



~ Welcome Visitors! ~

Guide to the bulletin: An asterisk (*) indicates an invitation to rise in body and/or spirit. Text printed in **BOLD** indicates everyone says them together. **NCH** is the New Century Hymnal next to your pew chair.

Children: Children are always welcome here. We know youth grow – in the love of God and the love of others – when they have opportunities to worship in community. Today, children and youth are invited to participate in Nifty Gifty (making Christmas crafts and gifts) during the worship service in Fellowship Hall. If the youth in your family would like to stay in worship, there are a variety of quiet activities and fidgets the youth (and adults!) can do available by the sanctuary doors. There is also a [Prayer Ground](#) set up at the front of the sanctuary. There are several quiet activities prepared for children. We know many of us need to wiggle a bit to be comfortable. Kids do too!!! Adults are welcome to sit in this area as well! #ChildofGod. You and/or your children are welcome to get up during the service to select something to do. If you want to have your younger children (ages 0-4) taken care of during the service, we have a nursery available at 9:30 am.

GATHERING TOGETHER

Prelude

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Donna Robertson

Welcome and Community Connections

***Introit**

We Are Called

***Call to Worship**

One: In a world that is lonely,

All: we will save a seat for you.

One: In a world that is anxious,

All: we will light candles against the gloom.

One: In a world that is weary,

All: we will sing songs of joy and truth.

One: I am not alone.

All: We are not alone.

One: For here in this place, God is weaving us together.

All: Light the candles! Sing with joy!

We are a three-cord strand, not easily broken.

***Advent Candle Lighting | PEACE**

***Prayer for Illumination**

Holy God, the words of this world whip around us like a mighty wind.

We are caught up in news reports,

in text messages, in emails and notifications.

**We are drowning in updates from the media,
caught off guard by the constant hum of it all.**

But here on this bright morning we remember: you too are speaking.

**Still the voices around us. Calm our minds and center our hearts
so that we can hear your words above the wind.**

We are leaning closer. We are at the edge of our chairs.

We are beginning again. Speak to us, as only you can. Amen.

***Hymn**

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

NCH 126, all verses

HEARING THE WORD

First Bible Reading

Philippians 1:3-11

Special Music

In the Bleak Midwinter

Molly Ijames

The Good News

Luke 3:1-6

Reflection

SHARING OUR LIVES

Call to Prayer

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

Ken Medema

Prayers of the People

During our online worship service, we invite you to type your prayers in the comments section on your screen. Or you can text prayers to Pastor Kris at 608-438-6307 or Pastor Peter at 608-338-2268. They will collect the petitions and read them during the service. Know that prayers shared this day are public. If you have prayer request you would like to remain private, you may email them to: pastorkris@memorialucc.org and/or pastorpeter@memorialucc.org

Those who celebrate birthdays in December: Mike Caravello, Maddie Dipko, Bill Jetzer, Brian Richardson-James, Tiffani Roltgen, Adam Schoenwetter, Jonathan Schroerlucke, Marty Smith, Merry Spangler, Stu Turner, Bob Webb, Susan Webb

*If we missed your birthday, contact the church office!

Prayer of Jesus

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

***Passing of the Peace**

GOING OUT INTO THE WORLD

***Sing to God**

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

NCH 43, verse 1

*** Affirmation of Faith**

**We believe in a with-us God:
a God who walks with us in the valley,
dances with us on the mountaintop,
sings with us through the night
and rejoices in the morning.**

**We believe that this with-us God
wired us for relationship,
saying to creation on the very first week,
“Humans should not be alone.”
Therefore, in an effort to be who God called us to be,
we strive to live like the Trinity—
connected, united, and centered.**

**We believe in the power of community.
We commit to learning each other’s names.
We choose to journey with each other,
remembering no one can go through life alone.
Thanks be to God, for lighting our way.**

***Song for Going Out** *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* NCH 43, vss 2-4

***Benediction**

*** Postlude** *Rondeau Carol* Carson Cooman

Worship Leaders: Jonathan Schroerlucke (Dir. of Music), Jeff Darwin (Pianist), Pastor Peter, and Pastor Kris

Readers: Lisa Schoenwetter and Ulrika Swanson

Ushers: The Roltgen Family

Media Room: Bill Jetzer

Youth Programming Leader: Mo Foster

Fellowship: Kelly Jetzer and Barb Stransky

Memorial UCC uses photographs and video for social media communication with our members and friends. If someone does not wish to be photographed or in a video, ushers will help them find a seat out of camera view.

