

WELCOME
PRELUDE

“Prayer of St Gregory”
Alan Hovhaness

Pastor Beth Snarr
Chris Woodruff

CALL TO WORSHIP

Ashley Ordway

Here in worship -
we pray together,
we stand together,
we sing together,
we listen together.

Here in worship - we are not alone.
So when life gives you reason to grieve, to fear, or to worry, remember this moment.
We are not alone.
Let us worship our with-us God.

HYMN UMH 218 “It Came Upon The Midnight Clear”

- ¹ It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold: “Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven’s all-gracious King.” The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.
- ² Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled, and still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world; above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing, and ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.
- ³ And ye, beneath life’s crushing load, whose forms are bending low, who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow, look now! for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing. O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!
- ⁴ For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old, when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars. We have seen the longest night, and still we believe.
We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow. We believe that good news is louder than fear. We believe this good news is for all people. So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles, even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news.
We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst. We will sing songs of joy. We will proclaim: Unto us, love is born.
We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love. So still, we believe. Amen.

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 OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Mike and Cindy Woodruff, and Chris Woodruff

RESPONSE UMH 254 (refrain)

“We Three Kings”

O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright, westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

RECEIVING GOD’S TITHE AND OUR OFFERINGS

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”
arr. Lloyd Larson

Jennifer Miller and
Jessica Van Leer

CALL TO PRAYER

Take heart. Take heart! The One who calls to you will give you strength and see you through.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor Harold Henderson

LORD’S PRAYER UMH 895

GATHERING SONG UMH 217 (vs 3)

“Away In A Manger”

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray; bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

CHILDREN’S MOMENT

WE WELCOME AND AFFIRM THOSE OF EVERY RACE, ETHNICITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION,
GENDER IDENTITY, SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION, FAMILY STRUCTURE,
AND MENTAL OR PHYSICAL ABILITY INTO ALL ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF THIS CONGREGATION.



HYMN UMH 220 “Angels From The Realms Of Glory”

¹ Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o’er all the earth; ye who sang creation’s story now proclaim Messiah’s birth:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

² Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o’er your flocks by night, God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light:

³ Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar; seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star:

⁴ Saints, before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear; suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear:

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 “Postlude on Regent Square”
Alec Rowley

Maggie Tran

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ALTAR FLOWERS

Today’s altar flowers are given by Joe Ward in loving celebration of his wife, Carol and their 57 wonderful years of marriage.

Our 2026 Flower Calendar is now open. To reserve a date on the 2026 calendar, please email or text our Altar Flower Coordinator, Carol Morris, at AltarFlowers@fumcgnv.org or 239-595-6714.

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 go to <https://fumcgnv.org/PrayerRequest>.

MINISTRY FOCUS - HELPING HANDS MATCH CHALLENGE

During this special season of giving, we celebrate the ministry of our mission partner, Helping Hands Clinic who has consistently served our community’s most vulnerable as their primary source for healthcare for over 30 years. You can support this life-saving work in 2026 and beyond by participating in the Helping Hands Clinic Annual Holiday Donation Match Challenge where every gift is matched by an anonymous donor!

Donations can be made by check (put “Helping Hands Clinic” in the memo line), or through the First UMC web site at <https://fumcgnv.org/give> and using the Helping Hands 2nd Mile Giving link on the right. We are so grateful for all the ways Helping Hands and First UMC have been in partnership for so many years to bring healing, not only to broken bodies, but also to broken spirits. God bless you.

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE - DECEMBER 21

The holidays can be a difficult time for those who’ve experienced the loss of a loved one, a broken relationship, the loss of a job, cancer or other illness, and a number of other human situations that put a question mark over the future. On Sunday, December 21 at noon in the Chapel, Pastors Beth and Harold, members of the Stephen Ministry leadership team, and the music ministry will lead a brief and but meaningful time to make space for the sadness. We will name it and honor it. We will take it to Christ. And yes, we will remember the hope we have in Him. The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be offered during the Blue Christmas service.

Christmas Eve Worship Services

Children’s Nativity and Candlelight Service at 4:00 p.m.
Chancel Choir, Candlelight, and Communion Service at 7:00 p.m.



The light of Jesus shines most brightly when our God-given time and talents are shared in service to others. Learn where you can volunteer by using the QR code above or visit fumcgnv.org/ways-to-serve

WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR MINISTRIES



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



GIVE ONLINE
use the QR code above or visit fumcgnv.com/GiveOnline or via the First UMC app