

*Order of Worship*  
*CHRISTMAS EVE*  
7:30 pm – December 24, 2023

*Participating Live?*

*Text your prayer requests to 805-309-6867 before the end of the first hymn.*

**PRELUDE**

Three Carols

arr. Kyle Hanks

- i. 'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime
- ii. The First Noel
- iii. O Come, All Ye Faithful

Kenneth Sithan, Trumpet; Tatiana Giesler, Trumpet; Brian Hollett, French Horn;  
Gregory Ochotorena, Trombone; Kyle Hanks, Organ

**WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (responsive)

There is room for you here. If you're weary and worn, or hopeful and patient.

**If you're tired and lost, or wrapped up in hope,**  
If you're new to this place, or have been here before.  
**Come in, come in. There is room for you here.**

The angels are singing,

**"Be not afraid."**

The angels are singing,

**"Good news and great joy!"**

**So come in, come in!**

There is room for us here.

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

*O Holy Night*

arr. Mark Hayes

Daniel Brackett, Tenor; Miriam Arichea, Piano

**LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE**

Arichea /Brackett Family

How does a weary world hold onto hope, practice peace, spread joy, or know love?

**How does a weary world combat cruelty?**

How does a weary world shine a light into our bleakest night?

**We do all these things with God's help. For tonight, a child is born in Bethlehem.**

Tonight, Christ draws near.

**Tonight, we light the Christ Candle.**

Tonight, we are not alone.

**God is near. Love has drawn close. Rejoice! For God loves this weary world. Amen**

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

**LESSON**

*Matthew 1: 18-23 (NRSV)*

**HYMN**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, vs. 2 & 7*

UMH 211

**LESSON**

*Luke 2: 1-5 (NRSV)*

**HYMN**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem, vs. 1 & 4*

UMH 230

**LESSON**

*Luke 2: 6-7 (NRSV)*

<b>HYMN</b>	<i>Away in a Manger, vs. 1 &amp; 3</i>	UMH 217
<b>LESSON</b>	<i>Luke 2: 8-9 (NRSV)</i>	
<b>HYMN</b>	<i>The First Noel, v. 1</i>	UMH 245
<b>LESSON</b>	<i>Luke 2: 10-12 (NRSV)</i>	
<b>HYMN</b>	<i>Angels We Have Heard on High, vs. 1 &amp; 3</i>	UMH 238
<b>LESSON</b>	<i>Luke 2: 13-14 (NRSV)</i>	
<b>HYMN</b>	<i>It Came upon the Midnight Clear, vs. 1 &amp; 4</i>	UMH 218
<b>LESSON</b>	<i>Luke 2: 15-20 (NRSV)</i>	
<b>HYMN</b>	<i>Joy to the World, vs. 1 &amp; 4</i>	UMH 246
<b>MESSAGE</b>		Pastor Diane Rehfield

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**Holy, Holy, Holy God, on this night when we celebrate the greatest gift that has ever been given to the world, we are grateful. We give thanks with glad hearts for the gift of the Christ child; for the hope that He continues to bring, that one day we may indeed know peace on earth; for the joy that we can hold even in times of trouble, knowing that you are present with us; and for the love that sustains us, knowing that nothing can separate us from you and your love. For all these things God, we give thanks, and pray that you will bless these our gifts that we now return to your work in the world. May they be symbols of hope, peace, joy, and love for all whom they will touch. Amen**

**OFFERTORY**

**DOXOLOGY** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* UMH 94

Tapestry of Light: A Celtic Christmas Celebration  
by Joseph M. Martin

VFUMC Chancel Choir; Clara Johnson, Director; Kyle Hanks, Piano; Chad Cullins, Flute;  
Mary Ellen Reedie, Violin; Alec Glass, Cello; Martha Brewer-Hong, Soprano; Bruce Miller, Narrator

Carols of Hope and Light

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Longing for the Light

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An Advent Garden

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The Holy Child of Mary

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O Wondrous Night

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A Celtic Noel

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A Celtic Gloria!

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Carols of Celebration

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**HYMN**

*Silent Night, Holy Night*

UMH 239

**BENEDICTION**

*Prayer Requests*

**Estero Bay UMC** —Pastor Steven Poteete-Marshall

**First German UMC**—Pastor Kurt Poland

Pastor Matt and the entire McPhee family—mother Pam McPhee passed away

All those suffering from illness or loss of loved ones.