



500 East Colorado Boulevard  
Pasadena, California 91101  
(626) 796-0157

**DECEMBER 31, 2023**

**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY**

**GATHERING TOGETHER**

Welcome to Worship. We are so glad that you are joining us today. We invite you to open your spirit to this time of worship, song, prayer, inspiration and challenge.

In consideration of others, please silence electronic devices.

“+” indicates to stand in body or spirit as you choose.

**STATEMENT OF INCLUSION**



All people are welcome at First United Methodist Church. We are proudly part of the Reconciling Ministries Network and welcome all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, physical or mental capacity, and education, socio-economic or marital status.

**CHILDREN ARE WELCOME HERE!**

**Nursery Care**

(Infant–4 years old)  
Nursery care is available every Sunday from 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Children’s Sunday School and Music**

(PreK–6th Grade)  
Children age 3 yrs. through 6th grade are invited to Sunday School after the Children’s Sermon in Worship, followed by Children’s Music for children 4 and up. (3 year olds will go to the nursery following Sunday School.) Child Pick Up (for ages 4+) is in Room 202 at 12:00 p.m.

**Questions? Early Pick Up? See the Children’s Ministry Superintendent in the Children’s Ministry Office.**

**INDIGENOUS LAND**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We, acknowledge that the land upon which we worship was the ancestral homeland of the Tongva People for thousands of years. Approximately two thousand Tongva people still live in the Los Angeles area. We honor their connection to this region and give thanks for the opportunity to live, work, worship and learn on this sacred land.

**PRELUDE**

*Go Tell It On the Mountain*

Traditional Spiritual

Rob Hayes, guitar and Aaron Shows, organ

**+ CALL TO WORSHIP**

Rejoice, friends of God! Celebrate the new Life that has been born among us.

**Thanks be to God, in Jesus Christ, the hope of all the world, we are born anew.**

We come to God, on this final day of the year, to give thanks for God’s faithfulness throughout our days, and to pray for guidance in the coming year.

**We come to God, our Creator and Redeemer, who formed us and molds us, who heals us and makes us whole. As God has come among us, we now draw our hearts to God.**

**+ OPENING PRAYER**

Lord of yesterday, today and tomorrow, we gather here this last Sunday of the year, in a mixture of hope, anticipation, fear, excitement, and expectation.

We do not know what the year holds for us.

there are things we are afraid of:

worries about health and family, our finances, our nation and our world.

There is much to look forward to –

weddings or anniversaries or baptisms,

holidays to enjoy,

friends with whom we laugh, cry and dream.

Lord God,

the coming year is full of uncertainty and hope.

Whatever the year holds for us, though,

we trust You, and we place every day of this year in your care

knowing that, as in the past, You are with us,

caring for us with constant love.

And so Lord, we place ourselves into your keeping and dedicate our lives to your service through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior. **Amen.**

## IN OUR PRAYERS...

As a community of faith, let us hold these persons in our prayers:

**Newly Added:** Cameron Fernandez

**For Healing:** Joyce Breslin, Patricia Bruce, Erika Carillo, Albert Davis, Mary Davis, Trygve Gangnes, Jr., Juliette De Guzman, Joyce Dorn, Charlotte Dyson, John Evans, Zina Figilis, Brett Hain, Sofia Hain, Friends and family of Muriel Henderson, Sallie Higginbotham, Lisa Jaffe, Norman Jensen, Stephen Kastner, Greg Klimuck, Family of Randy Leach, Julie and Henry Lee and their family, Sam El Masri, Jocelyn Medina, Ken Morrow, Gail Nance, Hans Neuroth, Carol Nunemaker, Katherine Olivas, Leslie Parham, Tommy Parham, Donna Shook, Priscilla Shurney, Frances Smith, Jeffrey Stephens, Tim Sun, Deb and Gary Webster, Jan Wentz, Leilani Williams, Nadine Wittry and family, Sonia Wittry, Mona Woodard, Richard Zeiss.

Prayer requests may be shared via [connect@fumcpasadena.org](mailto:connect@fumcpasadena.org) and we will gladly add them.

## LET'S CONNECT!

Connect cards are located at the back of the sanctuary. Please use a Connect Card to provide or update your contact information, for information on church programs, make a prayer request or communicate a message to our pastors. Place completed cards in the offering plate near the back of the sanctuary. If you are part of the Connected (Online) Campus, send an email to [connect@fumcpasadena.org](mailto:connect@fumcpasadena.org).

+ **OPENING HYMN**      *Angels from the Realms of Glory*

UMH 220

+ **WELCOME AND SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

The peace of Christ be with you, **and also with you.**

## COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

### GATHERING OUR HEARTS IN PRAYER

**CENTERING SONG**

*Hope of the World*

UMH 178

Hope of the world, God's gift from highest heaven,  
bringing to hungry souls the bread of life,  
still let thy spirit unto us be given,  
to heal earth's wounds and end all bitter strife.

