

WELCOME

Pastor Beth Snarr

PRELUDE

"Bethlehem"
Michael Helman

Celebration Ringers

CALL TO WORSHIP

Martha Peyser

Alleluia the Christ child comes, and we await his birth.

Let us throw off our distractions, and allow the chaos to settle.

Let us watch for the signs, and listen to the messengers.

Let us stand on tiptoe, and shout aloud and sing.

Something new is emerging, something new is being birthed.

Emmanuel! Let us worship with grateful hearts.

HYMN UMH 203

"Hail to the Lord's Anointed"

¹ Hail to the Lord's Anointed, great David's greater Son! Hail in the time appointed, his reign on earth begun! He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free; to take away transgression, and rule in equity.

² He comes with succor speedy to those who suffer wrong; to help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong; to give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light, whose souls, condemned and dying, are precious in his sight.

³ He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth; love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in his path to birth. Before him, on the mountains, shall peace, the herald, go, and righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.

⁴ To him shall prayer unceasing and daily vows ascend; his kingdom still increasing, a kingdom without end. The tide of time shall never his covenant remove; his name shall stand forever; that name to us is love.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in the Triune God, who through all our doubt and despair, prepares a way for hope. Through our selfishness and fear, prepares a way for love. Through our resistance and control, prepares a way for grace. Through our anger and enmity, prepares a way for peace.

O You Who Are Coming - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, prepare your way in us.

GLORIA PATRI UMH 70

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE

Laura and Jenna Herndon

ADVENT RESPONSE

¹ Kindle this flame of peace. May it burn bright and true. Lighting the way that is of God, the journey we pursue.

² God's realm is our desire, where peace and justice reign. Heaven and earth combined as one, when Christ shall come again.

RECEIVING GOD'S TITHE AND OUR OFFERINGS

SPECIAL MUSIC

"We Three Kings"
arr. Sandra Eithun

Celebration Ringers

CALL TO PRAYER FWS 2128 (vs 1) "Come And Find The Quiet Center"

Come and find the quiet center in the crowded life we lead, find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed: Clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor Harold Henderson

LORD'S PRAYER UMH 895

HYMN

"Jesus Loves The Little Children"

Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world; red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

SERMON

The Heart That Grew Three Sizes
When Christmas Isn't Christmas
Matthew 3:7b-12

Pastor Beth Snarr



HYMN W&S 3052

“God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen”

¹ God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay, for Jesus Christ our Savior was born upon this day, to save us all from Satan’s power when we were gone astray.

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy; O tidings of comfort and joy.

² In Bethlehem in Judah this blessed babe was born, and laid within a manger upon this blessed morn: for which his mother Mary did nothing take in scorn.

³ From God our heavenly Father a blessed angel came, and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same, how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.

⁴ The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind, and left their flocks a-feeding in tempest, storm, and wind, and went to Bethlehem straightway, the blessed babe to find.

⁵ Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place, and with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace; this holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface.

BENEDICTION

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE W&S 3154 “Draw the Circle Wide”

Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still. Let this be our song: no one stands alone. Standing side by side. Draw the circle. Draw the circle wide.

POSTLUDE

CONNECTION CARD

Please use the Connection Card for any questions, comments, or prayer requests you may have and place in the basket on your way out of the Sanctuary today. You can also fill one out using our First UMC app or online at fumcgnv.org/ConnectionCard



online Connection Card

Name(s): _____

Please have a Pastor contact me Please have someone contact me, I am interested in

Please add me to your email list Volunteering Membership at First UMC

My contact information: Growth Groups Other Mobile

Email: _____ Phone: _____ Home

Questions, Comments, Prayer Requests

Please share only with the Pastors



ALTAR FLOWERS

Today’s altar flowers are given by Joe Ward in celebration of his and Carol’s 55th wedding anniversary.

PRAYER CONCERNS

If you have prayers to be lifted up or wish to be part of the team who lifts up prayers, drop an email to prayer@fumcgnv.org or note it on the Connection Card.

PLEDGE CAMPAIGN 2024 - IT’S NOT TOO LATE!

To those of you who have already pledged in support the ministries of First UMC in 2024, THANK YOU for getting this pledge season off to a great start! If you have not yet had an opportunity to submit your pledge, will you keep our momentum going into 2024 by submitting yours online at <https://fumcgnv.org/pledge>, mailing or bringing your card to the church office during the week or to worship on Sunday? We are BETTER TOGETHER!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDERS END MONDAY!

As we celebrate Advent, help us beautify our Sanctuary with poinsettias starting Sunday, December 17. You can place your poinsettia order and dedication after worship today at the Welcome Table outside the Sanctuary. You can also order by contacting the church office at 352-372-8523 or via our web site (<https://fumcgnv.org/poinsettia>). Each poinsettia is only \$12 and can go home with you after the 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. **Orders need to be placed by Monday, December 11.**

WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR MINISTRIES



GIVE ONLINE

use the QR code above or visit [www.fumcgnv.com/GiveOnline](https://fumcgnv.com/GiveOnline) or via the First UMC app



TEXT TO GIVE

Text FUMCGNV to 1-888-364-GIVE (4483)



GIVE BY CHECK

Mail or bring your check to the Church Office 419 NE 1st Street Gainesville, FL 32601



Have you considered long-term support of our church ministries through our Legacy Endowment Fund? For more details, contact legacy@fumcgnv.org