

Welcome to Worship!

** Please stand as you are able.*

Please silence cell phones and other alarms.

You are invited in these beginning moments of worship to offer prayers, using the prayer cards if desired, and passing them to an usher. Please take a moment to sign in using the gray registration pad found in the pew pocket near the outside aisle, and passing it to your neighbors.

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” ~ 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18 (NRSV)

PRAISE

PRELUDE “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” arr. Linker/McFadden

*CONGREGATIONAL INTROIT 211 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (v. 1, 2, 6)

*GREETING and the PASSING OF THE PEACE

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

*ADVENT RESPONSE “Onward Came the Lord”

Came he not in fire, on-ward came the Lord. Not in wind or rain,
on-ward came the Lord. Hail nor sleet or snow, on-ward came the
Lord. In a still small voice came He, on-ward came the Lord!

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LIGHTING THE PEACE CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP and LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES *(all reading the bold)*

As we began our Advent pilgrimage, we asked that you grant us the courage to hope:

Hope for your presence; hope for your peace, hope for your promise.

Today we still hope. *(The first purple candle will be lit: HOPE)*

As we continued our journey down this year's Advent road, we asked that you grant us the courage to make peace:

Peace in our hearts; peace in our homes; peace in our communities.

Today we still strive for peace. *(The second purple candle will be lit: PEACE)*

Today, as we move ahead in our Advent walk, we ask you to grant us the courage to experience joy:

Joy in the face of apathy; joy in the face of sorrow; joy in the face of uncertainty.

As you come into the world to bring light;

Come, Lord Jesus, come and bring us joy! *(The pink candle will be lit: JOY)*

*HYMN OF PRAISE 213 *(red hymnal)* “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

UNISON PRAYER *(praying together)*

Eternal God of heaven and earth, rivers and seas, forests and glen, mountains and valleys; but also God of city and village, freeways and highways, shopping malls and retail strips, time clocks and board meetings, classrooms and hospital rooms, tinsel and manger scenes: There is not a place where you are not. You are here. Today. With us. Emmanuel. Rejoice. Amen.

HANDBELL ANTHEM “Advent Hope” Derek K. Hakes

PROCLAMATION

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN “Jacob’s Gift Revisited” First Puppets

Following Time With Our Children, “Live B.I.G.” for ages 4 through early elementary is provided on the secure 2nd floor. Children may be picked up on the 2nd floor (4 yrs.—kindergarten, room 203; 1st & 2nd grades, room 202; 3rd grade, room 209.).

RESPONSE 204 *(red hymnal)* “Emmanuel, Emmanuel”

LESSON FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES Isaiah 61: 1-4 (OT, p. 691)

RESPONSE 204 *(red hymnal)* “Emmanuel, Emmanuel”

EPISTLE LESSON 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24 (NT, p. 205)

This is what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE “The Joyful Community”

RESPONSE

HYMN 206 *(red hymnal)* “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

SILENT, PASTORAL and THE LORD’S PRAYER

OFFERING INVITATION

SHARING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Coins received will be designated for the support of United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) for our work around the world. Please sign the attendance pads as they are passed down the aisle.

OFFERTORY “Jesus Christ the Apple Tree” Elizabeth Poston

*DOXOLOGY 221 v. 4 *(red hymnal)* “In the Bleak Midwinter”

*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.*

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(praying together)*

Lord of Hope, Peace and Joy, we thankfully give these generous gifts as an expression of all that you have given us. As the prophets foretold, Christ was born for our redemption and new life. We prayerfully ask you to increase our ability to help others discover anew the best Christmas message ever—the Hope, Peace and Joy of the babe in the manger. Amen.

*OUR SHARED LIFE / MINISTRY SHARES with John Clark

*CLOSING HYMN 224 *(red hymnal)* “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

BLESSING

GOING FORTH “Advent Fantasia” J. Langlais

UPCOMING WORSHIP

Sunday, December 18

Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:30 Rev. Julie Kline:

“The Loving Community”

11:00 Rev. John Boley

“The Loving Community”

Children’s Christmas Pageant during the
11 a.m. worship: “Joy at the Stable”

Christmas Eve (Dec. 24)

5:00, 7:00, 11:00 p.m.

