

# CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION SERVICE



DECEMBER 24, 2025

# Christmas Eve Communion Service

December 24, 2025

PRELUDE Gesú Bambino (Pietro Yon)

Thomas Batson, organ

WELCOME

Rev. Greg Batson, Senior Minister

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

The Batson Family

This is the moment we have been waiting for:

**To welcome and celebrate the newborn Christ.**

On that night so long ago, Christ was cherished by those who welcomed him into the world.

**On this night, may we cherish each other as we welcome Christ into our lives.**

As we light the Christ candle, may we be filled with God's hope, peace, joy, and love so that we can proclaim to all, "You are loved! You are cherished! Christ is with you!"

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

THE NICENE CREED #880 UMH

Daniel 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 See, Amid the Winter's Snow (John Goss, arr. Dan Forest)

Tania Batson, Soprano

Thomas Batson, piano

THE GOSPEL John 1:1-14

Wesley Batson

HOMILY "Hope Is Born"

Rev. Batson

HYMN #218 UMH – It Came upon the Midnight Clear

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.**

COMMUNION MUSIC The Holy Boy (John Ireland)

Thomas Batson

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES

HYMN UMH #239 – Silent Night, Holy Night (*see insert*)

BENEDICTION

Rev. Batson

*(Please depart in silence following the Benediction)*

Rev. Greg Batson, Senior Minister  
Thomas Batson, Organ  
Tania Batson, Soloist  
Communion Coordinator, Anne Premer  
A/V Engineer, Brandon Searfoss  
Head Usher, Vern Busse

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**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](http://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.



## Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent night! Holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin  
mother and child;  
Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight:  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ, the Savior is born!  
Christ, the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night,  
Wondrous star, lend the light;  
With the angels let us sing  
Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born,  
Christ the Savior is born.



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.

**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.

**Nikki Edwards:** In memory of Helen and Graeme A. Reid and in honor of Inice Edwards and in memory of Glen Edwards.

**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.*



## 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**

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## 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](http://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/UCSantaMonicaUMC)  
• Website: [www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream) • The First UMC App: (Go to the App Store, search FirstUMC\_SM)

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## 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**

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## 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**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### • Walk the Labyrinth & Chapel Open for Prayers

Take a moment during the busy season for an hour to walk the labyrinth or visit the chapel. The Labyrinth laid in the Simkins Hall floor of First UMC is a replica of the Chartres Labyrinth laid in the cathedral around 1220 CE. Walking the Labyrinth is an ancient spiritual practice, a way to quiet our minds and open our spirits to the presence of the Holy. View the 2026 Labyrinth schedule on the website: <https://santamonicaumc.org/labyrinth/>

**Friday, January 2, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. Simkins Hall, Chapel**

### • Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast

The Santa Monica Area Interfaith Council is hosting a MLK breakfast at Mount Olive Lutheran Church on **Friday, January 16**, beginning with breakfast at 7:30 a.m., and program starting at 8 a.m. More details to follow.

### • Spirit Sisters Retreat

The Spirit Sisters, led by Pastor Dorothy Bimber Worley, are holding an annual All-Day January Retreat as they prepare for Lent together. Theme: “I AM the Light of the World” Women are encouraged to come at 8:30 a.m. for registration & continental breakfast. \$15 donation for breakfast and lunch. All women are welcome! RSVP: Pastor Dorothy (626)826-8301 (*call or text*)

**Saturday, January 17, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Fireside Room & Chapel**

### • Listening Deeply: A Spiritual Formation Retreat

All are welcome to deeply listen for God through the practice of Lectio Divina. Rev. Keri Olsen Paget will facilitate the prayerful practice and create opportunities for participants to respond creatively and as a community. Anyone who is interested in focusing their attention on God for the day is invited. Contact Rev. Keri at [k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org) for more information. This retreat is free, but registration is required. A simple lunch will be provided. Register on the church website by Friday, January 23:

[www.santamonicaumc.org/listening-deeply](https://www.santamonicaumc.org/listening-deeply)

**Saturday, January 31, 9:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.**  
**First UMC campus**

## MISSION AND SERVICE

TWO ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

### • The People Concern

Linda Diane Anderson (with the help of Janet Searfoss) run a volunteer group on the **third Saturday of the month** at The People Concern, making sandwiches and assembling sack lunches. The shift is 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., but often ends earlier.

**Next volunteer day: Saturday, January 17**

Contact Tricia to volunteer: [t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org)

### • Westside Food Bank

Westside Food Bank offers a volunteer opportunity every 4th Wednesday of the month. Upcoming dates:

**Wednesdays: Jan 28/Feb 25**

**10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

**1914 14th Street, Santa Monica**

Volunteers will unpack cases of food for distribution at the Mobile Pantry at Virginia Avenue Park.

