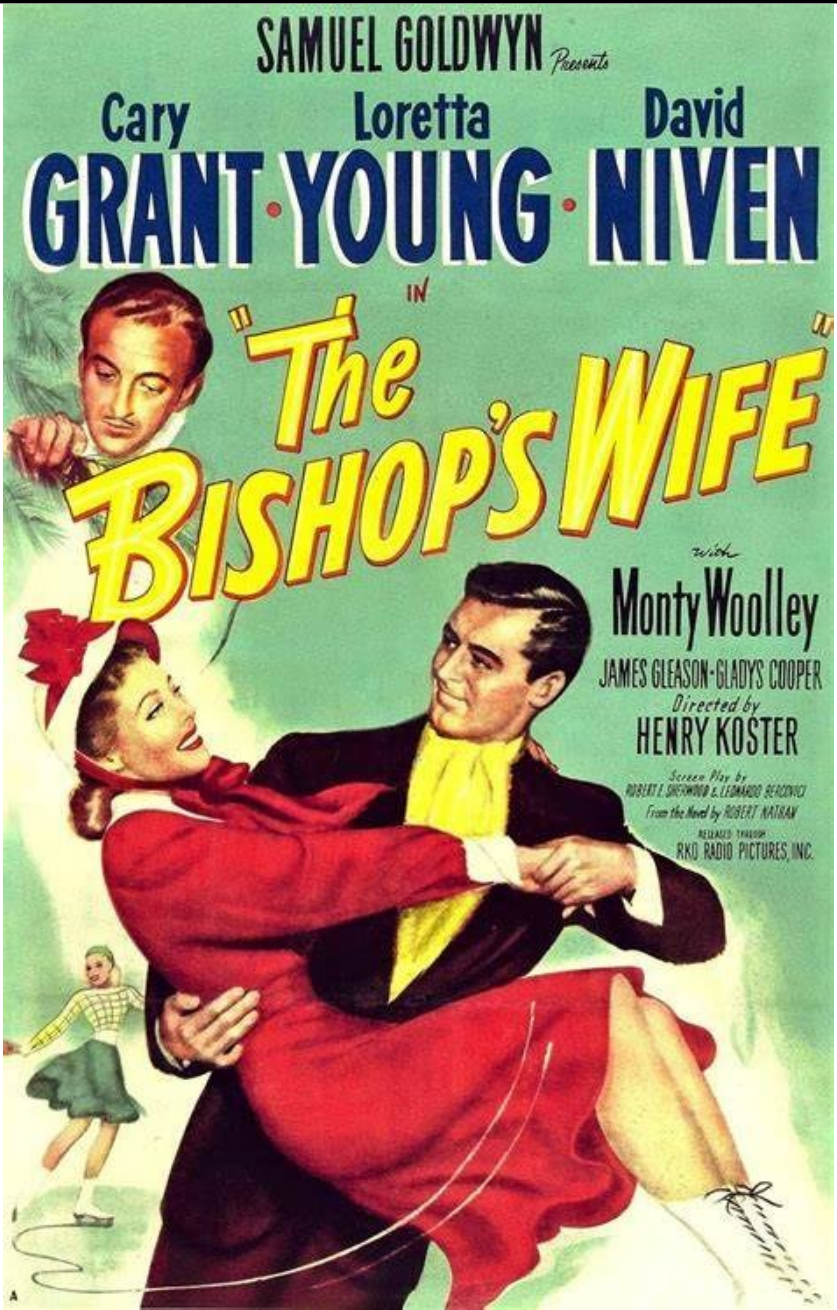


FRANKLIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



ADVENT IV: LOVE

DECEMBER 24, 2023

82 West Central Street, Franklin, MA  
508-528-1092

franklinumc.org  
office@franklinumc.org

# WELCOME TO FRANKLIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH!

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This service of worship is gathering in-person at the church building, in-person via Google Meet, and streaming on YouTube.

This worship aid, or “bulletin,” will guide you through this service, offering you a brief outline and instructions for the service along with the responses, prayers, and lyrics to the songs we will sing together. Congregational responses are typically **bolded**.

Please record your gift of presence and make your other offerings using the offering card included in the print bulletin. Online worshippers are encouraged to record their presence and offerings online at **[franklinumc.org/offering](http://franklinumc.org/offering)**.

Financial contributions can be made in the offering plate (cash or check made payable to “Franklin United Methodist Church”) or online by going to **[franklinumc.org/giving](http://franklinumc.org/giving)**.

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## WELCOME

## PRELUDE

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

When the angel Gabriel visited Mary, announcing God's plan for her to conceive and give birth to the Messiah, "Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'" (Luke 1:34). And yet, only a few months later, Mary sings to Elizabeth,

"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name" (Luke 1:46-49).

We, like Mary, hear God's call to be part of making God's dream for our salvation and flourishing a reality, and we question, "How can this be? I am only..." Yet, like Mary, the "onlys" that make us hesitate are gifts God can and will use as God's love transforms us into bearers of good news.