Childcare will be available at 5 & 7 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship (Dec. 25)

4 p.m.

Rev. John Boley

“The Customs of Christmas”

THE WEEK AHEAD

SUNDAY, December 11

8:30 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary

9:30 a.m. Park Street Perks - Perks Gathering Area

9:30 a.m. Sip ‘n Sing - Parlor

9:30 a.m. Sunday School for children and youth

11:00 a.m. Worship - Sanctuary

4:00 p.m. Martha’s Table - Wesley Hall

4:00 p.m. Youth Tribe (Martha’s Table)

4:00 p.m. Notified Rehearsal - Sanctuary

5:00 p.m. All-Church Caroling

6:00 p.m. First Singers Rehearsal - Choir Room

MONDAY, December 12

7:00 a.m. Sunrise Patrol - Fellowship Room

TUESDAY, December 13

10:00 a.m. Worship Planning - 305

12:00 p.m. Clergy/Directors Meeting - 305

4:15 p.m. Children’s Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room

5:30 p.m. Reconciling Ministries Team - Allen Library

7:00 p.m. NA - Fellowship Room

7:00 p.m. Ruth Circle - Parlor

WEDNESDAY, December 14

7:30 a.m. Dawn Patrol - Fellowship Room

10:30 a.m. Community for Healing Counseling - 304

12:00 p.m. Endowment Committee - 305

12:00 p.m. Advent Concert Series - Sanctuary

12:00 p.m. Bronson Park Clergy Luncheon - Parlor

1:00 p.m. Staff Helping at Kalamazoo Christmas

2:30 p.m. Stephen Ministry - 304, 307

4:30 p.m. Trustees - 305

5:30 p.m. Worship Ministry Team - Parlor

7:00 p.m. CFM Team - 203

7:00 p.m. Lou Gehrig’s Support Group - Parlor

7:00 p.m. NA - Fellowship Room

7:00 p.m. Disciple II - 304

THURSDAY, December 15

9:30 a.m. First Stitchers - Fellowship Room

11:30 a.m. A Blue Christmas Luncheon - Wesley Hall

12:00 p.m. LGBT Resource Center - Parlor

1:30 p.m. Prayer Group - Chapel

5:30 p.m. Depression/Bipolar Support - Youth Center

6:00 p.m. Wild Ones - 305

6:00 p.m. NA - Wesley Hall

7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir - Choir Room

FRIDAY, December 16

SATURDAY, December 17

10:00 a.m. Children’s Christmas Pageant Rehearsal -
Sanctuary

OUR MISSION

We are called to

- Experience God's love
- Celebrate God's love
- Share God's love

OUR VISION

We are a Faith Community

- Alive in Christ
- Open to all
- Growing in faith
- Serving our neighbors
- Active in the world

We're glad you are our guest today!

If you are worshipping with us for the first time, please stop by the Welcome Center as you exit the side sanctuary doors so that we may personally welcome you and present a gift of love from First Church. Please register your attendance in the gray pad found in the pew pocket.

Child care is provided on the second floor. There is also a family room in the right balcony.

Worship activities for children can be found on a cart outside the side sanctuary doors.

LARGE print Bibles and United Methodist Hymnals are available at the Park Street entrance.

Hearing assistance devices are available at the Welcome Center. If you need assistance, please speak with one of the ushers. Please return hearing devices to the Welcome Center following worship.

Today's service is being recorded. You can request a free copy from the office. A basket on the table near the parking lot entrance has previous Sunday recordings on CD. You can also access Sunday worship recordings from our website: <http://www.umc-kzo.org/mp3.asp>.