To volunteer, sign up on the WSFB website: <https://www.wsfb.org/take-action/volunteer-opportunities/> Click on the option for “Wednesdays – 10am – 12pm: VAP Mobile Pantry Prep” and (Wed, Jan 28) in the calendar, then fill out your contact information.

### • Youth Service Project Trip

Each summer, a team of youth and adult volunteers from First UMC Santa Monica take time out of their summer vacations to go on a week-long mission trip. During the trip, youth learn about themselves and build relationships with people from all over the U.S., they learn teamwork and how to use power tools, and they are given the opportunity to help people to gain a safe, warm, and dry home to live in through their work. We collaborate with reputable youth-centered service organizations, and while the location of the trips varies each year, the mission remains the same: Be in community and of service to those in need.

**2026 YSP Trip: Appalachia Service Project**  
**Saturday, June 20 – Sunday, June 28**

Look for upcoming fundraising opportunities that the youth will be holding to raise money for their trip.

<https://santamonicaumc.org/ysp>



## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

### • Children's Ministry

Families are invited to worship in the Sanctuary. Parents with infants are welcome to worship in the Sanctuary, in the Family Zone in the Narthex, or in the nursery.

[www.santamonicaumc.org/childrens-ministry](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/childrens-ministry)

We have 3 groups for **Sunday School** following the children's message in worship:

- Nursery Care for 6 months through toddler
- Younger Elementary for Kinder-3rd graders
- New Sunday School group for 4th-7th graders

Please contact Jamie ([j.jones@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:j.jones@santamonicaumc.org)) for more info.

### • Preschool Enrollment - Open Now

Schedule a tour today with Preschool Co-Directors Dane or Johanna at 310-395-7292, or visit our webpage for more information: [www.santamonicaumc.org/preschool](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/preschool)

## YOUTH

### • United Methodist Youth Fellowship Group

The Youth Ministry at First UMC is a community of youth and adult volunteers who gather weekly to explore and grow in faith together. [www.santamonicaumc.org/youth-ministry](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/youth-ministry) Sundays, 6-8 p.m. in the Youth Lounge

## PRAYER

### • Walk the Labyrinth/Chapel Open for Prayers

The Labyrinth and Chapel are open on the first Friday of the month, from 1 - 3 p.m. Families welcome!

**Friday, January 2, 1 - 3 p.m.** Simkins Hall/Chapel

### • Prayer Requests

The Prayer Chain is a network of persons who pray in response to prayer requests. You may send a prayer request to the church at any time.

[www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests/](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests/)

### • Request a Prayer Quilt

The Prayer Quilt Ministry is a group that makes Prayer Quilts as a service for those in need. (*\*Prayer quilts may only be requested and sponsored by members of the First UMC congregation.*) To request a Prayer Quilt, visit:

[www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry)

## ONGOING MINISTRIES AT FIRST UMC

If you'd like more information for ministry opportunities, you may contact the church office (310) 393-8258, or visit the website: [www.santamonicaumc.org](http://www.santamonicaumc.org)

[www.santamonicaumc.org](http://www.santamonicaumc.org)

### • Men's Bible Study

Tuesdays, 7 a.m. via Zoom - Men's Bible Study is a weekly online meeting where men of all ages and generations gather to ground themselves in the Holy Scripture.

[www.santamonicaumc.org/biblestudy](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/biblestudy)

### • Listening Hearts Women's Group

Listening Hearts is a spiritual community of women, led by Pastoral Associate Tricia Guerrero. Contact Tricia for upcoming meetings:

[t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org)

Next meeting: **Wednesday, January 7, 10 a.m.** at Literati Cafe

### • Prayer Quilt Ministry

Meets the 3rd Saturdays of the month, 9:30 a.m. in Room 300. Next meeting: **Saturday, January 17**

### • The Chancel Choir

The Chancel Choir provides music every Sunday during the 10 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Service. Sing in the Chancel Choir! **Thursday evening rehearsals are from 7:40 p.m. - 9 p.m.** Contact Jim Smith if you are interested in joining: [djes@roadrunner.com](mailto:djes@roadrunner.com)

### • Messy Church

Messy Church is a monthly all age worship experience that explores God's love in an accessible way.

**Next meeting: Saturday, February 21, 4 - 6 p.m.** in Simkins Hall. *Theme: Choosing to Be Kind with our Words*

### • Blood Pressure Screenings

The Health Ministry Council provides free Blood Pressure Screenings once a month after worship.

Next meeting: **Sunday, January 11, after worship** in the Alcove





## 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](http://www.santamonicaumc.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc](https://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](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/give)



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