



FIRST CHURCH

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
of SAN DIEGO

DECEMBER 24, 2023 – 9:00 PM



FIRST CHURCH IS A COMMUNITY THAT IS GROWING
IN GRACE AND REACHING OUT WITH LOVE.

CHRISTMAS EVE

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

*With joy we welcome your presence today, wherever you are.
Please join us as we prepare our hearts and minds for worship together.*

Words of Inspiration

“Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love.”
~ Hamilton Wright Mabie

Prelude Dr. Jaebon Hwang

A Nativity Suite

I. Oh, Come, Emmanuel

II. Silent Night

III. Shepherds

IV. The Three Kings

V. Joy to the World

Wilbur Held (1914-2015)

La Nativité

Jean Langlais (1907-1991)



Register Your Attendance

Welcome In-Person and Online Community Rev. Trudy D. Robinson

• **Call to Worship** Rev. Tamara Walker

On a regular day, in an ordinary place,
to a young woman, to an elderly man.
for laborers on a hillside and nations of distant lands:

A child is born!

In every moment, in every space,
with outrageous love, and endless hope,
for every need, for every person:

Christ is here!

• **Processional Hymn #234: O Come, All Ye Faithful** (vs. 1-3, 6)

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| 1. 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: | 3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; |
| 2. True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,
lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created; | 6. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: |

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Lighting of the Christ Candle The Smith Family

In the middle of everyday business, at the edge of unexpected space,
God appears in a baby, and to weary workers hope is born,
to seasoned sages peace is born,
to anxious youth, joy is born,
to lonely elders, love is born.

God is among us always.

We light a candle for the Christ.

Hymn #216: Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (vs. 1-2)

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| 1. Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
as those of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night. | 2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the Rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,
the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night. |
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Pastoral Prayer Rev. Dr. Hannah Ka

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who are 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.

Hymn #230: *O Little Town of Bethlehem* (vs. 1-2)

1. O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

2. For Christ is born of Mary,
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together,
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth!

First Lesson: *Luke 1:26-35* B Mayner

Hymn #218: *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* (vs. 1, 4)

1. 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.

4. 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.

Second Lesson: *Matthew 1:18-25* Barb Weicksel

Hymn #211: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (vs. 1-2)

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive
Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the
Son of God appear.

2. O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all
things far and nigh; to us the path of knowledge
show and cause us in her ways to go.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Third Lesson: *Luke 2:1-7* Kimberly Sather

Hymn #217: *Away in a Manger* (vs. 1-2)

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus, a sleep on the day.

2. The cattle are lowing, a baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Fourth Lesson: *Luke 2:8-16* Leo Djamson

Anthem Chancel Choir; Brian Lustig, *director*

Sussex Carol

arr. Cecilia McDowall (b. 1951)

On Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring.
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King’s birth.

Then why should we on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty.

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angles sing this night:
Glory to God and peace to all,
O that we were there.

Glory to God and peace to all,
Now and for evermore. Amen. (Traditional English, 17th cent.)

Fifth Lesson: *Matthew 2:1-11* Pat Brown

Anthem Chancel Choir

African Noel

arr. André J. Thomas (b. 1952)

Sing Noel, Sing we all Noel,
O Come, yet people, gather here to hear the news of good cheer.
The King of kings, the Lamb of God is born today in Bethlehem.

Scripture Lesson: *Psalms 96:1-4; 11-13*

The word of God for the People of God: **thanks be to God.**

Homily: “*Christmas in Full Blossom*” Rev. Trudy D. Robinson

Anthem Chancel Choir

What Sweeter Music

John Rutter (b. 1945)

What sweeter music can we bring Than a carol for to sing The birth of this our Heavenly King? Awake the voice, awake the string Dark and dull night, fly hence away And give the honor to this day That sees December turned to May. Why does the chilling winter’s morn Smile, like a field beset with corn? Or smell like a meadow newly-shorn Thus, on the sudden? Come and see The cause, why things thus fragrant be: Tis’ he is born, whose quickening birth Gives life and luster, public mirth, To Heaven, and the under-Earth.	We see him come, and know him ours, Who, with his sunshine and his showers, Turns all the patient ground to flowers. The darling of the world is come, And fit it is, we find a room To welcome him. The nobler part of all the house here, is the heart, Which we will give him; and bequeath This holly, and this ivy wreath, To do him honour; who’s our King And Lord of all this revelling What sweeter music can we bring Than a carol for to sing The birth of this our Heavenly King. (Robert Herrick)
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Worship Through Gifts & Offerings. Rev. Brittany Juliette Hanlin