Worship CDs

Recordings of past Sunday morning services are available in the Perks gathering area. If you would like to be on a mailing list for CD recordings, please contact John Ross, jross@umc-kzo.org

Worship Leaders

Rev. John Boley, Rev. Sandy Elfring, Rev. Julie Kline, Lois Schmidt

Advent Candles

Ron Cooper and Sandy Cooper Dugal

Ushers

Anthony Ertz, Jeff Swenarton, Greg Gill, Andrew Gill, Ken Hall, Nic Aranda, Christopher Aranda

Greeters

Carol & John Holms
Archie & Jan Murrish

Acolytes

Carly Braginton
Elise Warnicke

Office

Fay Woolrich

Van Driver

Scott Willoughby

Audio & Lighting

Riley Lundquist

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of deceased family members of Lois and Myron Schmidt.

The new Advent wreath is a gift to the church in loving memory of Mary Cooper.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sip 'n Sing. Join us next Sunday @ 9:30 a.m. for a time of hymn singing and fellowship while you sip your coffee or hot chocolate. Located in the parlor.

Young People: a small group ministry. This growing ministry for adults ages 18-35 years will meet today after the 11:00 service for fellowship, movie and popcorn in the lower level Movie Lounge. Today's movie is "What Would Jesus Buy?"

2012 Offering Envelopes. Boxed envelopes are available for pick up on the desk in the Jesus Lounge for those who ordered them.

New Year's Eve Fest Volunteers. Sign-up at the table in the hall for the time of your choice to help direct guests during the New Year's Eve Fest and get free admission for the evening! Contact Dan Bunker, 329-1196 with questions.

Christmas Caroling TODAY! Meet at the church in the Perks area at 5 p.m. and we will break up into groups and carpool to some of the Kalamazoo neighborhoods. Please bring a flashlight. Music will be provided. We will return to the church at 7 p.m. for hot chocolate and sloppy joes. Yum!

Blue Christmas Luncheon. The holidays are hard for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. We welcome anyone who is grieving to join the clergy for lunch, love and support in Wesley Hall on Thursday, December 15 at 11:30 a.m.

"Joy at the Stable" Children's Christmas Pageant. On Sunday, Dec. 18 during the 11 a.m. worship service the children will offer a Christmas program that tells the story of the miraculous birth of Jesus through song and spoken word.

Christmas Eve Worship. Join us for a Christmas Eve celebration, "The Customs of Christmas," on Saturday, December 24 at 5:00, 7:00 and 11:00 p.m. Child care for infants and toddlers will be available at the 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. services. Family and friends are always welcome!

First United Methodist Church

212 S. Park St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
Phone 269-381-6340; Fax 269-381-1678
www.umc-kzo.org

Christmas Day Vesper Service @ 4 p.m. Join us on Christmas Day for a celebration of "The Customs of Christmas."

Advent Concert Series. Join us on Wednesdays at noon during Advent for classical and seasonal music. Our December 14th concert will feature Celtic songs by Anne Marie Boyle and Mary Jo Ramsey-Smith. Refreshments will be available after the concert. A free will offering will be accepted for future music and arts programming.

A Kalamazoo Christmas: Give the Gift of Warmth. Sunday, December 18 at Stockbridge UMC. They will be serving guests in need a full Christmas dinner as well as provide warm clothing. They will need many volunteers to provide a meal, sort toys, sort clothing, and bake cookies. Find out how you can donate your time and gifts by checking out their website at www.AKalamazooChristmas.org. You can also sign up to volunteer in the hall.

Pledge Cards. A big thank you to all those who have responded to our "Live A God-Pleasing Life" stewardship campaign. As of December 8 we have heard from 219 pledging units for \$643,062. If you have not done so yet, please return your 2012 pledge card to the office as soon as possible so that we may finalize the process of setting the budget for next year.

Ministry Shares 100%. Your Christmas Eve offering will help us reach our tradition of paying 100% of our ministry shares.

Christmas Eve Greeters. If your family is interested in greeting on Christmas Eve at one of our three services, please contact the office.

Companions in Christ. *The Way of Blessedness* small group study will begin Thursday, Jan. 5. They will meet in the chapel from 7-9 p.m. It is open to all those who have taken a previous Companions study. Contact Miriam Downey or Mary Bullock if you would like to participate.



FIRST UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO

December 11, 2011

11:00 a.m.

Experience, Celebrate and Share God's love



We are a Reconciling Congregation.

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.*