*Moment for Silent Meditation*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art 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.**

## LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

**SCRIPTURE READING**

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born and a time to die;  
a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
a time to kill and a time to heal;  
a time to break down and a time to build up;  
a time to weep and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn and a time to dance;  
a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek and a time to lose;  
a time to keep and a time to throw away;  
a time to tear and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silent and a time to speak;  
a time to love and a time to hate;  
a time for war and a time for peace.

*The word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.*

## HYMN SING

*The First Noel* UMH 245 (verses 1 and 2)  
*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* UMH 229  
*Go, Tell It on the Mountain* UMH 251

## SERMON

*In the Fullness of Time* Pastor Amy Aitken

## WESLEYAN COVENANT PRAYER

Loving God, I accept that I am yours, created by you, claimed by you,  
led by you throughout my life.  
The call to follow you is one of grace.  
Your love and mercy surround me everyday.  
Today, I choose to respond to your invitation with my "yes."  
While not every day will be easy, you promise to always be with me.  
Put me to what you want, place me where you will.  
Put me to doing, put me to waiting.  
Call me to step-up in service for you, or to step aside.  
Let me be exalted for you or brought low for you.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
With all that I am, and all that I have, I offer myself to you.  
And now, O glorious and blessed God,  
you are mine, and I am yours.  
So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven.  
Amen.

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD AMONG US

+PRESENTATION MUSIC *What Child Is This* UMH 219

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh, come peasant, king to own him;  
the King of Kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.  
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

## +PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Let us lift up the name of Jesus today; let us make our pledge and follow  
his light into this new year. Let us be about the one who guides us, who  
finds us even when we are lost and gives us direction and hope. Let our  
worship be full of songs of praise of the name of Jesus, and let our prayers  
be prayers of commitment to follow Christ's love wherever it may lead us.  
We offer these gifts, and ourselves, to your love and light in the world.  
Amen.

## OFFERING TO GOD OUR HEARTS, OUR LIVES AND OUR GIFTS

Giving supports all of the ministries of the church, making it possible for us to offer ministries of hope, hospitality, service and compassion in Pasadena, and around the world.

If you'd like to partner with us and make a financial gift today, you may use your phone to scan the QR code below.



## INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP?

Joining the church is an important step in claiming the Christian faith for yourself. When you join the church, you make a commitment to your own spiritual journey, nurtured through worship and the love of a faithful Christian community.

We would love for you to be a part of our community as a member here at First UMC. To learn more about membership, email [connect@fumcpasadena.org](mailto:connect@fumcpasadena.org)

## GOING INTO THE WORLD TO LOVE AND SERVE

+CLOSING HYMN      *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*      UMH 240

+BENEDICTION

+POSTLUDE      *Here We Come a-Wassailing*      Traditional English Carol  
Rob Hayes, guitar and Aaron Shows, organ

### UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES @ FIRST UMC

For more information, email us at [connect@fumcpasadena.org](mailto:connect@fumcpasadena.org)

**Join the Bible Year 2024** - Have you wanted to know more about the Bible but weren't sure how, or where, to begin? Good News! In 2024, we are inviting the whole congregation (yes, you!) to lean into your faith, and join in a year-long walk through the entire Bible.

The Bible Year breaks up the Bible into shorter, daily readings with a concise explanation of key themes and a devotional to help you grow closer to God. To learn more and register at the QR below.



**Meeting about St. James on Jan. 7-**  
We will have a meeting in the church lounge after worship to discuss the possible merger of St. James with our congregation

**Charge Conference on Jan. 14** -  
Please join us for a Friends and Family Lunch after worship in Fellowship Hall. After lunch (11:45 a.m.), we will have our annual Charge Conference for members to vote on the church budget, church leadership, and other matters.

**Managing Anger begins Wednesday, January 17 from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. on Zoom.** In this 4-session group, we uncover the purpose for anger, identify learned patterns of thinking and acting that influence our anger, and look at positive ways to express our emotions.

For more info, or the Zoom link, contact [connect@fumcpasadena.org](mailto:connect@fumcpasadena.org)

## TODAY AT FIRST UMC

- 10:00 a.m.: Sunday Worship (Sanctuary)
- 11:15 a.m.: Coffee Hour (Fellowship Hall)

## SERVING IN MINISTRY

The entire congregation shares in offering the ministries of this church. Some of the people who help lead our ministries include:

**Today's Worship Liturgist:**  
Jonathan Carlos

**Pastor**  
Rev. Dr. Amy Aitken

**Associate Pastor:**  
Rev. Mina Nau-Mahe

**Director of Music Ministries:**  
Scott Lehmkuhl

**Organist:**  
Aaron Shows

**Ministry Coordinator:**  
Dori Fotsch

**Facilities & Office Manager:**  
Aisha Williams

**Finance Manager:**  
Tim Sun

**Communications Director:**  
Ashley Slade

**Leadership Council Chairperson:**  
Kevin Lussier

**Lay Leader for Faith Development**  
Mikala Rahn

**Lay Leader for Finance & Generosity:**  
J.P. Harris

**Lay Leaders for Missions:**  
Pam Marx & Rosalie Niemann

**Chair of Trustees:**  
Paul Audley

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