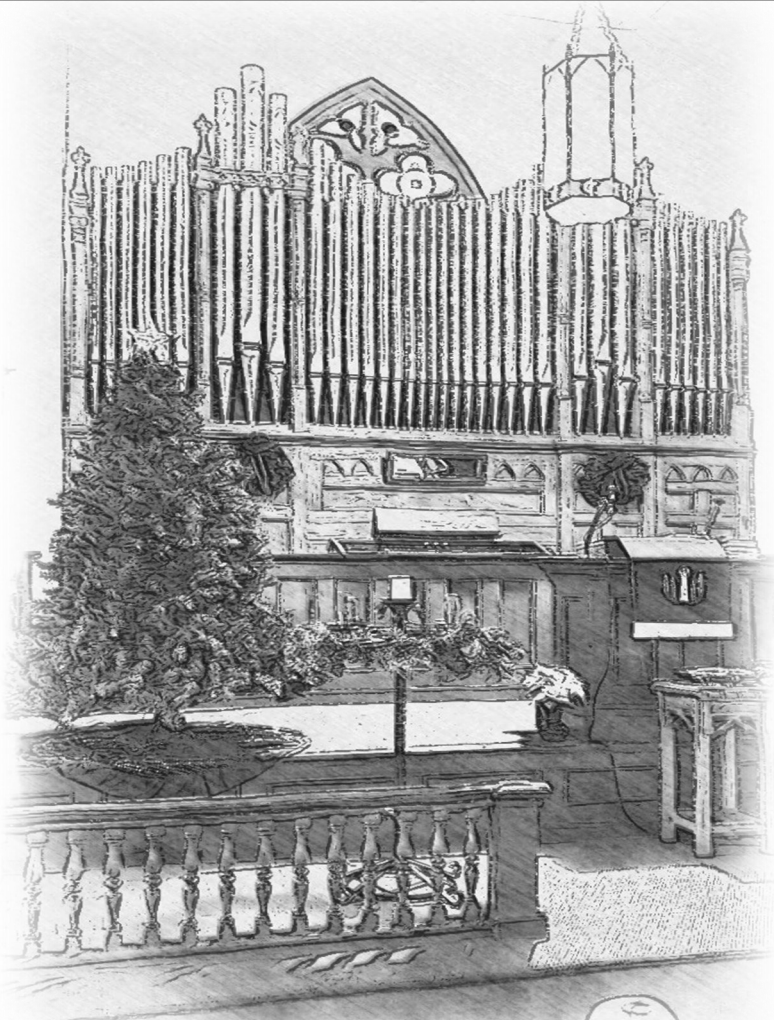


FRANKLIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Come, Let Us Adore Him

Joy

Christmas Eve 2024

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

franklinumc.org
office@franklinumc.org

WELCOME TO FRANKLIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH!

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**.

Prayer requests can be made by filling out the offering form enclosed with the print bulletins, or by going to **franklinumc.org/pray**. Confidential requests will be sent to the pastor. Non-confidential requests will be distributed to the Prayer Team.

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/give**.

To learn about ways you can volunteer, and sign up, go to **franklinumc.org/volunteer**. You can also sign up to volunteer by filling out the offering form enclosed with the print bulletins. All persons who sign up to volunteer will receive an email confirmation of your volunteer registration.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

For you who are filled to the brim with happiness,

Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.

For you who are mourning the loss of family and friends,

Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.

For you who feel like you are tripping about in darkness,

Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.

For you who rest in gratitude and contentment,

Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.

For you who feel the ache of loneliness,

Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.

For you who are surrounded by unlikely yet beautiful companionship,

Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.

Come, let us worship the birth of our Savior!

Come, let us worship God who came to dwell among us!

SONG

“O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL”

No. 234 (vs 1-4), UMH (1989)

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;

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,

lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;

Son of the Father, begotten, not created;

(Refrain)

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;

O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest;

(Refrain)

See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,

leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;

we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps;

(Refrain)

PRAYERS OF INVOCATION

We have waited for a long time for your hope, your joy, your love to shine in the darkness of this world, Almighty God. Even now, in our gathering here, we await you. In our hearts, we still hope that your light will blaze forth, banishing the shadows of this world and guiding all the people back to you.

