

# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



THE TWENTY-FIRST DAY *of* DECEMBER 2025

**THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

THE CHURCH WITH A HEART *in* THE HEART OF CHERAW

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT– PURPLE

DECEMBER 21, 2025 – 11:00 AM

†CONGREGATION STANDS

**PRELUDE** Grand Fantasia on “*Joy to the World*”

Mark Cheban

**CHIMING/INTROIT** Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne

MARGARET

Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown, when thou camest to earth for me; but in Bethlehem’s home there was found no room for thy holy nativity. O come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for thee.

**WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!**

Sue Skipper

Welcome to this service! We pray that this time together will be a blessing in your life. Please read and take note of our important announcements.

†**HYMN INSERT** Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

TEMPUS FLORIDUM

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE**

Amanda & Joshua King

Today, we come face to face with the scandal of Advent: Mary, the unmarried mother; God Incarnate growing in Mary’s womb as a vulnerable baby; Joseph contemplating leaving Mary because of her pregnancy; God’s love at work in ways that society and propriety could not understand; God calling Mary and Joseph to faithfulness despite the fear of disgrace. ***All: With Mary and Joseph, we choose to wait, watch, and listen for the way of Love instead of responding in fear to the world’s judgement.*** We light this candle of love as a sign of our faithfulness as we seek, find, and follow Emmanuel, God with us.

**PASTORAL PRAYER/THE LORD’S PRAYER**

Rev. Joseph Kovas

†**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH 881**

Sue Skipper

†**ADVENT GLORIA PATRI**

GLORIA

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

PSALTER 756-757 – PSALM 25 R 1

Sue Skipper

CHILDREN’S MOMENT

Rev. Joseph Kovas

†HYMN INSERT Still, Still, Still

STILL

OFFERTORY Mary’s Song

Thomas Rider

†ADVENT DOXOLOGY

VENI EMMANUEL

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

ANTHEM The Son of Mary

Andrew Parr

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping? This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing; haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary! Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding? Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading. Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you; hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary! So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him. The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him. Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby; joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary! (From John 1, 14; para. Luke 2, 2024)

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 10: 18-25

Rev. Joseph Kovas

SERMON *Joseph was a Righteous Man*

Rev. Joseph Kovas

†HYMN TFWS 2095 Star-Child

STAR

DISMISSAL & PRAYER

Rev. Joseph Kovas

†CHORAL BENEDICTION I Want to Walk

WALKING IN LIGHT

†POSTLUDE We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Danny Jones

**BOOK STUDY FOR ADVENT:** Beginning Monday December 8, 2025, Pastor Kovas will be leading a Monday morning book study at 10:00am for Advent on *All the Good: A Wesleyan Way of Christmas*. The books are \$9.49. To purchase a copy, please write a check to First UMC and write on Memo line “Advent book.” The books are now in the office for pickup.

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE:** 5:00pm Candlelight service.

**OFFICE CLOSED:** The office will be closed Christmas Eve and New Years Eve for the holidays.

**TURN-IN:** Please turn in all invoices and receipts by Dec. 23 for credits!

**CHILDREN’S PROGRAM:** The Children’s Christmas Program has been canceled this year.

**MCARN REQUEST:** We need individual cups of Beef Ravioli, Cereal, and Mac & Cheese for the duration of the months of December and January. Thank you for your help!

**STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFT:** As in years past, the church collects a Christmas Love-Offering for our church staff. Members may submit an offering to Shelby or place in the offering plate with “Staff Love Offering” on the “For” line. The deadline for the Christmas staff love-offering is Dec. 21. Thank you so much!

**SPPRC:** Staff-Parish will meet Dec. 29 at 6:00pm in the Fred Harris Sunday School classroom.

**QUARTERLY STATEMENTS:** If you are interested in receiving quarterly statements next year, please contact the church office with the correct email. Annual giving statements will continue to be mailed.

**ABBA’S HOUSE:** Christmas at ABBA’S House is on Monday, December 22. If you would like to help with distribution of gifts to the people of Cheraw, please be at ABBA’S House by 2:00. The program begins at 3:00 and the Christmas meal will be served by their parents at 5:00. FUMC’s contribution to this community meal is instant mashed potatoes. We need your contribution of these large boxes by Sunday, 12/21, in our kitchen. Thank you from your Missions/Evangelism team.

**DONATIONS CHANGE LIVES:** Since all of us have been so blessed, please continue to be a blessing to others by placing items on our Blessing Fence (bags and tags and miniature Jesus’ are in the fellowship hall), by placing self-opening cans in our blessing box, and continuing to donate to McArn Food Bank.

**PRAYER LIST** - Our Church, President, Congress, Governors, Mayors, State & local employees, health care workers, EMTs, firefighters, law enforcement officers, people of all ages with mental illnesses, all who defend our Nation, Shep Straughn, Emily Marsh, Martha Griggs, Thomas & Sharon McKinnon, Frank Shutt, Pal Moore, Regina Reames (Brantley Butler Reams' mother-in-law), Kaitlyn Freeman, Lesley Jean Watson, Mason Tomberlin, Pam Walter (Angie Smith’s cousin), Wyatt Smith (Gini Eddins Mother’s Morning Out Child), Avery Dickson, and the family of Travis Rivers.

TITHE NEEDED WEEKLY.....	\$5,928.83.	NURSERY TODAY.....	Kelly Dusa
CONTRIBUTIONS DEC 14.....	\$4,404.00.	NURSERY DEC 28.....	Dawn Leach
SUNDAY SCHOOL DEC 14.....	43	MCARN FOOD ITEM.....	Mac & Cheese
WORSHIP DEC 14.....	72	CHURCH PHONE.....	(843) 537-7002
LITURGIST TODAY.....	Sue Skipper	PASTOR.....	Rev. Joseph Kovas
LITURGIST DEC 28.....	Jimmie Williamson	(803.374.1677; <a href="mailto:jdkovas@umcsc.org">jdkovas@umcsc.org</a> )	
GREETER TODAY.....	Michelle Rohde	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.....	Shelby Nolan
GREETER DEC 28.....	Christy & Heath Ruffner	(843.537.7002; <a href="mailto:fumcadassistant1@gmail.com">fumcadassistant1@gmail.com</a> )	
HEAD USHER DEC.....	Chase Watson	MUSIC DIRECTOR/ORGANIST.....	Jackson Stone
ACOLYTE DEC.....	Penny Quick	(843.506.4312; <a href="mailto:jacjstone14@gmail.com">jacjstone14@gmail.com</a> )	