

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
NEW PORT RICHEY, FL**



*Making Disciples of Jesus Christ
And Transforming the World*



Pastor—Inhong Lee

Pastor's phone: 813-474-6320

Pastor's email: rleefumcnpr@gmail.com

Music Director—Ruthie Nelson

Accompanist—Faye Monroe

Liturgist—Rick Vaughn

Tech Team—Ray Calvert, Gary Sawyer

5901 Indiana Avenue, New Port Richey, Florida, 34652

Office Phone: 727-842-7674

Office email: frontoffice@fumcnpr.com

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00am-12:00pm

www.fumcnpr.com

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REACH OUT IN CHRIST
CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
DECEMBER 24th, 2023 **7:00pm**

Prelude - Excerpts from Midnight Mass

Welcome

Carol - #234:1,3,6 O Come, All Ye Faithful

Call to Worship

Leader: The people who once lived in darkness have been given a great light!

People: Praise be to God who has heard our cries.

L: Our souls sing out God's praise!

P: God has brought us a light of Hope and Peace.

L: Tonight, in this place, the Light of God's Love is given to us!

P: And we shall see that light and let it shine through our lives. AMEN.

Prayer

Gracious God,

With joy and thanksgiving we gather as your people.

We have come to hear again the timeless story of Christ's birth. In the excitement of this night, quiet our hearts that we may know the peace and fullness of this holy time.

Shine, O Light, in the darkness of our world.

Sing, O angels, in the stillness of our hearts,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those God favors." This we pray in the name of the Child of Bethlehem. Amen.

First Lesson (Isaiah 40:1-8, NASB) Rev. Ralph Cain

1 Comfort, O comfort My people," says your God.

2 “Speak kindly to Jerusalem; And call out to her, that her warfare has ended, That her iniquity has been removed, That she has received of the Lord’s hand Double for all her sins.”

3 A voice is calling, “Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.

4 “Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley;

5 Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

6 A voice says, “Call out.” Then he answered, “What shall I call out?” All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.

7 The grass withers, the flower fades, When the breath of the Lord blows upon it; Surely the people are grass.

8 The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.

Choir - Oh Christmas Night All Christians Sing

Second Lesson (Jeremiah 23:5-6) Joan Thomas

5 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land.

6 “In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The Lord our righteousness.’

Hand Bells - Il Est Né (Judy Simpson & Kay Cooper)

Third Lesson (Zechariah 9:9-10) D. Smith or G. Knox
9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.

Receiving of Offering
(You may use this QR code to make online offerings)



Carol - #238 Angels We Have Heard on High vs. 1, 2, 3

Fourth Lesson (Haggai 2:6-9) Ella Nelson

6 “For thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land.

7 ‘I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the Lord of hosts.

8 ‘The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,’ declares the Lord of hosts.

9 ‘The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘and in this place I will give peace,’ declares the Lord of hosts.”

Away in a Manger (Children)

Fifth Lesson (Isaiah 35:1-6) Margie Polen

1 The wilderness and the desert will be glad, And the Arabah will rejoice and blossom; Like the crocus

2 It will blossom profusely And rejoice with rejoicing and shout of joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, The majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the glory of the Lord, The majesty of our God.

3 Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble.

4 Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; The recompense of God will come, But He will save you."

5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.

6 Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Arabah.

Carol - #246 Joy to the World vs. 1, 2, 4

Sixth Lesson (Luke 1:26-35, 38) Shellby Russell

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,

27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."

29 But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was.

30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God.

31 "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.

32 "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;

33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."

34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

35 The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.

38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Solo - O Holy Night (Ruthie Nelson)

Seventh Lesson (Mark 1:1-15) Rev. Inhong Lee

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You, Who will prepare Your way;

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make ready the way of the Lord, Make His paths straight.' "

4 John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

5 And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

6 John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey.

7 And he was preaching, and saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals.

8 "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

10 Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him;

11 and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

12 Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness.

13 And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.

14 Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God,

15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Carol - #239 Silent Night, Holy Night

Dismissal With Blessing

Postlude - Good Christian Men Rejoice by Charpentier



CIRCLE OF PRAYER—Sandra Buck, Charlie Monroe, Brenda and Mike Smeby, Lettie Witt, Rod and Michelle Bailey, Rita Harned, Starla Knox, Tom Miller, Ramona Vaughn, Susan (Kay Cooper's friend), Ainsworth Brown, Joann & Tony Bolt, Pat McDowell, Joan Klingensmith, Kathi Belcher, George Kranz.

WEEKLY REPORT

*Worship attendance December 17, 2023: 121 people.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CHRISTMAS OFFERING**—Special envelopes are provided for your convenience. Please use them 12/24.

***PLEDGE CARDS**—For your 2024 Giving are still available to pick up in the Narthex and give during Offering.

***ALTAR FLOWERS**—New signup chart in the Narthex. Please choose a date if you would like to dedicate the altar flowers for Sunday worship to someone. They are \$30. Please mark your envelope/check "flowers". Contact the office to let us know in whose memory/honor they are.

***UPPER ROOM**—This daily devotional guide for January/February is available in the Narthex and the office. Please put \$2 into an envelope and mark it "Upper Room" when you take a copy.

POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS DECEMBER 2023



Carilyn Arnold - In loving memory of Mike Arnold

Jo Babcock - In memory of Wayne Babcock

Maryann Barth - In honor of Sergej Barth

Glenn Davis - In memory of Susan Davis

Pam Dobies - In honor of my grandson Mason Montana

Pam Dobies - In honor of my granddaughter Blaire Garapola

Carolyn Dye - In memory of Ronald Dye

Beverly Fikse – In memory of my mother & father

Beverly Fikse – In memory of my brother & husband

Alex Grimberg – In loving memory of Martie Grimberg

Elke Chaples – In memory of my dad Ernst Herber and my brother Hellwig Herber

Rita Harned – In memory of Frank B. Harned

Jeff&Belinda Hill – In memory of Richard Phillips



Jeff & Belinda Hill – In memory of Charlene Phillips

Jeff & Belinda Hill – In memory of Noni Hill

Pat Hiuser - In memory of Marvin Hiuser

Jeanine Hill – In memory of Jennifer Hopkins

Darby Kaduk – In memory of my husband Theodore W. Kaduk

Mayer – In memory of Pauline Marks

Dan & Margie Polen - In memory of

Laun & Helen Young

Dan & Margie Polen - In memory of Carrell & Iris Polen

Cheryl Vaugh – In memory of my mother Ruth Willett

Bob Yarnell in memory of Jeanne & Lester Yarnell

Bob Yarnell in honor of Lois, Terry, Anna & Mike Caipen

