

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME

Rev. Wes Kelley

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Rejoice, for God is with us — Emmanuel.

People: **In the darkness of our world shines God's holy light.**

Leader: Now there is reason to hope, to love, to laugh, to live.

People: **God is truly with us. We are not alone.**

All: **Thanks be to God!**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

OPENING HYMN # 234 “O Come All Ye Faithful”

INVITATION

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another. Therefore, let us confess our sins before God and one another

CONFESSION & PARDON

All: **Merciful God, we confess that often we find darkness more comfortable than light. We confess that we find your good news frightening and unsettling, especially when we consider its demands as well as its promises.**

**We confess that Christmas has become more to us than the birthday of the Christ, partly because we do not want a Christ-Child in our lives or in our world. Forgive us, break us, bend us, remake us. Give us the courage to lay ourselves open to the wonder and healing of your coming. Be born again into our world, be born again into our hearts and lives. Hear now our silent and personal confessions as we prepare ourselves for your nativity.**

Leader: The true light that enlightens all has come into the world. That light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to put it out. This is the good news: God has heard our confession. God has forgiven our sin.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

OFFERTORY PRAYER

*Our White Christmas offering tonight will go towards the ministry of the United Methodist Children's home to offer hope and a second chance for kids and their families.*

OFFERTORY “A Baby Changes Everything” Kristen Faulkner

DOXOLOGY #95

SCRIPTURE READING - Luke 2:3-20 Mary Porter and Marshall Thornhill

CHRISTMAS MEDITATION Rev. Wes Kelley

ANTHEM “He Made a Way in a Manger” Mary Henning Dale

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Rev. Meghan S. Kelley

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.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. In the fullness of time you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior, and at his birth the angels sang glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on Earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and Earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.

As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem and there found no room, so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected. As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born, so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

As your Word became flesh, born of a woman, on that night long ago, so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.  
**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, That we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, One with each other, and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

BREAKING THE BREAD

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

*Ushers will direct you to the communion stations, where you will receive a piece of bread to dip in the cup. You are welcome to kneel to pray at the altar after receiving communion.*

SPECIAL MUSIC Mabrey & Francesca Millard  
"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"

ARRIVAL OF THE CHRIST CHILD Ella Young

LIGHTING OF CANDLES – Madison Brown, Ella Young, Mary Henning Dale, Aiden Smitherman, Colin Smitherman, Dennis Mitchell, Marshall Thornhill and Millie Cleckler

CLOSING HYMN – "Silent Night"

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!  
Shepherds quake at the sight  
Glories stream from heaven afar  
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ the Savior is born  
Christ the Savior is born

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

BENEDICTION

*Acolytes serving: Aiden and Colin Smitherman, Dennis Mitchell, Marshall Thornhill and Millie Cleckler*

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
**CLANTON, ALABAMA**  
**A SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION**  
**DECEMBER 24, 2018**