**We wait as people who have encountered divine Love that disrupts the status quo and ushers us into abundant life marked by mutual love and peace that flows from the flourishing of all people.**

We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, and the love that transforms us. May Love grow within us, transforming us into bold witnesses of God's salvation with our voices and our lives. Amen.

## SONG

## "LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS"

No. 203, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989)

Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas; star and angels gave the sign

Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine  
worship we our Jesus, but where-with for sacred sign?.

Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine;  
love to God and neighbor, love for plea and gift and sign.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### SILENT PRAYER

### COLLECT (PRAYER OF THE DAY)

### LORD'S PRAYER No. 895, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989)

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.

### GOSPEL READING

### LUKE 1:26-55

*The New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*

### REFLECTION

Pastor Jacob

### SONG

### “LOVE HAS COME”

No. 3059, *Worship & Song* (2011)

Love has come—a light in the darkness!  
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.  
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;  
hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!  
Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.  
Love is God now asleep in the hay.  
See the glow in the eyes of his mother;  
what is the name her heart is saying?  
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers.  
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Love has come and never will leave us!  
Love is life everlasting and free.  
Love is Jesus within and among us.  
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking..  
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.  
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

## **OFFERING**

## **DOXOLOGY**

No. 95, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise [God], all creatures here below;  
praise [God] above, ye heavenly host;  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

## **PRAYER**

## **SONG**

### **“TELL OUT, MY SOUL”**

No. 200, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989)

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!  
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;  
tender to me the promise of God's word;  
in God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out my soul, the greatness of God's name!  
Make known God's might, who wondrous deeds has done;  
God's mercy sure, from age to age the same;  
God's holy name, the Lord, the mighty One.

Tell out my soul, the greatness of God's might!  
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;  
proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,  
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of God's word!  
Firm is the promise and God's mercy sure.  
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord  
to children's children and forevermore!

## SETTING THE NATIVITY

### SONG

### “AWAY IN A MANGER”

No. 217, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989)

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.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;  
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky  
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

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.

### THE PEACE

The peace of the Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

### POSTLUDE

# THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

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We hope that you found, in our community, a place to experience meaningful relationship with God, grow in Christ, and reach out in love to others. We hope that this community has been a place where you feel welcome, acceptance, and love. If you have questions about the church, or are interested in becoming a member of the church, please feel free to contact any of the leaders listed below.

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## **franklinumc.org**

Franklin United Methodist Church  
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Franklin, MA 02038

508-528-1092  
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Paul Seaver, Custodian  
Linda Zardeskas, Chair of Church Council  
George Remus, Lay Leader & Treasurer  
Dawn Harlow, Financial Secretary  
Dawn Pokorny, Lay Member to Annual Conference  
Allen Smith, Chair of Personnel Committee  
John Milot, Chair of Resource Committee  
Inger Anderson, Chair of Committee on Ministry

# UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

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## WORK CONTINUES

Work began on our sanctuary ceiling on Monday, December 18. As work is being done, the sanctuary will be closed. Sunday morning (10am) worship will be in the vestry and continue in the vestry until the ceiling work and painting has been completed. We anticipate being back in the sanctuary for the season of Lent and the celebration of Easter.

## GET CONNECTED TO THE CHURCH

The Franklin United Methodist Church uses Realm, an online database software, to better communicate with and connect people into the life of the church. It is simple and easy to use! Every person in the church gets a unique profile. Your profile enables you to RSVP to events (including volunteer opportunities), track your giving, update your contact information, change your family details, and replace that outdated directory photo. And, most importantly, it allows the church to communicate better with you. To create and log into the database, go to **[onrealm.org/FranklinUMC](https://onrealm.org/FranklinUMC)**.

## 2024 PLEDGES

One of the ways we show our commitment and dedication to the work of Christ and the church is through our financial contributions. While our dedication cannot be measured by the amount we give, our dedication is reflected in our commitment to give. As such, we are asking everyone to consider making a commitment (a pledge) as a sign of their dedication to the church. Pledges can be made going to <https://franklinumc.org/dedicated/> and following the link. Paper pledge cards can be found at the entrance to the worship space and can be turned into the church office or offering plate.

## STAY UP-TO-DATE & SHARE THE WORD

The easiest ways to stay up-to-date on all that is going on is to subscribe to the church website and follow our social media accounts. Go to **[franklinumc.org](https://franklinumc.org)**, scroll to the bottom of the page, enter your email address, and hit subscribe. All new posts to the website will be sent directly to your email!

You can also find regular updates on **[Facebook.com/FranklinMaUMC](https://www.facebook.com/FranklinMaUMC)** and **[Instagram.com/FranklinUMC](https://www.instagram.com/FranklinUMC)**. You can find all past services archived under the “Live” section of our YouTube channel (**[YouTube.com/@FranklinMaUMC](https://www.youtube.com/@FranklinMaUMC)**). Follow, like, share, and comment on the content to help make others aware of all that we do and are together for Christ’s sake.