Yet you did not come into this world in a show of power and glory. You did not shine forth for all of creation to behold. A tiny spark – a newborn baby, visible to parents and curious animals. A host of angels – away from the populated areas, singing to migrant workers. A sparkling star – guiding foreigners to see what neighbors could not.

Open our hearts, merciful God, to the sparks of your presence still in this world. Open our eyes, that we might behold your presence in the least likely of places, and among the least likely of people.

God with us, kindle your spark within us, that together we may shine forth your light, we might banish the shadows of this world, we might be the continuation of the Christmas miracle: Emmanuel is in this world, God is with us, now and evermore.

Illumine our hearts, gracious God. Kindle our faith, we pray.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

ISAIAH 9:2-7

SONG

“LIGHT ONE CANDLE”

Words and Music by Natalie Sleeth

Light one candle for hope, One bright candle for hope.
He brings hope to ev'ry heart, He comes, He comes!

Light one candle for peace, one bright candle for peace.
He brings peace to ev'ry heart. He comes! He comes!

Light one candle for joy, one bright candle for joy.
Ev'ry nation will find salvation in Beth-l'em's baby boy.

Light one candle for love, one bright candle for love.
He brings love to ev'ry heart. He comes! He comes!

He brings love to ev'ry heart.
He comes! He comes!

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Beloved, today we welcome the Christ Child, the fulfillment of our joy, as we proclaim with the prophet Isaiah, “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

Christ our joy has come near. Emmanuel, God with us, has come to dwell with us as a tiny baby. “His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this” (Isaiah 9:7).

We light this candle as a sign of Christ coming to dwell with us, to live in the neighborhood of vulnerable humanity as a vulnerable child. May the light of Christ warm our hearts and light our way as we share the joy of God’s salvation wherever we go.

RESPONSE

“STAR-CHILD”

No. 2095, FWS (2001)

Star-Child, earth-Child,
go-between of God,
love Child, Christ Child,
heaven's lightning rod,

Refrain:

*This year, this year,
let the day arrive
when Christmas comes for everyone,
everyone alive.*

Street child, beat child,
no place left to go,
hurt child, used child
no one wants to know, [*Refrain*]

Grown child, old child,
memory full of years,
sad child, lost child,
story told in tears, [*Refrain*]

Spared child, spoiled child,
having, wanting more,
wise child, faith child
knowing joy in store, [*Refrain*]

Hope-for-peace Child,
God's stupendous sign,
down-to-earth Child,
Star of stars that shine, [*Refrain*]

SCRIPTURE READING

LUKE 2:1-20

SONG

“ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH”

No. 238 , UMH (1989)

Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song? (*Refrain*)

Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. (*Refrain*)

See him in a manger laid,
whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
while our hearts in love we raise. (*Refrain*)

REFLECTION

SONG

“JOY TO THE WORLD”

No. 246 , UMH (1989)

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of all times and places, we gather at your table of grace to recall your vision of hope for us, the people of this world, and all creation.

Through Abraham and Sarah, you revealed your promise in the surprise of a child. Through your prophets, you called your people to make way for peace and justice. In Jesus, you revealed your way of forgiveness and love. Through the ever-circling year, your Word discloses to us—again and anew—your promise for the restoration of all creation.

As we gather to share this holy meal, a sign of hope and fulfillment, we remember Jesus, the child born into obscurity, amid fear and uncertainty. We remember the fragility of that revelation, as well as the hope he stirred and imagination he inspired, and we sing...

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in they dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**
UMH 230 (v. 1), "O Little Town of Bethlehem)

We remember Jesus, the One who blazed a new and risky path of extravagant generosity and of passionate concern: temple-shaker, world-maker, rule-breaker, risk-taker, the author and finisher of our faith. We remember Jesus' self-giving love and the offer of himself for others, even those who gave him over to death, and we sing...