Memorial UCC's ONE LICENSE for streaming: #A-711042



Hearing Loop and Listening Devices: For those who have hearing aids, Memorial UCC has a t-coil compatible hearing loop. Listening devices are also available for people who are hard of hearing. See an usher if you need assistance.

Bathrooms: There are two bathrooms near the main entrance of the church. A third Gender Neutral and Accessible bathroom is in the hallway by the nursery. If you need assistance finding the restrooms, an usher will gladly help you



Giving Options—Ever-Widening Opportunities: Checks can be mailed directly to the church or dropped off during office hours. Please indicate any special designation in the memo line. You can give securely via PayPal with your credit card, debit card, or direct withdrawals. Giving online through PayPal is fast and secure, and you do not need a PayPal account to make one-time or recurring donations. Visit memorialucc.org and click the "giving" link in the upper right-hand corner or scan the QR code here. If you are interested in monthly automatic withdrawals, please email Cathy Halpin at halpincjo@gmail.com, and she will get you signed up.

Want to Know More About Us? Co-pastors Kris and Peter would be happy to set up a time to chat further. Feel free to contact either of them at pastorkris@memorialucc.org or pastorpeter@memorialucc.org. You don't need to be a formal member to get involved here. There is a lot of information on our website at www.memorialucc.org. You can also follow us on Facebook (@FitchburgMemorialUCC), Twitter (@MemUCC), or join our Facebook group Memorial UCC: Ever-Widening Circles.

TONIGHT! YOUTH GROUP GATHERING

THIS SUNDAY (12/8) 5:30 - 7:00 pm at the McFarland UCC, 5710 Anthony Street, McFarland and we will have a Christmas Party! Youth Group is open to youth 11-18 years of age and friends are welcome! If you would like to car-pool, let Pastor Kris know. We can meet in Memorial's parking lot at 5 pm.

ENGAGING WISDOM

Wednesday, Dec 11, Finding Meaning, Purpose, and Connection with God as We Age. In December we will create sacred space in which to consider rest, wintering, and share holiday traditions. Katherine May's book '*Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times*' will provide a foundation for our conversation.

Anyone who considers themselves a senior... or nearing "that age"... and is interested in connecting with others around the serious—and sometimes humorous—realities of getting older is welcome to participate. There are two groups meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (with the exceptions of April and May when we will meet on the 3rd Wednesday): The morning gathering runs from 9:30 – 11 am. The afternoon group meets from 4 – 5:30 pm

SAVE THE DATE! ANNUAL CRAFT & COOKIE EVENT

Saturday, December 14, 9:00-12:00

This will be the 21st year of selling crafts and cookies to support a full-year scholarship to a student at Dar Al Kalima University of Arts and Culture, in Bethlehem. We sell hand-made crafts made by the congregation, and Christmas cookies by the pound. It's a fun event of fellowship and purpose. Neighborhood friends even call the church making sure of the date because they don't want to miss it! We need makers, bakers and workers that day- and then of course customers, too! Watch for more information and sign-up sheets!

Cookies, baked goods and crafts can be dropped off at church on Friday (12/13) morning, Friday afternoon (4-6:30 PM), or Sat (12/14) morning (7:30-9:00 AM). Please label cookie/baked goods containers, and note special ingredients. Cookies will be arranged on large trays by our artistic cookie arrangers. Please suggest a price for crafts. Contact Nancy Baumgardner with questions. THANK YOU!!!!
