# FIRST UNITED METHODIST

C H U R C H OF KALAMAZOO

(269) 381-6340 † www.umc-kzo.org

\* Please rise in body or in spirit

**PRELUDE** 

ANTHEM Star Carol John Rutter

CHRISTMAS BELLS Christmas Fanfare arr. Douglas E. Wagner

CALL TO CHRISTMAS & LIGHTING THE PEACE CANDLE

Amazing Peace: A Christmas Poem

Rev. Julie Kline by Dr. Maya Angelou

\*PROCESSIONAL CAROL #234 O Come All Ye Faithful

(UMH-red hymnal)

WELCOME AND PASSING THE PEACE

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES AND CHRIST CANDLE The Grant Family

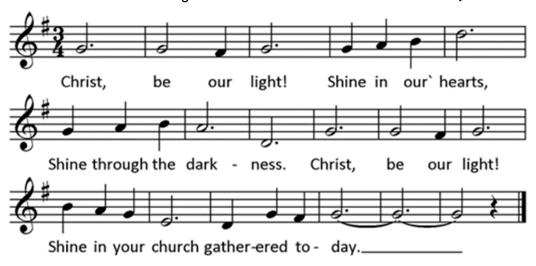
One: Hope, peace, joy, and love. Four candles, four promises continually offered to us by God . . . . In Christ we find light and life, and the courage to be like him, answering his call and following in his footsteps.

All: We rejoice in God's steadfast presence in our lives, and in God's unique presence in the life of Jesus of Nazareth—born of Mary, growing through child-hood into an adult ministry, in all his life manifesting the peace, love, and justice of God; his voice undimmed by the centuries, his call and his promise as clear to us as it was to his disciples so long ago. Come to us, Lord Jesus, be born in us this night, in our hearts, our minds, our lives. May the light of your life be kindled in us, and lead us to the shining truth, of God with us, God for us, God in us. Amen.

# 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.



©1993 Bernadette Farrell, Pub. By OCP Pub, All rights reserved. Used with permission. OneLicense #717536

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 9:2-7 The People have seen a Great Light Rev. Weiler

#### **CHORAL ANTHEM** Of the Father's Love

12th century. Plainsong and 15th century German carol arr. William Roger Price

Of the Father's love begotten ere the worlds began to be, he is Alpha and Omega, he the Source, the Ending he. Of the things that are, that have been and that future years shall see, evermore and evermore. Lo, how a rose e'er blooming form tender stem hath sprung, of Jesse's lineage coming, as men of old have sung. It came a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter, when halfspent was the night. This flower whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air, dispels with glorious spender the darkness every where. True man but very God; from sin and death he saves us and lightens every load. Isaiah 'twas foretold it. This is he whom heaven taught singers sang of old with one accord, whom the Scriptures of the prophets promised in their faithful word; now he shines, the long expected; let creation praise its Lord, evermore and evermore.

**SECOND LESSON** Luke 2:1-14 The Birth of Jesus Jonathan Richardson

ANTHEM Gloria Antonio Vivaldi

**THIRD LESSON** Luke 2:15-20 The Shepherds Seek the Savior

\*CAROL #238 Angels We Have Heard on High (UMH-red hymnal)

\*FOURTH LESSON John 1:1-5 The Light Shines in the Darkness

\*CAROL #242 Love Came Down at Christmas (UMH-red hymnal)

**MESSAGE** Humble Acts of Love Rev. Julie Kline

CAROL #242 v. 3 Love Came Down at Christmas (UMH-red hymnal)

#### **CALL TO OFFERING**

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

#### **OFFERTORY** A Child is Born in Bethlehem

Philip Stopford

A child is born in Bethlehem, Alleluia. And joy is in Jerusalem, Alleluia. Rejoice, rejoice, sing high, sing low, Alleluia. Benedicamus Domino. To thee O Lord be glory paid, Alleluia. Thou Son of Mary, Mother maid, Alleluia. To Holy Trinity give praise, Alleluia, with Dec Gracias always, Alleluia.

\*THE DOXOLOGY #240 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

(UMH-red hymnal)

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (praying together)

Holy Spirit, make of our hearts an open manger, that Christ may be born in us anew and live in us always. By your grace help us to give and receive the gifts of this holy season, to share them with all the world, and to live always in the light of Jesus' presence. Amen.

#### \*SERVICE OF LIGHT

One: Jesus said, "I have come as a light into the world.

Whoever believes in me will not remain in darkness."

All: In Christ's name, I will light my candle.

With Christ's strength, I will take it into the world.

As we light our candles, please turn and pass the light to the person next to you, tilting only the **UNLIT** candle to avoid dripping wax.

\*CAROL #239 Silent Night, Holy Night

(UMH-red hymnal)

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. Heavenly 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.

(You are invited to carefully raise your candle during this last verse)

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light; With the angels let us sing, "Alleluia" to our King; Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born!

