

Welcome to Watsonville First United Methodist Church

Open Mind, Open Heart, Open Door

Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 17, 2023, 10 am

Welcoming to humans of all races, genders, and sexual orientations. We invite, respect, and support all people who speak to love, dignity, and justice. You are affirmed and accepted as a full participant in the life and work of this United Methodist congregation.

We welcome all visitors today! Thank you for being here and gracing us with your presence. Please fill out the “**Visitation Card**” found in the pew and either place it in the offering plate or deposit into the *Suggestion Box* back in the narthex.

Prayer Candles are located back at the narthex for anyone who wants to light a candle for someone or something and offer it to God in prayer.

This Sunday is ***Sunday School with Joan!***

First, children will be in worship. Following the Special Music, the teacher, Joan Culbertson, will lead our children to the Nursery Room.

Words of Meditation

“Man has always been his own most vexing problem.”

~ Reinhold Niebuhr, the 20th century American theologian from *The Nature and Destiny of Man*

“Ultimately evil is done not so much by evil people, but by good people who do not know themselves and who do not probe deeply.”

~ Reinhold Niebuhr, the 20th century American theologian

“Evil is a ‘militant ignorance’. Evil actively and militantly refuse consciousness. Evil attempts to escape and hide from their own conscience through self-deception.”

~ M. Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, 1998

“Those who would give up essential Liberty,
to purchase a little temporary Safety,
deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.”

~ Ben Franklin

“Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible,
but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.”

~ Reinhold Niebuhr, the 20th century American theologian

“Learning history is an antidote to the hubris of the present.”

~ David McCullough, the 20th century American historian

(*Please stand if you are able)

Prelude

Mary, did you know?

Marina Thomas

Bringing in the Light (The flame symbolizes Christ's light in the world.)

Welcome & the Life of the Church

Rev. John Song

***Advent Blessings** (Wave to your neighbors and exchange greetings of...

"Advent blessings be with you. And also with you.")

"Centering Breath

***Advent Candle Song**

Light the Advent Candle

FWS #2090 (vs. 3)

Lighting the Third Advent Candle

Gomez/Bernabe Family

***Call to Worship**

Mark Sorensen

Leader: As we journey through the Christmas story,

People: more than a star guides us,

Leader: more than a messenger shows us the way,

People: more than an angel shields us from harm.

Leader: As we live the Christmas story,

People: more than a fairy tale touches our heart,

Leader: more than Santa Claus leaves gifts under the tree.

People: When we live the truth of Christmas,

Leader: we touch the presence of the living God,

All: we taste the joy of our salvation.

***Gathering Song**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

#211 (vs. 1, 2, 4)

Children's Time

"Last Shall Be First"

Pastor John

***Gospel Readings**

Luke 1: 46-55

Magnificat (Latin for "My Soul") or *The Song of Mary*

⁴⁶ And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,

and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.
People: Thanks be to God!

Special Music	<i>Jingle Bells</i>	Ethan Abenoja, Piano
	<i>Walking in the Air</i>	Elizabeth Reitano, Piano
	<i>Happy Birthday, Gentle Savior</i> D. Rogers	Elizabeth & Ethan, Duet
	<i>Children may now leave for Sunday School with the teacher, Joan Culbertson, to the Nursery room.</i>	

Message	<i>The Magnificat, the Song of Mary</i>	Rev. John Song
Part 3) “He has brought down the Powerful from their Thrones”		

Hymn in Response	<i>O Come, O Come, Emmanuel</i>	#211 (vs. 5-7)
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Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Let us respond to this word of grace and hope by the giving of our tithes and offerings, which support the varied ministries of the Watsonville First United Methodist Church, mission at home and throughout the world.

Offertory	<i>I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day</i>	Marina Thomas
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Presentation of Offering

*Hymn to the Trinity	<i>Gloria Patri</i> (Glory to the Father)	#70
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.		

***Offertory Prayer** (In unison)

Accept these gifts from our hearts, O God, and our lives in the ministry of love and peace, through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

*Recessional Song	<i>God Rest You Merry Gentlemen</i>	<i>Worship & Song</i> (green book) #3052
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***Benediction**

*This ends Live Streaming]

Prayers of the People

- a. Sharing of Joys & Concerns (Please raise your hand & mic will be given to you)
- b. Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer/Padre Nuestro (You are invited to pray in the language of your choice)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

*We warmly invite everyone to a delicious cup of quality coffee,
refreshments and fellowship in the Social Hall following worship.*

Today's refreshments: Marjorie Martinez, Marieta Flores

Worship Leaders

Pastor	Rev. John Song
Pianist	Marina Thomas
Choir Leader	Carmelita Abenoja
Liturgist	Mark Sorensen
Greeters	Harry & Clarice Wiggins
Head Usher	Marieta Flores
Tech Team	Antonio Pantaleón, Lucila Pantaleón, Elizabeth Reitano
Nursery Attendants	Tatyana Martinez, Julissa Solis
Coffee Hour	Marjorie Martinez, Marieta Flores

Christmas Services @ 10 am

December 24 **Family Christmas Celebration**
5:00 pm *Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

December 31 **New Year's Eve Service:** Guest Preacher: Dr. Haley Feuerbacher

Calendar for the Week

Sun., Dec. 17	10:00 am	Third Sun. of Advent/ Sunday School with Joan
	11:15 am	Coffee Hour, Social Hall
	11:40 am	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
	12:00 pm	Community Garden X-Mas Potluck, Social Hall
Wed., Dec. 20	4:30 pm	Wed. Bible Study, St. Stephen's room
Sun., Dec. 24	10:00 am	Family Christmas Celebration
	11:15 am	Coffee Hour, Social Hall
	11:40 am	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
	5:00 pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Opportunities!

Weekly Wed. Bible Study!

Every Wed. from 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm, St. Stephen's room

Church Website: watsonville1stumc.org

Email: office@watsonville1stumc.org | Phone: (831) 724-4434

229 Stanford Street, Watsonville, CA 95076

Baptism, Membership, Wedding, Funeral, and Pastoral Counseling are available