Offertory Anthem Chancel Choir

Joys Seven

English traditional carol; arr. Stephen Cleobury (b. 1948)

The first good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of one; To see the blessed Jesus Christ when He was first her son: When he was first her son, good man: and blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to all eternity. The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of two; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, to make the lame to go: To make the lame to go, good man: and blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to all eternity. The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of three; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, to make the blind to see; To make the blind to see, good man: and blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to all eternity. The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of four; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, to read the Bible o’er:	To read the Bible o’er, good man: and blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to all eternity. The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of five; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, to bring the dead alive: To bring the dead alive, good man: and blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to all eternity. The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of six; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, upon the crucifix: Upon the crucifix, good man: and blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to all eternity. The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of seven; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, to wear the crown of heaven: To wear the crown of heaven, good man, And blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to all eternity. (English traditional)
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THE LIGHT COMES INTO THE WORLD

Distribution of the Light

Hymn #239: *Silent Night, Holy Night*

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| 1. Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin, mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
<i>Sleep in heavenly peace,</i>
<i>Sleep in heavenly peace.</i> | 3. Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light;
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
<i>Jesus Lord at thy birth;</i>
<i>Jesus Lord at thy birth.</i> |
| 2. Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
<i>Christ the Savior is born,</i>
<i>Christ the Savior is born!</i> | 4. Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light!
With the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King!
<i>Christ the Savior is born,</i>
<i>Christ the Savior is born!</i> |

Benediction Rev. Trudy D. Robinson

• Recessional Hymn #246: *Joy to the World*

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|---|---|
| 1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing. | 3. No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found. |
| 2. Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy. | 4. He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love. |

(Please place your candle in the box at the door as you leave the Sanctuary.)

KEEP IN TOUCH

Connect with the First Church community here!

Worship online: each week via www.fumcsd.org/watch-live or subscribe to our YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/c/FirstChurchSanDiego.

Drop in early or stay online late to catch upcoming events in our pre- and post-worship announcements loop.

Stay up to date with all the happenings via the weekly eNEWS. To subscribe visit www.fumcsd.org/enews or text FUMCSDNEWS to 22828.

FIRST CHURCH WELCOMES YOU IF...

You are single, married, divorced, gay, transgender, filthy rich, dirt poor, o no habla inglés,

You are a crying newborn, skinny as a rail or could afford to lose a few pounds,

You can sing like Aretha Franklin or cannot carry a tune in a bucket,

You're "just browsing", just woke up, or you just got out of jail,

You've been a Methodist your whole life or haven't been in church except for your little niece's baptism years ago,

You've got an AARP card but have yet to grow up, or you're a teenager growing up, too fast.

We welcome soccer moms, NASCAR dads, tree huggers, latte-sippers, vegans, junk-food eaters,

We welcome those who are in recovery or struggling with addiction,

We welcome you if you're having problems or if you're down in the dumps or if you don't like "organized religion," this church is for you,

If you blew all your money in Vegas, you're welcome here,

*We offer a special welcome to those who think the earth is flat, those who work too hard, those who don't work,
can't spell or found us because Grandma wants you to go to church,*

We welcome all those who are inked, pierced or both,

We welcome you if your ancestors arrived in chains, below the decks, captained those ships, or have been on this land since the beginning of time,

We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now (all of us could use a prayer right now),

We'd also like to welcome you if you had religion shoved down your throat, or you got lost on YouTube somehow and ended up here by mistake.

We welcome tourists, seekers, doubters, bleeding hearts...and you!

May the Peace of Christ, which passes all understanding be with you this day, and all the days going forward.



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of SAN DIEGO

Growing in Grace, Reaching Out with Love

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SAN DIEGO • IN MISSION SINCE 1869

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A RECONCILING CONGREGATION