

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BELMONT



SERVICE OF WORSHIP

December 15, 2024 – 8:30 a.m.

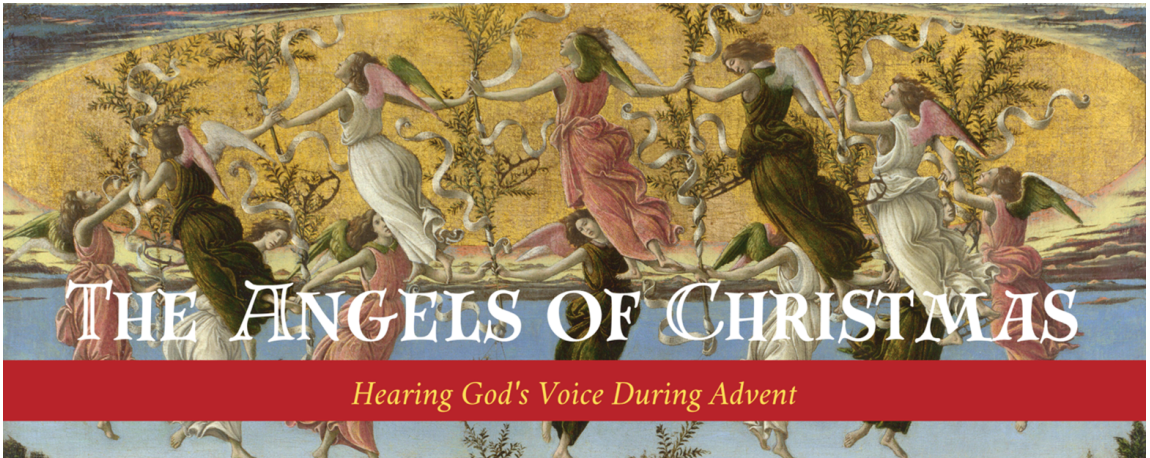
The Third Sunday of Advent



The Courageous Choice by Lisle Gwynn Garrity, 2022

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***United in the Spirit, First United Methodist Church of Belmont exists
to be more like Jesus Christ for our community and beyond***
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THE REVEREND GEORGE RAGSDALE, SENIOR PASTOR
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www.fumcbelmont.org



Good morning and welcome to First United Methodist Church of Belmont! This morning, we're continuing our Advent exploration of the special role angels play in the story of Christmas. Today we turn to Matthew's Gospel, which records the special role Joseph plays in the birth of Jesus. It all begins with an angel's message compelling him to defy societal norms and expectations and show the mercy and compassion of God. What voices challenge us to bring justice at this time of year? How can we practice and proclaim mercy and compassion in this holy season?

PRAISE AND PRAYER

*OPENING SONG

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

CCLI Song # 7163644

*PRAYER

Margie Ligon

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE

The Delany Family

MOMENTS WITH CHILDREN

Jennifer Martin

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

*GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew Henry

SERMON

The Rev. George Ragsdale

SILENT REFLECTION

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

As a forgiven and reconciled child of God, you are invited to give your offerings and gifts to God by placing them in the offering plate when you come forward to receive communion.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

*THE PEACE

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

*TAKING THE BREAD AND CUP

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

*BREAKING THE BREAD (gluten free option available)

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

"Manger Throne"

CCLI Song # 7226106

You could have stepped into creation
With fire for all to see
Brought every tribe and nation to their knees
Arriving with the host of heaven
In royal robe and crown
The rulers of the earth all bowing down
But You chose meekness over majesty
Wrapped Your power in humanity
Glory be to You alone
King who reigns from a manger throne
My life my praise everything I own
To Jesus the King on a manger throne
You could have marched in all Your glory
Into the heart of Rome

Showed them splendor like they'd never known
But You wrote a better story
In humble Bethlehem
Creator in the arms of common men
You will die for our redemption
And You'll rise so we can live
From heaven to the cradle
From cradle to the cross
Let heaven and nature sing
This is our King
But the grave couldn't hold Him
Our God has overcome
Let heaven and nature sing
This is our King

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

GOING FORTH AS WITNESSES TO THE WORLD

*BENEDICTION

*CLOSING SONG

"King of Kings"

CCLI Song # 7127647

**Those who are able please stand*

Welcome to First United Methodist Church of Belmont! We're glad that you've chosen to worship with us this morning. We invite you to explore all the opportunities we have for children, youth and adults of all ages and stages of life. We seek to be a community of faith that welcomes all as we grow to be more like Jesus Christ for our community, loving and serving God and one another in all that we do.