# \*CHRISTMAS BLESSING

(Please extinguish your candle after the blessing)

\*RECESSIONAL CAROL #246 Joy to the World

(UMH-red hymnal)

#### **BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** Allegro from Concerto in C minor by Vivaldi-Bach

arr. David Baldwin

# **WORSHIP LEADERS**

Rev. Julie Kline, Rev. Matt Weiler, Jonathan Richardson

Advent Candle Lighters: The Grant Family

**Director of Music** Organist
Jacqueline Stilger Bernie Foulk

# West Michigan BrassWorks:

Scott Thornburg and Johannes Stegman, trumpets, Margaret Hamilton, horn, Robert Whaley, tuba, Hana Beloglavec, trombone

AV Team: Casey Curran, Bryan Heany

**Greeters:** Ray & Ann Sweany, Judy Sivak, Steve and Donna Dunyak, Deborah Jewett

# **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**

Welcome. If you are visiting First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo for the first time or are visiting us for the holidays, we bid you welcome! If you are seeking a church home, please consider worshiping with us again and discovering more about the journey of faith offered to all by our loving and seeking God. We worship on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Christmas Offering. Our offering this Christmas will support the following organizations: Wesley Foundation, welcoming college students and offering diverse programming and collaboration with community groups; Growing Hope Globally, supporting agricultural programs that make a lasting impact in families and communities; Immigration Law and Justice Michigan, extending hospitality to low-income immigrants with legal assistance; and Helping Our Neighbors, extending a life-line to individuals confronting the threat of homelessness or utility shut-offs.

Labyrinth Invitation. Last change to walk the labyrinth the season is after worship tonight downstairs in Wesley Hall. There will be prayer stations set up outside the four corners of the labyrinth to enhance your time of prayer and contemplation. We encourage you to try this ancient prayer practice to quiet your mind, center yourself, and allow your spirit to be in prayer. Peace be with you.

#### Adult Sunday School Resumes January 7.

Family Foundations: A Sunday School class for parents of young children will begin with fellowship and coffee in room 209. On Jan. 7. Family Foundations will begin their study of I Guess I Haven't Learned That Yet by Shauna Niequist. Using Weekly videos guided by the author and discussion questions with optional at home reading and reflections join this journey of unlearning what is no longer helpful, embracing curiosity, and accepting the unknowns of midlife, heartbreak, and chronic pain. Shauna speaks about the challenges and delights of releasing our expectations for how we thought our lives would look. In this fivesession study, follow Shauna on her journey to understand grief, to reshape her faith, to practice courage when all she wanted to do was hide.

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. Class will resume on January 7.

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.

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.

#### **UPCOMING WORSHIP**

#### **December 31, 2023**

10:00 a.m. Worship Rev. Matt Weiler Jesus of Nazareth Luke 2:22-40

## January 7, 2024

10:00 a.m. Worship Rev. Julie Kline Accepting God's Claim Upon Us Mark 1:4-11

#### 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 said 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 may request a free copy of the DVD from the office. Previous worship services may be found on our website: www.umc-kzo.org. You may view worship services on our YouTube channel: Kalamazoofirstunitedmethodistchurch

# **Clergy & Directors**

Rev. Julie Kline

Lead Pastor

Rev. Matt Weiler

Pastor of Community Formation

Jacqueline Stilger

Director of Music

Iulia Librizzi

Director of Children and Families Ministries

**Thom Victor** 

Pastor of Congregational Care

Ruth LaMachia

Director of Business Administration

#### **OUR MISSION**

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

#### **OUR VISION**

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

#### **OUR VALUES**

Love: God is Love and all 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 wholeness.

#### THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Office Hours this week will be Tues - Thurs, 10 - 2

Sunday, December 24

11:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship - Sanctuary

Monday, December 25

The church building will be closed

Tuesday, December 26

Office hours 10 am - 2 pm

Wednesday, December 27

Office hours 10 am - 2 pm 12:00 pm Cuppa Inspiration - Facebook Live 12:30 pm Food Pantry

Thursday, December 28

Office hours 10 am - 2 pm

Friday December 29

Saturday December 20

Sunday, December 31

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

Monday, January 1

The church building will be closed

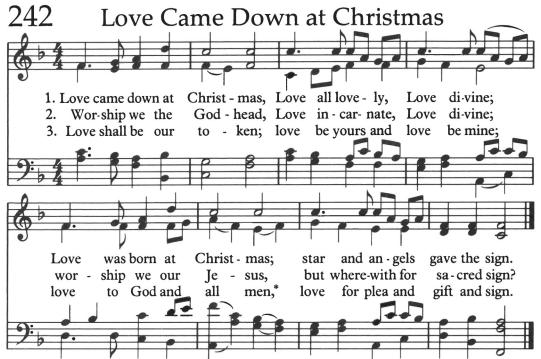
# Winter Weather Closing Policy

We share closures on WWMT, Face-book, our webpage, and email.



