Sign up for the Children and Family Ministries email to receive registration info:

<https://santamonicaumc.org/childrens-ministry> (click Subscribe)

Friday, January 23, 4 – 8 p.m. in the Education Building



United Women in Faith Game Day

The UWF are excited for their annual Game Day! ALL are welcome for an intergenerational afternoon of Scrabble, Bridge, Mahjong, Rummikub tiles, fun and fellowship, with proceeds supporting the missions of UWF. \$10 suggested donation, includes pie!

Saturday, January 24, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. in Simkins Hall





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 150 years.

First UMC Christmas Concert

You can now view this year's Christmas Concert on our website and YouTube Channel! This year's musical celebration featured Arthur Honegger's *Une Cantate de Noël* with the South Bay Children's Choir—along with the return of our beloved "Carols, Etc." Enjoy the glorious sounds of the Chancel Choir and guest singers, the Los Angeles Concert Orchestra, and the South Bay Children's Choir, all under the direction of James Smith. Enjoy the performance!

<https://santamonicaumc.org/music-theater>



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



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA

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