

Christmas Eve Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

December 24, 2017

Gathering

*Processional Hymn "Once in Royal David's City" UMH# 250

Opening Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Time with the Children

(All children under 12 years are invited to the front. Afterwards, during second service only, children ages 3 thru kindergarten are invited to children's church and will be escorted to room #113. Parents may pick them up there after the service.)

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Today we light the fourth candle of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning.

This fourth candle is LOVE.

Let us pray together:

Loving God, your mercy and compassion endure forever. Open our hearts, that we may receive your love; and following the example of your Son, spread that love to a love-starved world. Through Jesus Christ, who loved us to the end. Amen.

First Lesson Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

God announces in the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve's punishment for their rebellion and that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

Carol "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" UMH# 196

Second Lesson Genesis 22:15-18

God promises to Abraham that by his descendants all the nations of the earth will obtain blessings.

Carol "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (stanzas 1,2,4,7) UMH# 211

Third Lesson Isaiah 9:2,6-7

The prophet announces the birth of a king to a people in darkness.

Carol "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" (stanzas 1, 2) UMH# 216

Fourth Lesson Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9 or Micah 5:2-5a

The king is coming and will usher in a reign of justice for the poor and peace for all God's creation.

Carol "O Little Town of Bethlehem" UMH# 230

Anthem "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" *The Chancel Choir*

Fifth Lesson Luke 1:26-35,38

The angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will give birth to God's promised Son, whose kingdom will never end.

Offertory Prayer The Giving of Tithes & Offerings

Offertory "To a Maid Engaged to Joseph" *The Chancel Choir*

*The Doxology "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Him, all creatures here below; praise Him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen" UMH # 95

Sixth Lesson Luke 2:1-7

Against a backdrop of emperors and taxes, Jesus is born.

Carol "He Is Born" UMH# 228
"The First Noel" (stanza 1) UMH# 245

Seventh Lesson Luke 2:8-16

The shepherds go to see the Savior of the world and find him lying in a manger.

Carol "In the Bleak Midwinter" (stanzas 1, 2) UMH# 221

Eighth Lesson Matthew 2:1-11

The wise men follow a star to find the child Jesus, the King of the Jews.

Carol "We Three Kings" UMH# 254

Ninth Lesson John 1:1-14

John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

*Carol "O Come, All Ye Faithful" UMH# 234

*Collect

*Dismissal with Blessing

2017 Financial Update

Needed to meet General Fund Budget as of 11/30/17	\$ 603,824
Actual General Fund Spending as of 11/30/17	\$ 522,266
Received for General Fund as of 11/30/17	\$ 523,955

Financial Update for December! Thank you for your continued support for the ministry of Christ through FUMC. You have been so generous all year long in your ministry support and in your giving to internal ministries and external outreach. Even during this Thanksgiving/ Christmas Season we have seen giving in wonderful ways for the ministry before us to the needy. **As we end December, please remember that we have ministry obligations to finish out our year in a healthy way that must be met before December 31st. We are two payments behind on our Apportionments that support world missions and the extension ministries of the United Methodist Church. We have done well in keeping up all year, but we want to make sure we complete these gifts in December as well as meet our ending obligations for ministry and beyond. Please help us to end the year well, financially!** Please do not forget the church in your giving as we move through the end of the year. If you would like to know where you are presently in your giving in order to meet your Pledge to the church, please contact Shirley Davis (financial secretary at the church and request this over the phone, ask for current print out or to have this info emailed to you.) Each member will be mailed an end of the year statement in January of 2018 for your tax records.

Thanks in advance for your faithfulness and your giving to Christ's church at First United Methodist and for the ministry made possibly through your generous giving. May the God who always provides seed for the sower bear fruit in your lives, bear fruit in this community and bear fruit through our giving to the wider world.

My hope is that we as a church finish out the year well so we can begin in 2018 strong and healthy. Giving can be made for 2017 up until December 31st through the church office, the Sunday Offering, on line or through the debit machine at church. Remember, any proceeds we collect in 2017 for the budget beyond our spending in 2018 will only go to help us in our reserves for the coming year.

