LIGHTING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST FROM THE ADVENT CANDLES

One: We light these candles of hope, love, joy, and peace once again in celebration of the light of life, now with us forevermore.

For the Word has become flesh and is dwelling among us. We have seen the glory of the world,

The glory as of a parent's only child, full of grace and truth.

All: Glory to God, Amen.

HYMN #206 v. 2 I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

(UMH-red hymnal)

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (praying together)

Almighty God,
we confess that our hearts have not been open
to all that you have revealed to us in the nativity of your Son.
You sent Christ to be born as a helpless Child,
and yet we have not attended to suffering of children.
You chose humble Mary to be mother of our Lord Jesus,
and yet we have not attended to the struggles of women.
The holy family could find no room in Bethlehem but a stable,
and yet we have not attended to the cry of the unhoused.
You announced your birth to lowly shepherds,

Forgive our lack of attention, And free us for joyful compassion, That we may know Christ in serving others. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Yet we ignore those who tend our farms and fields.

ASSURANCE/FORGIVENESS

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

*PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

*GOSPEL READING Luke 2:22-40

One: This is what the Spirit is saying to the church All: **Thanks be to God.**

A TIME FOR THE CHILD WITHIN US ALL

Julia Librizzi

SERMON Jesus of Nazareth

Rev. Matt Weiler

HYMN SING The congregation is invited to choose some of their favorite hymns for all to sing at this time

PASTORAL PRAYERS AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Deb Search Willoughby

Congregational Response -One: Hear us, O God; All: **your mercy is great.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our God/Father/Mother, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

Loose coins received will be designated for the support of United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) for their work around the world.

OFFERTORY Nocturne, Opus 54, number 4 Alex Moon, Piano

Edvard Greig

*THE DOXOLOGY HYMN 240 v.1 Hark the Herald Angels Sing (UMH-red hymnal)

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (praying together)

On this glad new day for all the earth, we are grateful for giving hearts made joyful in the gift of your son. For you, O God, are generosity itself. Bless our lives in service of sharing your love in the world; through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

OUR SHARED LIFE

*CLOSING HYMN #251 Go Tell It on the Mountain

(UMH-red hymnal)

POSTLUDE

OUR MISSION

We are called to Experience God's love Celebrate God's love Share God's love

OUR VISION

We are a Christ-centered community where our stories are woven with God's story.

OUR VALUES

creation is made in love, by love, for love. Community: Sacred relationship with God and one another. Inclusion: All identities belong and are loved in Christ. Justice: Restoration of equity and

Love: God is Love and all

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Sunday, December 31

wholeness.

10:00 am Worship - Sanctuary 10:00 am Friendship Village Satellite Worship

Monday, January 1

The church building will be closed

Tuesday, January 2

12:30 pm Clergy/Directors - 305 6:30 pm SPRC - Parlor/Zoom 6:30 pm Manna - Youth Center

Wednesday, January 3

9:00 am Dawn Patrol - Parlor
12:00 pm Cuppa Inspiration - Facebook Live
12:30 pm Food Pantry
1:30 pm OLLI Curriculum Committee - Fellowship Rm
3:00 pm HON - Zoom

Thursday, January 4

9:30 am First Stitchers - Fellowship Room 12:20 pm DOCC - Parlor 4:30 pm Second Sunday Planning 7:15 pm Chancel Singers - Choir Room

Friday January 5

Saturday January 6

Sunday, January 7 9:00 am The New Storyteller - Rm 304 10:00 am Sunday Worship - Sanctuary 10:00 am Friendship Village Satellite Worship 11:15 am Sunday School for all ages 11:15 am Youth Council - Youth Lounge

6:00pm Small Groups at church

Monday, January 8

6:00 pm Youth Group - Youth Center

1:00 pm Building & Grounds - Zoom

UMH-United Methodist Hymnal

UPCOMING WORSHIP

Sunday, January 7 10 am Worship

Rev. Julie Kline Accepting God's Claim Upon Us Mark 1:4-11

> Sunday, January 14 10 am Worship

Rev. Julie Kline 2nd Sunday After the Epiphany

We're glad you are our guest today!

If you are worshipping with us for the first time, please stop by the Welcome Center. Child care with trained and fully vaccinated staff is provided on the second floor for infants through three-year-olds.

Worship activities for children can be found on a cart outside the side sanctuary doors.

LARGE print Bibles and Hymnals are available at the Park Street entrance.

Hearing assistance devices are available at the Welcome Center.

