

WHEN *Hope* WAS
BORN



Organ Prelude

Call to Worship:

L: Rejoice, for God is with us -- Emmanuel.

P: In the darkness of our world shines God's holy light.

L: Now there is reason to hope, to love, to laugh, to live.

P: God is truly with us. We are not alone.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

The Prophecy of the Messiah

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

***Carol:** "O Come, All Ye Faithful," vv. 1,3,6

UMH #234

Opening Prayer (unison):

Gracious God, with joy and thanksgiving we gather as your people. We have come to hear again the timeless story of Christ's birth. In the excitement of this night, quiet our hearts that we may know the peace and fullness of this holy time. Shine, O Light, in the darkness of our world. Sing, O angels, in the stillness of our hearts, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those God favors." This we pray in the name of the Child of Bethlehem. Amen.

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

John & Cathy VanReenan

The Coming of Jesus Announced to Mary

Luke 1:26-38

Mary's Song

Solo - Rev. Deb Hanson

The Coming of Jesus Announced to Joseph

Matthew 1:18-25

Carol: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," vs. 1,2

UMH #240

The Preparations for the Birth of Jesus

Carol: "O Little Town of Bethlehem," vs. 1,4

UMH #230

Jesus is Born

Luke 2:1-7

Oh Holy Night

Solo - Kaya Sarosiek

Jesus' Birth is Announced to the Shepherds

Luke 2:8-20

Carol: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," vs. 1,4

UMH #218

The Shepherds Find the Baby Jesus

Don't Be Afraid

Solo - Bevan Bloemendaal

The Wise Men Bring Their Gifts to Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12

Carol: "The First Noel," vs. 1,3,5

UMH #245

We Offer Our Gifts to God

Offertory [for the UMCOR Disaster Relief fund]

Trio - Dianne Crisp, Steve Scott & Bevan Bloemendaal

Offertory Response:

“What Gift Can We Bring,” v. 4

UMH #87

Message: “What Gifts Can We Give?” - *Rev. Deb Hanson & Dave Atkinson*

Union Prayer and Assurance of Pardon:

Merciful God, we confess that often we find darkness more comfortable than light. We confess that we find your good news frightening and unsettling, especially when we consider its demands as well as its promises. We confess that Christmas has become more to us than the birthday of the Christ, partly because we do not want a Christ-Child in our lives or in our world. Forgive us, break us, bend us, re-make us. Give us the courage to lay ourselves open to the wonder and healing of your coming. Be born again into our world, be born again into our hearts and lives. Hear now our silent and personal confessions as we prepare ourselves for your nativity.

Words of Assurance

L: The true light that enlightens all has come into the world. That light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to put it out. This is the good news: God has heard our confession. God has forgiven our sin.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

The Lord’s Prayer (unison)

The Sharing of the Light

(house lights are turned off until after singing)

Carol: “Silent Night”

UMH #239

Blessing (L. Frenz)

P: God comes to us now; comes to embrace us.

C: Emmanuel, God who is with us.

A: For this Child is Peace beyond all peace,

C: Love beyond all loves, Light of light, Song of songs, God almighty!

P: Follow this Child who is Grace beyond all grace,

C: A Gift beyond all gifts, Joy of joys, God made flesh, almighty!

A: Go in joy and love to serve your newborn King!

C: Thanks be to God! Amen!

Carol: “Joy to the World,” vs. 1,4

UMH #246

Postlude

Join us in Sanborn Hall for coffee and fellowship after the service



Welcome!

Whether you are joining us for worship for the first time or after many years of attending here at First UMC, we want you to know that you are welcome!

We are an inclusive community that invites everyone to be part of our church fellowship. Thank you for being here, and we hope that you have had a meaningful experience of worshiping our God so you leave this place feeling that you have been blessed to be a blessing. Please join us again!

Rev. Deb Hanson



Pastor - Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson

Pastor's Assistant - David Richards

Liturgist - David Richards

Lay Leader - Susan Sarosiek

Director of Music - Bevan Bloemendaal

Acolyte - Kaya Sarosiek

Greeters - Kevin Fickenscher, Suzanne Olbricht & Marilyn Stebbins

Ushers - Ken & Jenya Westbrook &

Kevin Fickenscher & Suzanne Ulbricht

Sunday School - Pageant

Sound Tech - Sue Sarosiek

Worship Service Tech - Steve Scott

Photographer - Dave Atkinson

In a world filled with so much judgement, hatred, and violence, it's often difficult to look past that and view the world as a kind place. Even if the world around you seems like it will never be a peaceful, loving place, you can still make a small difference. Sure, a single person can't stop people from being mean or violent towards each other, and world peace is not within one person's reach. However, what we all can do to promote peace, love, and a general respect for others is practice random acts of kindness. An act of kindness, no matter how small, can have such a powerful ripple-effect on others. When people are treated with kindness, they will often convey that same kindness towards others and before you know it, you've impacted quite a few people. No act of kindness is menial or unimportant; anything done with kindness is significant and beneficial to our world today. **BE THE HOPE EVERYDAY!**



ADVENT 2018

BE THE HOPE

THIS CHRISTMAS

As part of our tradition at FUMC in lieu of poinsettias we partnered with Heifer International and the FUMC kids blessings project to honor our loved ones with a gift of kindness and BE THE HOPE this Christmas.

We honor and remember:

Peter and Sue Newbury by PennySue Orr

Paul & Dorothy Atkinson, Marlo & Jane Hanson, Alex Atkinson by
Dave Atkinson & Deb Hanson

Anonymous

In Memory of Bud by Jane Richards

James W. New, II, Isabella New-Walker, Elliot C. Walker by Evelyn New

In Memory of Ernest Drake by Cynthia Drake

For Kaya Sarosiek by Marilyn Stebbins

In Memory of Richard by Linda Reiber

In Honor of my parents by Bevan Bloemendaal

For those who feel hopeless by Bevan Bloemendaal

In loving memory of Skip by Sue and Kaya Sarosiek

Advent Wreath given in loving memory of Jim Millar by Barbara Miller

Christmas Tree in loving memory of Bob Clement by his family