

Things You Should Know

Holiday Closing - The church building and office and the food pantry will be closed tomorrow, January 1.

FEAST Meals - Our Kitchen crew is gearing up for the next session of meals Weds., Jan. 10 through Mar. 13. They would love to have your delicious desserts and help cleaning up. Please take a look at your calendar and sign-up on the media board or call the church office.

Family Game Night - Join us Jan. 20 from 6-8pm for an evening of games. More details next week.

Food Pantry - The January Food Pantry item is pasta. Donations may be placed in the baskets near our entrances.

Preparation for 2024:

2024 Altar Flower Calendar is available on the media board. We are blessed to have beautiful flowers in honor or memory of someone each and every Sunday. Sign up today or call the church office.

2024 Offering Envelopes have arrived and are available for pickup across from the office. If you don't see your name and would like to receive envelopes, please contact the church office.

Church office—419-238-0631 ext. 302 or firstchurch@vanwertfirst.net



FIRST^{united} methodist CHURCH

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December 31, 2023

Watchnight

Our Vision Statement:

Enlarging the circle of disciples through Jesus

Thanks for joining us today! If you have any questions while you are here this morning, you can find an answer at the Welcome table, which is inside the doors off Jefferson Street. Whatever your circumstances, and no matter where you've been, you matter to God, and you matter to us. We are glad you are here! If you are a first time guest with us this morning, ***Welcome!*** Please stop by the welcome table and pick up a welcome packet.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Keep watch over yourselves and the entire flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. Acts 20:28

**indicates please stand if you are able
Please fill out the attendance pad and pass it to your neighbor*

Welcome & Announcements: Nate Gearhart

Prelude: *There's a Song in the Air* arr. Dorothy Wells

***Call to Worship:** Noah Krites

Leader: We have welcomed the Christ child and declared the glory of God's salvation that comes to live among us. And yet, still, we wait.

People: We watch and work for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Leader: We prepare to welcome a new year, thankful for how God has brought us through the past year and anxious to discover what the new year might bring.

People: We watch and work for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Leader: We join generations of Simeons and Annas who learned and taught us how to listen, notice, and discern divine love at work.

People: We watch and work for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Leader: Come, let us worship God, whose love endures from generation to generation, guiding us from one year to the next.

People: Come, let us worship as we live in anticipation of God's kingdom on earth as it is heaven. Amen.

***Hymns:** *Joy to the World* #246

***Opening Prayer:** Zakk Hogan

God of stars and angels, God of sheep and lambs, God of abundance and grace: You know us well, better than we know ourselves. You hear us cry, "Gloria!" and "Praise!" And you watch us tear things apart with our words and deeds. You hear us say, "Thy will be done" and "Use me, O God," and you watch us do nothing in response to cries for help. You know us, and you love us, and you forgive. Hear us now say, "Help us to change; turn us around, make us more loving and courageous and hopeful." This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Song: *10,000 Reasons (Bless The Lord)*

Chat with the Children:

Lauren Gearhart, Maddie Laukhuf, Ashlynn Shaffer & Gabe White

Children will remain in Worship

Life in the Church: Cayden Laukhuf

***Scripture:** Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Sydney Dowler

Series: **Our Spirit Awaits**
Message: "Watchnight" Pastor Christian Taylor

***Song:** *We Will Feast In The House Of Zion*

Prayers of the People
The Lord's Prayer

Giving of Tithes & Offerings:

Offertory: *Improvisation on He Is Born* arr. Scott Turner

***Doxology:** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* (Tune: Greensleeves)

***Prayer of Gratitude** Lillie Best

***Spoken Benediction:** Pastor Christian Taylor

Postlude: *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* by Todd Kendall

*You are invited to be seated and enjoy the Postlude or leave quietly in peace.
Thank you for worshiping with us!*

KID'S MINISTRY AWE

Children preschool through 5th grade have an opportunity to build their relationship with Jesus through uplifting songs and impactful Bible lessons by attending our Alternate Worship Experience. Children will be released to AWE after praise and worship time. AWE will not meet Communion Sundays which is the first Sunday of the month.

Today we will not have AWE and children will remain in worship.

Leaders in Today's Worship

Pastor: Christian Taylor

Director of Music: Scott Turner

Worship Leader: Jeremy Laukhuf

Acolyte: Dillon Staas

Projectionist: Noah Carter

Sound Technician: Ron Allison

Videographer: Kurt Massillo

Screen Creators: Cheri Oechsle, Melody Taylor

Usher Coordinators: Dave Lichtle, Neil Shaffer