If you are a guest, we are honored to have you with us. Please stop by the information center as you leave this morning to receive a small gift and more information about our church. We look forward to getting to know you in the days to come! Welcome!

Today's Bulletin Cover features the work of Black Mountain, NC artist and Presbyterian pastor Lisle Gwynn Garrity. Of her depiction of today's Gospel Lesson she writes, "In this image, I've captured Joseph in the liminal space where his dreams will soon shape his reality. He rests his head on a folded blanket, which represents the woven tapestry of his ancestors who also made difficult choices for good. Gold interconnecting lines, like the roots and branches of a family tree, envelop him, symbolizing the beautiful web of regeneration that will come from his courage."

Welcome, New Members This morning we are blessed to welcome new members into our church family. Joining today at our 11:00 service are Mario and Katie Quispe, by Transfer of Church Membership from Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Shelby. We also welcome their son, Micah. If you would like more information about joining our church family, please call or email Pastor George (704-249-0645 or george@fumcbelmont.org) or speak with him after the service today.

Prayer after each worship service is available in the prayer room off of the Narthex. Our Congregational Care Ministers and retired clergy are available to pray with you.

CHURCH GATHERINGS

Our Annual Christmas Concert on December 15 at 4:00 p.m. will feature all of the musical ensembles at FUMC with guest musicians. The concert, in the Sanctuary, is free and all are invited. Our annual Christmas dinner follows in Carpenter Hall.

Young Adults will gather for lunch on December 20 at 11:30 at the Spruced Goose Station. Contact Quanna at quanna@fumcbelmont.org with questions.

First Kids are invited to dress in provided costumes and participate in our nativity retelling at the 4:00 Christmas Eve service. Please email jennifer@fumcbelmont.org to sign up.

All Youth are invited to the New Year's Hike on January 5 from 1:00 to 2:30 at Rocky Branch Trail. Contact Quanna to sign up today!

Connect begins again on January 12 from 5:30 to 7:30 in Carpenter Hall. Join us for a few rounds of Grog and other fun games!

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE AND SERVE

Support Dahlia Grove Community Café on Thursdays from 11:45 to 1:15 p.m. in Carpenter Hall. Dining at the café provides financial support and training for women recovering from human trafficking, domestic violence and drug addiction. Learn more at dahliagrove.org.

Room in the Inn began this month as we again partner with Christ UMC in Charlotte to provide emergency housing for our neighbors without a home on December 28. Learn more and sign up to help at fumcbelmont.org/roomintheinn, where you can also find our Amazon Wishlist with items to donate for our guests, including rain gear, flashlights and toiletry items.

Through your generosity we are able to help support the functioning of a **Warming Center at the Gastonia Farmers Market** on nights when the temperature drops below 32 degrees for neighbors without shelter. You can also assist by working a shift greeting the neighbors and providing them with what is available to help bring comfort for the night. To sign up go to www.fumcbelmont.org/warmingcenter.

Share the Warmth this Advent season by donating gloves, hats and socks. You can place your items on the tree in the narthex. All items will be donated to the S.O.C.K.S. Crisis ministry in the Springwood community.

Help us Feed the Children! Visit fumcbelmont.org/feedthechildren to sign up to pre-pack, cook and assemble or deliver lunches and bags of shelf-stable food to children during their Winter break.

Give Gifts That Matter this Christmas by supporting the children and families of our ZOE Empowerment community in Rwanda. For as little as \$10 you can purchase a gift that will transform the life of a child and honor a loved one at the same time. Visit the ZOE table in the narthex after worship throughout Advent.

