

FORMAL WORSHIP  
November 29, 2015  
8:45 a.m.  
First Sunday of Advent  
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord.”  
Isaiah 40:3

PRELUDE                      *Welcome the Child of Light*                      Hayes  
                                 Celtic Ensemble

INTROIT                      *What Star is This?*                      Lantz  
                                 Sanctuary Choir  
                                 Dr. Terry Morris, Director of Music

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH                      Mary Ellen Abshire  
**I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic<sup>†</sup> church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**  
<sup>†</sup>Apostolic and Universal

\*GLORIA PATRI  
**Glory be to the Father  
And to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

\*INVOCATION                      Rev. Ann Spears

\*LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE      *Candle of Hope*      The Lawson Family

\*HYMN                      *Rejoice* with *Joy to the World*                      arr. Choplin  
                                 *Choir Only*  
                                 *Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King.*

**Good Christians, now rejoice with heart and soul and voice!  
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today!  
Ox and ass before Him bow, and He is in the manger now;  
Christ is born today, Christ is born today!**

*Choir Only*  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice!*

**Good Christians, now rejoice with heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye hear of endless bliss; Jesus Christ was born for this.  
He hath opened heaven’s door, and we are blest forevermore.  
Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!**

*Choir Only*  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice!*

**Good Christians, now rejoice, with heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye need not fear the grave; Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain His everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!**

*Choir Only*  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice!*

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King!  
Let ev’ry heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and heaven and nature sing.**

*Choir Only*  
*Good Christians now rejoice! Joy to the world!*  
*Good Christians now rejoice! Joy to the world!*  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Joy to the world!*

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE                      Dr. Steve Wende

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

\*HYMN                      *In the Bleak Midwinter*                      arr. Raney  
**In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone.  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow.  
In the bleak mid-winter, long, long ago.**

**Angels and archangels may have gathered there,  
Cherubin and seraphim thronged the air;  
But His mother only in her maiden bliss,  
Worshipped the Beloved with a kiss.**

*Choir Only*  
*Still, still, still, He sleeps this night so chill!*  
*The Virgin’s tender arms enfolding,*  
*Warm and safe the Child are holding.*  
*Still, still, still, He sleeps this night so chill.*

**What can I give Him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb.  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part.**

*Choir Only*  
*What I can I give Him, what can I give Him?*  
*Give Him my heart. Give Him my heart.*

\*THE WORD IN SCRIPTURE                      Dr. Bill Allen  
Isaiah 40:1-5                      Page 627, O.T. Pew Bible  
This is the Word of the Lord! **Thanks be to God!**

THE WORD IN SONG                      *Shepherd’s Joy*                      Hayes  
                                 Sanctuary Choir

MESSAGE                      Dr. Steve Wende  
*Miracles:*  
*Expect Great Things*

THE LORD’S PRAYER                      Matthew 6:9-13

MORNING PRAYER                      *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*                      #211  
**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.**

*Refrain*  
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE      *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*      Rev. John Onstott  
*Refrain*  
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

SILENT PRAYER                      *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*  
*Refrain*  
**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

OFFERTORY PRAYER                      Rev. Charles Thompson

THE WORD IN SONG                      *Celtic Advent Carol*                      Angerman and Barrett  
                                 Sanctuary Choir

CHRIST’S INVITATION                      Rev. Ann Spears

\*HYMN                      *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*                      arr. Page  
**Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;  
Dear desire of ev’ry nation, joy of ev’ry longing heart.**

**Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King.  
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone,  
By Thine all sufficient merit raise us to Thy glorious throne.**

\*BENEDICTION                      Christopher George

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE      *Alleluia to the King*                      arr. Page

POSTLUDE                      *Toccata on VENI EMMANUEL*                      Hailstork  
                                 Jay Whatley, Organist

\* *Please stand, as you are able.*

**CELTIC ENSEMBLE**

<b>Violin</b>	<b>Flute</b>	<b>Acoustic Guitar</b>
Rodica Gonzalez	Judy Dines	Marc Rosenberg
<b>Cello</b>		<b>Percussion</b>
Patrick Moore		Christina Carroll

**ALTAR FLOWERS**  
The altar flowers today are given in loving memory of  
Glynda McCarty Rochen by her family.

**ACOLYTES**  
Lindsey Harris, Jr.                      Austin Ishee

**CLERGY ON-CALL**  
Rev. Charles Thompson, 832-668-1800, option 7

- *Service of Communion and Healing in the Chapel, 12:05 p.m.*
- *Assisted Listening Devices are available from the sound console.*
- *iPads, tablets and cell phones are welcome! Take notes and text points from the message to your friends. Just put your device on “silent.”*

