

SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE | CHRISTMAS EVE

First United Methodist Church, Houston

West Campus Traditional Service - 3:00 pm - Hinson Chapel | Downtown Campus Traditional Service - 7:00 & 11:00 pm - Sanctuary
December 24, 2024

PRELUDE Three Festive Carols *Mark Hayes & Marvin Gaspard*
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*CALL TO WORSHIP Hark! the Herald Angels Sing arr. John Rutter UMH 240
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**Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies; with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

Refrain: Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

**Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord; late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity, pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. *(sing refrain)***

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die, born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. *(sing refrain)***

*WELCOME Rev. Dr. Eric Pugh (3:00) Rev. Amanda Davis (7:00 & 11:00)

*CAROL OF WELCOME God Rest You Merry Gentlemen arr. John Rutter
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**God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay for Jesus Christ our Savior was born upon this day,
to save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray:**

*Refrain: O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

**From God our heavenly Father a blessed angel came, and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same,
how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name: *(sing refrain)***

**The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind, and left their flocks a-feeding, in tempest, storm and wind,
and went to Bethlehem straight-way this blessed babe to find: *(sing refrain)***

**But when to Bethlehem they came where-at this infant lay, they found Him in a manger here oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling, unto the Lord did pray: *(sing refrain)***

**Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place and with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas doth bring redeeming grace: *(sing refrain)***

LIFE OF THE CHURCH Celebration of 2024 Ministry & Christmas Offering Rev. Lance Richards

OFFERING PRAYER Rev. Dr. Eric Pugh (3:00) | Rev. Steven Newcomb (7:00 & 11:00)

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD Congregation

MINISTRY IN MUSIC How Great Our Joy arr. Craig Courtney
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Sanctuary Choir

While by the sheep we watched by night glad tidings brought an angel bright. How great our joy.

There shall be born, so did he say, in Bethlehem a Child today. How great our joy.

There shall a Child lie in a stall, this Child who shall redeem us all.

This gift of God we'll cherish well, that ever joy our hearts shall fill.

Praise we the Lord, praise we the Lord in heaven on high! Praise we the Lord! How great our joy!

*OFFERING RESPONSE In the Bleak Midwinter (v. 4) UMH 221

**What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart.**

*INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE Rev. Lance Richards

- *PRAYER OF CONFESSION Rev. Lance Richards
Lord of Christmas Peace we have done wrong. We have tarnished the gift you gave freely. We have buried you so deeply in our hearts, the world doesn't see you. We have not followed Christ, we have ignored your teachings, we have lived lives of apathy against your love, we have built fences and fortresses to push people away, and we have silenced the cries of those in need. Forgive us, we pray. Free us from our sin, free us from our captivity, free us to a life lived in joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- *ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS Rev. Lance Richards
 Hear the good news... ..in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
Leader and People: Glory to God. Amen.
- *GLORIA UMH 238
 Angels We Have Heard on High (Refrain)
Refrain: Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
- TIME FOR CHILDREN (3:00 & 7:00 p.m. only) Courtney Hutchins
- *CAROL OF PREPARATION UMH 234
 O Come, All Ye Faithful, arr. John Rutter (v. 1,3,6)
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**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
 Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;**
Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.
**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation; O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
 Glory to God, all glory in the highest; (sing refrain)**
**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning, Jesus, to Thee be all glory given.
 Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: (sing refrain)**
- *SCRIPTURE Rev. Lance Richards
 Luke 2:1-20
 The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**
- MESSAGE Rev. Lance Richards
 To YOU Is Born THIS Day
- PASTORAL PRAYER Rev. Dr. Eric Pugh
- *CAROL OF INVITATION UMH 218
 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (v. 1,2,4) arr. John Rutter
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**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 "Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all-gracious King." The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**
**MEN: Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
 and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;**
**WOMEN: above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
 and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**
**ALL: For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old, when, with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold
 when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.**
- THE GREAT THANKSGIVING Rev. Dr. Eric Pugh & Rev. Lance Richards (3:00)
 Rev. Dr. Eric Pugh, Rev. Steven Newcomb, Rev. Amanda Davis & Rev. Lance Richards (7:00 & 11:00)
 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!**
 ...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!**
 ...as we proclaim the mystery of the faith:
Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.
 ,...all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Spoken)

Our Father 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.

UMH 895
Rev. Lance Richards

COMMUNION MUSIC

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence
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Sanctury Choir

arr. Craig Courtney

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in His hand
Christ our God to earth descending comes our homage to demand.
King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture, in the body and the blood.
He will give to all the faithful His own self for heavenly food.
Rank on rank the host of heaven, spreads its vanguard on the way;
as the Light descending from the realms of endless day,
comes, the powers of hell to vanquish, as the darkness clears away.
At His feet the six-winged seraph, cherubim with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry: Alleluia! Alleluia, Lord Most High!

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Jones Family (3:00) | Ron Sledge & Virginia Pittman-Waller (7:00)
The Aldis Family (11:00)

*CANDLELIGHT CAROL

Silent Night
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arr. Mark Hayes

**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, 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, fill our hearts with Thy light.
In the darkness may we shine with the promise of love divine;
light of heaven on earth, light of heaven on earth.**

**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!**

CHOIR ONLY:

The Savior is born

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Lance Richards

*CAROL OF JOY

Joy to the World (v. 1 & 4)

UMH 246

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King; let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders, of his love.**

*POSTLUDE

Hallelujah Chorus
(PDM)

G.F. Handel

*Please stand as you are able.

ALTAR FLOWERS

The flowers on the Downtown Sanctuary altar are given in memory of Leon & Glynda Rothen by their family.

SERVICE PARTICIPANTS:

ORGANIST

Paul Butt

EXECUTIVE PASTOR

Rev. Amanda Davis

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC

Cynthia Douglas

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Courtney Hutchins

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Rev. Steven Newcomb

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP PASTOR/ DIRECTOR OF STUDENT MINISTRY

Rev. Dr. Eric Pugh

SENIOR PASTOR

Rev. Lance Richards

PIANIST

Jeremy Wood