Peace to you ~ Rev. Thomas Wilkes

Electronic Debit Giving: The card reader is now available in the lobby. Touch any key to begin and then follow the posted directions. **Be sure to leave a receipt with your name printed on it in the locked black receptacle.** This is the only way your offering can be posted to your contribution records. A second receipt is also offered for your personal convenience.



Also takes Discover, American Express & Apple Pay.

Direct Draft Giving is now available for free: We are now offering the opportunity for automatic draft from your bank to our bank, Clover Community Bank. Please pick up and/or hand in your authorization for Direct Draft form from Shirley in the office, or put in the offering plate. This method has proven to be an effective and timely way to regularly give to the church. "I am an electronic giver" cards are in the pews for your use if you choose to use this method of giving.

Giving On-Line: Giving to FUMC is now available online through our website: www.cloverfumc.org.

Thanks for your support of the mission and ministry of FUMC.

If you decide to give electronically or through Direct Draft, please feel free to drop an "Electronic Giver" card in the offering plate on Sundays as an act of worship.

OUR JOYS AND PRAYER CONCERNS

Contact pastors or Shirley Davis @ 222-3496 or sdavis@cloverfumc.org to add to joy and prayer concerns:

Recent Concerns: Anne Adams, Dorothy Gallien, Sandy Chapman, Barb Millay, Rhett Hurst, Mitch Barr, Jean Rodriguez (Kim Britton's mother), J.B. Jenkins (Starr Jenkins' brother), Fred Byers, Dave Blanton, Jim Heckle, Josie Skinnell, Dolly Killian, Larry Beamguard, Tammy Bailes, Tom Dann, Margaret Pendleton, Eloise Mallen, Rolfe Sukkert, Dave Jones.

Military: Captain Thad Wilson, Lt. Col. Nicholas S. Hare, Senior Chief Martin Johnson, Major Blair Preston, 2nd Lt. Rion Cartin, LCPL Chris Propst, M.Gy. Sgt. Terry Kenneth Lowman, Jr.

Christmas Eve Services tonight:

5:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service

11:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service

No Youth tonight or December 31st.

Our 2018 Flower Calendar is now available for you to sign up to provide flowers for the altar. It is located on the bulletin board near the Missions & Fellowship Center. You can place them in honor or in memory of a loved one. This is a way to add a beautiful part of God's creation to our worship experience. There are guidelines in a folder near the calendar if you need assistance.

To All My Church Family: Thank you for all of your prayers, food and money gifts given to me and my son-in-law, Tom, during our health issues this year. I'm convinced it were your prayers that brought me thru all of it. I am undyingly grateful to all of you. *Thank you, Barb Millay*

Thank you: With loving conversations, kind cards, ardent prayers, you, the people of God at First UMC, Clover, have graciously comforted and supported me in the recent death of my sister, for which I am profoundly thankful. May God continue to bless you as you have so wonderfully blessed me!

Sincerely, Dick Gibson

The Food Project Ministry: Next week's 5th Sunday donation is apple juice. Thank you for your continued support.

Reverend Tommy Wilkes, Senior Pastor – twilkes@cloverfumc.org

Reverend Meg Wilkes, Associate Minister – mwilkes@cloverfumc.org

Reverend J. Richard Gibson, Pastor Emeritus

Jon Valentine, Director of Children & Youth Ministries – jvalentine@cloverfumc.org

Cheri King, Director of Music Ministries – cking@cloverfumc.org

Christine Payseur, Church Business / Technical Coordinator – cpayseur@cloverfumc.org

Shirley M. Davis, Administrative Assistant / Financial Secretary – sdavis@cloverfumc.org

Natasha Bilousova, Pianist

Nannette Carnes, Organist

Tracie Kite, Sexton – kite_tracie@hotmail.com

Hope Long, Nursery

Windy Bartee, Lay Leader

Ray Reavis, David Edwards, Bob Grindle, Conference Lay Members