**CHRISTMAS OFFERING**

Our church's Christmas offering is crucial in helping First Methodist successfully meet her ministry commitments. It keeps Christ and His work at the top of our gift list – and allows us to reach out to hurting people in the name of the Child whose birth we celebrate! All that we give is given to others. Please join your church family in generously supporting this great tradition. Make your check to First Methodist Houston and designate “Christmas” in the memo section. All gifts received will go to impact the world and change lives in His name.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **HIDDEN TREASURES BOOKS & GIFTS**

***Christmas is coming soon!*** Do your Christmas shopping at Hidden Treasures Books & Gifts this year. The bookstore has lovely gifts and cards, and a wide selection of books. Remember, anything they don't have in stock can be ordered!

### **PRIME-TIMERS (SENIORS) CHRISTMAS PARTY**

***This year's party will feature the Salvation Army Harbor Light Choir.*** Join us Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 11:30 a.m., in the Downtown Fellowship Hall. The festivities will begin with a delicious lunch, followed by entertainment and games. Deadline for reservations is Thursday, Dec. 3. Contact Judy Saenz, 832-668-1836 or [jsaenz@fmhouston.com](mailto:jsaenz@fmhouston.com).

### **SERVICE OF HOPE AND REMEMBRANCE**

***Sunday, Dec. 13 at 1:00 in Binliff Chapel.*** This service is for anyone who has lost a loved one and wishes to reflect and remember. If you will be joining us for lunch beforehand, contact Rebecca Holland at 832.668.1824 or [rholland@fmhouston.com](mailto:rholland@fmhouston.com).

### **WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDY**

***Tuesday Bible Study.*** *Who Is This Man? The Unpredictable Impact of the Inescapable Jesus* by John Ortberg.

***Thursday Bible Study with Allen Houk.*** Allen's current series is on the book of Genesis. On both days, lunch for \$5 is served beginning at 11:30, or bring your own. Bible study starts at noon.

### **PRAYER MINISTRY**

***To join one of our prayer teams,*** or just learn about what is involved in prayer ministry, please contact Dr. Bill Allen, Director of Prayer Ministry at [ballen@fmhouston.com](mailto:ballen@fmhouston.com), or 832.668.1820.

### **WINTER WONDERLAND AT WESTCHASE**

***Westchase will host the annual Winter Wonderland on Dec. 10.*** Volunteers and Sponsors are needed ! Check your Sunday Bible Study class folders for more information, or call Sherry Fox, 713.780.9434.

### **KIDZ NIGHT OUT AT QUILLIAN**

***Looking for something exciting for the kids to do on a Friday night?*** Or maybe you want a night out? Look no further. Kidz Night Out is for children ages 5-13, Friday, Dec. 11 from 6:30 – 10:30 p.m. For more information, please contact Karen Wallis at 713.458.4707 or [kwallis@quilliantcenter.org](mailto:kwallis@quilliantcenter.org).

### **MISSIONS**

***Christmas Giving Projects.*** Join us as we fill the City (and beyond) with Christmas cheer.

***Magi Trees*** (1st, 3rd and 4th floors) - pick up an ornament and sponsor a child for Christmas. Benefitting NIA and the Thailand and Acuna orphanages.

***Lifeline Homeless Ministry*** - we will be collecting \$5-10 gift cards to McDonalds/Subway and gently used coats, gloves, hoodies, tennis shoes and jeans. Please return donations to 3rd or 4th floor collection bins by Sunday, Dec. 13.

### **HANDS ON CHRISTMAS**

***Lifeline Christmas*** (Downtown Campus). Join us for one of the luncheons Dec. 14 or 15 between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. and fellowship with our homeless friends.

### **NEIGHBORS IN ACTION**

***NIA will host its Annual Christmas Party*** in Fellowship Hall Downtown on Dec. 16 from 6:30-8:30pm. We are always in need of volunteers to help spread the Christmas cheer. Being in charge of games, gift distribution and overall operations of the party are ways to serve. Please email Miranda Jones at [mpjones@fmhouston.com](mailto:mpjones@fmhouston.com) or Sandra Roberson at [sroberson@fmhouston.com](mailto:sroberson@fmhouston.com) if you are interested in serving.