

Welcome!

All are welcome into the life and ministry of the United Methodist Church. We are honored that you are here. A cry room with sound feed is available for those with infants. Our nursery and attendant are also available. Please ask an usher for directions. We hope you will worship with us again as we continue to discover the difference God's love makes in our lives!

Contact Us

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December 24, 2021

7:00 and 9:00 p.m.

Candlelight and Holy Communion



Christmas is the festival at which Christians celebrate the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago. This fragile infant, long awaited and yet still a surprise, is the incarnation of God on earth. As we share gifts with our friends and families this season, we seek to capture the joy and wonder of the original gift of Christmas: God, out of his lavish abundance, comes into a broken world to dwell among us and draw us to him.

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the congregation of Lighthouse United Methodist Church, we are thrilled that you have joined us tonight to worship at the feet of the Christ-child. As we gather on this holiest of nights, may you be blessed by a Christmas season filled with hope, peace, joy and love.

The years 2020 and 2021 have been difficult for many of us. However, as people of faith, we still see glimpses of hope in our world and are grateful for the blessings of family, friends, and our communities. We recall that the world in which the Holy Family entered was a world of turmoil. Yet, the still small voice of God in their lives enabled them to birth eternal hope into our world. It is an everlasting hope. Jesus the Christ is the hope.

We celebrate the totality of Jesus' coming this evening including the celebration of Holy Communion. All are welcome at God's table. Bethlehem, where Jesus was born, means "House of Bread." Thus, as Jesus was born in Bethlehem, so we are born anew as we partake of the bread and cup.

Let us continue to make room for the presence of the Christ-child in our lives throughout 2022. The Christmas story compels us to make room for new possibilities, new gifts, and new surprises. Our God is Emmanuel - God with us!

*We are all meant to be mothers of God.
What good is it to me if this eternal birth of the divine Son takes place unceasingly, but does not take place within myself?
And, what good is it to me if Mary is full of grace if I am not also full of grace?
What good is it to me for the Creator to give birth to his Son if I do not also give birth to him in my time and my culture?
This, then, is the fullness of time: When the Son of Man is begotten in us.*
— Meister Eckhart 1260-1328

Merry Christmas,

Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams

+BENEDICTION

The Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams

When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart. -Howard Thurman

In the Name of Jesus, the Christ-child, go into all the world.

Amen.

+POSTLUDE

*Thank you to Joshua McKenna, grandson of Pat and Ross Witschonke,
for his contributions on trumpet tonight.*

*Today's poinsettias are placed in memory of those
who lost their lives in the recent Midwest tornadoes.*

*Thank you for your investment in the life and ministry of
Lighthouse United Methodist Church of Boca Grande.*



January 2022 Worship Services

January 2 - 10:00 AM Worship Service
January 9 - 10:00 AM, followed by Expansion Project Dedication / Open House
January 16 - 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM Worship Services
January 23 - 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM Worship Services
January 30 - 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM Worship Services

HOMILY

The Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams

OFFERTORY PRAYER

The Rev. Dr. Matthew M. Williams

This evening's offering is designated for the Samaritan Fund.
This fund is used to serve missional needs that arise throughout the year.

OFFERTORY

Breath of Heaven (Mary's Song)

Rebecca DeRosa, Soloist

Chris Eaton & Amy Grant

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

The United Methodist Church offers open communion.

All are invited to partake despite denominational or religious affiliation.

At the direction of the ushers, please come forward. The servers will offer you a
small piece of bread and you may dip it in the cup.

Gluten free bread is available by noting this need to the servers.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR CHRISTMAS

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 and ever. Amen.

GIVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

+HYMN #239

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

STILLE NACHT

+LIGHTING OF CANDLES

As Silent Night is being sung, the lights will be dimmed and the light from the Christ Candle will be shared throughout the congregation. Please hold the lighted candle upright. Please tip the unlighted candle to be lit. Following the service please place the candles in the narthex.

Gathering

PRELUDE

Prelude on "Divinum mysterium"

PLAINSONG

arr. David P. Dahl

Still, Still, Still

Traditional Austrian melody, arr. Hayes/Wagner

Silence is kept during the prelude to prepare our hearts for worship.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Rev. Dr. Matthew and Joy Williams

Readers:

We light the candle of hope.

We light the candle of peace.

We light the candle of joy.

We light the candle of love.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined. (Isaiah 9:2)

All: Christ, the Light, is born. Let us sing to the Lord a new song!

+PROCESSIONAL HYMN #246

"Joy to the World"

ANTIOCH

+OPENING PRAYER

Living God, on this holy night we gather -
to stand with the shepherds, amazed at your glory;
to sing with angels, rejoicing in your work;
to wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise;
to sit with Mary, cradling your love.
May the good news of this night inspire us
to tell the world of our great joy:
for to us is born a Savior,
the Messiah, the Lord.
Glory and praise to you forever! **Amen.**

THE GOSPEL IN WORD AND SONG

Luke 2:1-19

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

**O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark street shineth
the everlasting Light,
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

And so it was that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

**For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above.
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars together,
proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all the earth**

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

**Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King;"
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"**

And the angel said unto them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to all."

**Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

**O Holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray,
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide in us, our Lord Emmanuel!**