# Angels We Have Heard on High





\*"neighbor" may be substituted for "all men"

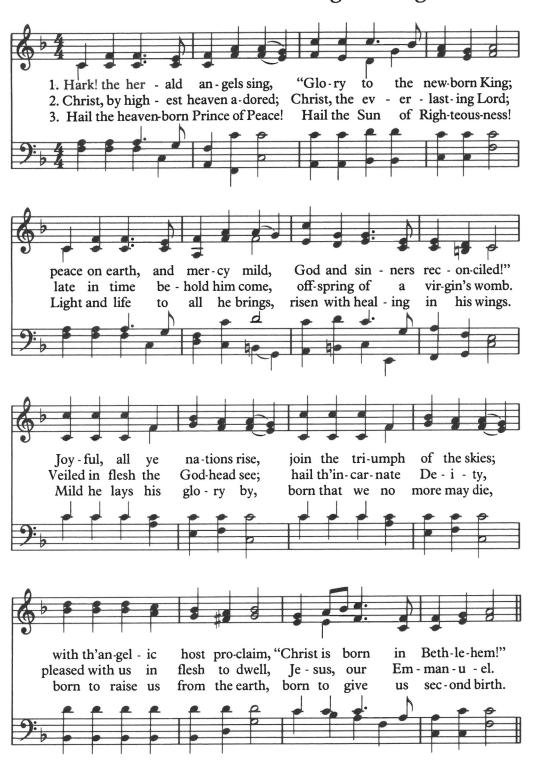
WORDS: Christina G. Rossetti, 1885

MUSIC: Trad. Irish melody; harm. by David Evans, 1927; alt.

Harm. by permission of Oxford University Press

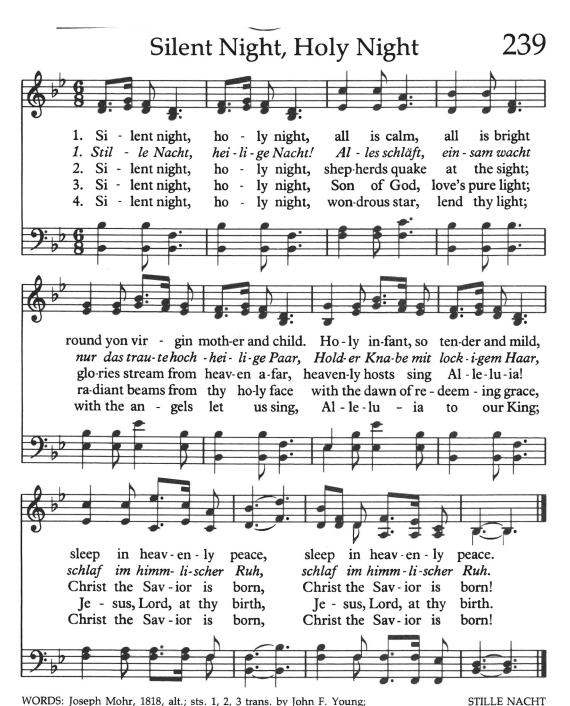
GARTAN 67.67

# 240 Hark! the Herald Angels Sing



WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739; alt. by George Whitefield, 1753, and others (Lk. 2:8-14) MENDELSSOHN MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. by William H. Cummings, 1856 77.77 D with Refrain





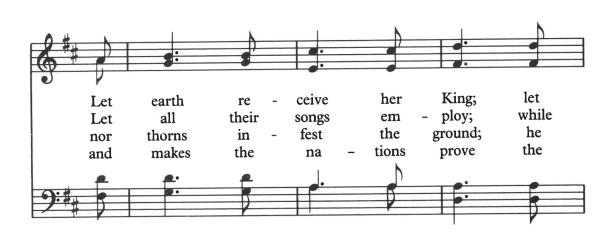
Irr.

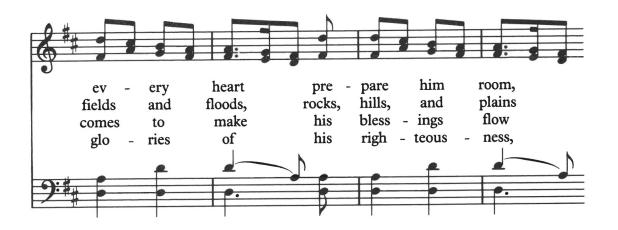
WORDS: Joseph Mohr, 1818, alt.; sts. 1, 2, 3 trans. by John F. Young; st. 4 trans. anon. (Lk. 2:6-20)

MUSIC: Franz Gruber, 1818

Joy to the World







WORDS: Issac Watts, 1719 (Ps. 98:4-9) MUSIC: Arr. from G. F. Handel, 1741, by Lowell Mason, 1848