Today's service is being livestreamed and recorded. You can request a free copy of the DVD from the office. You can find previous worship services on our website: http://www.umc-kzo.org/mp3.asp. You may view worship services on our YouTube channel: YouTube.com/c/ KALAMAZOOfirstunitedmethodistchurch

Clergy & Directors

Rev. Julie Kline Lead Pastor

Rev. Matt Weiler

Pastor of Community Formation

Jacqueline Stilger

Director of Music

Julia Librizzi

Director of Children and Families Ministries

Thom Victor

Pastor of Congregational Care

Ruth LaMachia

Director of Business Administration

WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Matt Weiler, Rev. Julie Kline, Julia Librizzi, Deb Search Willoughby, Robin Entenman, Alex Moon

Director of Music Organist Jacqueline Stilger Bernie Foulk

Piano - Alex Moon

Satellite Worship Coordinator: Pastor Thom Victor

AV Team: Casey Curran, Bryan Heany

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

In our worship, we strive to witness to the wholeness of God, embracing the diversity of images of God that are found within Scriptures. We will seek to include male, female, and gender-neutral language and imagery for God, and utilize language that helps to avoid binary terms in pronouns and images of people. In our hymns and liturgy, we invite you to use pronouns that best express your practice and affirm your faith.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

January Mission of the Month

While it seems that Winter has been delayed, many individuals in Kalamazoo are homeless and living outside in tents and many others are living in shelters. Others cannot afford warm winter clothing. We are hoping to help keep them warm by collecting the following items for Ministry with Community and the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission. Please consider helping our neighbors in need:

Ministry with Community

Men's underwear (all sizes)

Women's underwear (sizes small, medium and large NOT ex-large and above

Hand Warmers

Kalamazoo Gospel Mission

-Men's Shelter

Socks

Men's underwear all sizes

Undershirts

Winter gloves

-Women's Shelter

Socks Adult and Children Underwear Adult and Children Diapers size 3,4,5,6

The Mission of the Month collection point is near the entrance to the food pantry.

The Outreach Team thanks you for your assistance in helping others in our community.

Adult Sunday School Opportunities resume January 7.

Family Foundations: I Guess I Haven't Learned That Yet by Shauna Niequist. Using Weekly videos guided by the author, discussion questions, and reflections we join this journey of unlearning what is no longer helpful, embracing curiosity, and accepting the unknowns.

The New Storyteller! 9:00 a.m. in room 304. This study is a deep dive into the Book of Acts - the writer, Luke, was a New Storyteller.

New Years Fest

Join us this evening at 6 pm for the New Year's Fest! Featured events will include Alan Smola, returning with new illusions and magic in the sanctuary; the Otsego Jazz Band, and Ventriloquist Richard Paul in Wesley Hall.

Winter Weather Closing Policy. Every attempt will be made for the church to be open on Sundays. Please use discretion deciding when to venture out. Weekday meetings may be cancelled if travel is dangerous. Team and committee chairs are asked to contact the church and their team/committee if a meeting is cancelled. Please check Channel 3 news, our website, Facebook, and email for closing notices. Please note the church may be open even when area schools are closed.

Anti-Bias/Anti-Racist. As part of Kalamazoo First United Methodist Church's vow to resist oppression in all its forms we, the Church Council, commit ourselves to the decisive action that is needed to resist and dismantle racism at every level. This action must go beyond our historically empty rhetoric about repentance and broken promises to be a church that is a credible and active witness for peace, equity and justice in the face of harm visited upon communities of color. We beckon our clergy and lay leadership to unapologetically shine the light of truth on our church community so that we recognize our complicity in systemic racism, recognize and condemn white supremacy as sin, and seek a deep knowing of what God calls us to do. We make these vows so that every person - especially Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) -may live in safety, health, and freedom.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO

(269) 381-6340 † www.umc-kzo.org

We would like to connect with you.

Please fill out the attendance pad and introduce yourself as you pass it to your neighbor. You are invited in these beginning moments to use the green prayer cards found in the pews. The cards will be collected by an usher during the opening hymn to be shared with clergy.

* Please rise in body or in spirit

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP (reading responsively)

Robin Entenman

December 31, 2023

10 am

We have welcomed the Christ child and declared the glory of God's salvation that comes to live among us. And yet, still, we wait.

We watch and work for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

We prepare to welcome a new year, thankful for how God has brought us through the past year and anxious to discover what the new year might bring. We watch and work for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

We join generations of Simeons and Annas who learned and taught us how to listen, notice, and discern divine love at work in the world.

We watch and work for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Come, let us worship God, Whose love endures from generation to generation, Guiding us from one year to the next.

Come let us worship as we live

In anticipation of God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN #220 Angels from the Realms of Glory (UMH-red hymnal) During the hymn, ushers will pass through the sanctuary collecting the green prayer cards.

WELCOME Rev. Matt Weiler

We are a Reconciling Congregation, welcoming all.

First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo invites all persons to join us on our journey of faith. Jesus Christ calls us to be an inclusive church that exemplifies the kingdom of God. We strive to move toward reconciling relationships with all, affirming those who are marginalized for any reason, including sexual orientation or gender identity.

We welcome all with open hearts, open minds, open doors.