**For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wonder
ing love.
O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth!**
UMH 230 (v. 2), "O Little Town of Bethlehem)

On the night of his betrayal, in the midst of great confusion and fear, Jesus broke bread with friends, saying, "This is my body, which I give for you and for all. When you do this, remember me." With a blessing, he took the cup and offered it to them saying: "This cup is God's covenant which is given for all. When you drink this, remember me." And we sing...

**How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given;
so God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ
enters in.** UMH 230 (v. 3), "O Little Town of Bethlehem)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of All, we pray for your people:
for those who are afraid and oppressed, may you give courage;
for those suffering conflict and fear, may you bring peace;
for those who long for food and water, may they be filled;
for those who long for justice, may it be fulfilled.

We pray also for ourselves and our community:
that those in hospital and in care feel your strength;
that those who are alone and anxious feel you near;
that those who are ill in body and in spirit be comforted;
that our friends and family be blessed by healing and love.

Hear our prayers, O God,
and in your mercy, answer.

We pray these things trusting in God's faithfulness revealed:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

And we sing...

**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 with us, our Lord Emmanuel!**
UMH 230 (v. 4), "O Little Town of Bethlehem)

SHARING THE BREAD & CUP

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SHARING THE LIGHT

"SILENT NIGHT"

No. 239 (v. 1, 3-4), *UMH*(1989)

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

THE PEACE

Brothers and sisters, siblings in Christ,
the peace of the Christ be with you this night and always.
And also with you.

POSTLUDE

POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS

Vickie Low in memory of Wallace & Eileen Low, parents

Vickie Low In memory of Linda Low, sister

Bette Ghegan in memory of Bob Ghegan

Dawn & Keith Harlow in celebration of Kai Snay, grandson

Patricia Prewitt

Lindsey & Raymond Moreau in memory of Paul Monson
and William Moreau Sr

Inger Anderson in memory of parents

John & Linda Zardeskas on memory of parents

Cynthia Croteau in memory of grandparents

Nancy Boates in memory of Paul Boates

John Milot in memory of Karen

Clarice Cargill in celebration of family at home and church

Susan Read in memory of Steve, husband

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

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.

franklinumc.org

Franklin United Methodist Church

PO Box 313

82 W. Central Street

Franklin, MA 02038

508-528-1092

office@franklinumc.org

Rev. Dr. Jacob W. Juncker, Pastor

jacob@franklinumc.org

Deidre Bassignani, Administrator

deidre@franklinumc.org

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

LOOKING AHEAD

As we look to 2025, we are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. We aim to expand our programs, strengthen our community partnerships, reach out to more individuals, and continue to restore and renovate our facility. To achieve our goals, we are counting on your continued support. We invite you to make a year-end gift to help close out 2024 on a strong note. Additionally, we encourage you to renew your pledge for the coming year. Thank you for being a vital part of our church family. Your faith, generosity and dedication are truly appreciated. Please return your pledge card by December 22nd.

BLOOMING & GIVING IN DECEMBER

This season, let your purchase do more. Head over to the Franklin Stop & Shop location this month and purchase a specially marked \$10.99 *Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet*. Every bouquet sold will send us a \$1 donation!

BOOK CLUB

January we'll read *The Bird Hotel* by Joyce Maynard . The next meeting will be on **January 14 at 7pm**. The group will meet in a hybrid format at TBD or online (<https://meet.goto.com/richp/churchbookclub>), or phone (224-501-3412, access code 789-141-869).

MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Franklin Meals on Wheels office is looking for onsite volunteers, weekday mornings at the church. Meals on Wheels provides nutritious meals to in-need, homebound seniors in Franklin, Bellingham, Blackstone, and Medway. If you are interested or want more information, please contact Jeanne (Monday through Friday, 10a-1p) by phone at [508-520-1422](tel:508-520-1422).