Feed the House. Help care for mothers and children at Catherines House by dropping off a simple meal to them once a year. Help us fill up our calendar by signing up at www.fumcbelmont.org/catherineshouse

Christmas Poinsettias 2024

*The poinsettias decorating our worship space have been given
to honor and remember loved ones.*

Cici, Nana and Grandma Linda
Given by Ellie and Jackson Delany

Larry "Grandad" Morton
Given by Debbie and Colby Morton

Joe and Meriwether Maynard
Given by Boyce O'Tuel and Elizabeth Maynard

Joplin
Given by Primm and Etta

Carole Moore
Given by Jack O'Tuel

Michael Swanson
Carol Swanson
Given by The Corripio Family

Amelia McKnight
Given by John and Janet Rhodes

Charles and Margaret Burnette
Milton and Sara Allen
Given by Bob and Susan Burnette

William Ragsdale
Given by Annie Joe Ragsdale

Les Moore
Given by Maggie Moore

Sam Pennington Sr.
Given by Betty Pennington
My parents Cecil and Virginia Freeman
Spiritual friend, Gail Hanigan
Given by Charles Freeman

Our Parents
Jim and Cindy Griffin

Carolyn Mundy
Elaine Magennis
Given by Laura and Jim Magennis and Family

Martha A. Taylor
Teri and Claude Wilson
Children and Teachers of Godly Play
Given by Preston Taylor

Elizabeth Bunce
Jan Giang
Given by Mike and Lori Giang

Evelyn and Price Hand
Lorene Mellon
Given by Ginger Feimster and Family

Uncle Neil Zanetti; Peter Lewis
Given by The Dominov Family

Rebecca and Ed Nance
Red and Suzanne Lawing
Given by Mary Nance and Craig Nance

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday, December 15

- 8:30 a.m. Worship
- 9:15 a.m. Fellowship Breakfast
- 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
- 11:00 a.m. Worship
- 4:00 p.m. Christmas Concert and Dinner

Monday, December 16

- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting

Tuesday, December 17

- 1:30 p.m. Advent Small Group

Wednesday, December 18

Thursday, December 19

- 11:45 a.m. Community Cafe'
- 12:00 p.m. Jan. Newsletter Deadline

Friday, December 20

Feeding the Children

Saturday, December 21

Sunday, December 22

- 8:30 a.m. Worship
- 9:15 a.m. Fellowship Breakfast
- 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
- 11:00 a.m. Worship

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Trevis Lunsford's sister, Shirley Hunt

Ronnie and Susan Clements (Barbara Byrum)

Chris, friend of Teri Wilson

Greg Stanforth

Barb Lange and family upon the passing of her brother, Bob Shaffer

Friends, Richard & Judy Treneer (Nicole Stanforth)

Jaxon Forbes

Richard Rumpfelt and his family (Becky and Tom Fortenberry)

Sister-in-law, Jill Atkins (Chris and Connie Atkins)

Lynda Jenkins, Nancy, Clyde, Adam & Alex Underhill, Patsy Deese, Bill Griffin, Linda & Gerald, along with other family members who are all facing health issues (Cindy and Jim Griffin)

Alice Goins Ratterree (Cindy Goins' aunt)

Nicole Stanforth's grandfather

Paul Wallace, Judy Harris' brother and also her friend Herb Carnes

Erin Carver, Renee and Tim Painter's daughter

Murphy Clark and family

*You can submit prayer requests to
prayers@fumcbelmont.org*

**COME
CELEBRATE
WITH US**

Christmas Eve Worship

December 24 | 4 & 6 p.m.



feed the hungry

www.fumbelmont.org/missions/activities

OUR MISSION IS TO BE MORE LIKE JESUS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

***Current Opportunities:**

- Cook a meal for Catherine's House
- Help cook a meal for Room in the Inn
- Sign up to help with Soup for the Soul
- Volunteer with Feeding the Children
- Donate food for the BCO

A Light to the Nations

Experiencing and Sharing the Light of Christ

Begins January 5



OUR STAFF

Carole Bertino | Administrative Assistant | carole@fumcbelmont.org

Doreen Collins | Director of Adult Discipleship | doreen@fumcbelmont.org

Heather Gaskins | Director of the Child Development Center | heather@fumcbelmont.org

Margie Ligon | Director of Missions | margie@fumcbelmont.org

Jennifer Martin | Director of Children's Ministry | jennifer@fumcbelmont.org

Quanna McAlister | Director of Youth Ministries | quanna@fumcbelmont.org

George Ragsdale | Senior Pastor | george@fumcbelmont.org

Ellen Robison | Minister of Worship and the Arts | ellen@fumcbelmont.org

Mark Sutton | Business Administrator | mark@fumcbelmont.org