



Advent **WONDER OPPORTUNITIES**

DECEMBER 21, WEDNESDAY

Blue Christmas Service . 7:00 p.m. Murchison Chapel

How come I don't feel it? In the midst of the wonder and expectation of Advent, many of us might feel out of step with the joy and excitement of Christmas. Some of us have lost loved ones or face the "happy" holidays feeling blue with grief or depression. Come to this special worship service on the "longest night" to acknowledge our grief and longing for hope.

DECEMBER 24, SATURDAY

Christmas Eve Breakfast . 6:30 a.m. Great Hall

Breakfast will be held from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. Our guests will enjoy coffee and Christmas music beginning at 6:30 a.m., breakfast will be served at 7:00 a.m., and a worship service will begin at 8:00 a.m. in the Garrison Chapel. Many in our congregation have made this a significant part of their Christmas season. Sign up at fumcaustin.org/christmasbreakfast.

Christmas Eve Breakfast Service . 8:00 a.m. Garrison Chapel

A service that is interactive and reflective on the Christmas message. It is a time of fellowship, music, and prayer with our guests and each other.

Christmas Eve Noon Service . 12:15 p.m. Murchison Chapel

We will sing and pray our thanksgiving to God for the birth of Jesus. This service is for those who do not want to drive at night and for those whose plans make it impossible to participate in our later services.

Christmas Eve Family Service . 4:00 p.m., Sanctuary

For the young and young at heart, this 45-minute service is a wonderful way for families with young children to worship together and enjoy the holiness and excitement of the Christ child's arrival. *Childcare provided.*

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services . 8:00 and 11:00 p.m., Sanctuary

These traditional services will feature carols, choral offerings, scripture, Holy Communion, and candle lighting to celebrate Christ's birth. *Childcare provided at the 8:00 p.m. service only.*

DECEMBER 25, SUNDAY

Christmas Day Service . 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary

Come celebrate the birth of Christ on Christmas morning with your First Church family. Kids are welcome in their pajamas and we will have a casual, come-as-you-are service, complete with all the carols you can muster! With one service, it's a great way to begin the twelve days of Christmas. *Childcare not provided as families are invited to worship together.*

Experience the Wonder of Christmas with Us

WAYS TO SERVE

BAKE COOKIES

Cookie bakers are needed to provide guests at the Christmas Eve Breakfast with a treat to take with them. Our goal is 350 zipped bags with six cookies each! Make your chocolate chip (NO NUTS) cookies and package six per bag in zipped plastic baggies. We will take a dozen or six dozen! Happy baking! Bring your cookies to the church on Sundays, December 11 and 18. For more information, contact Doise Miers at doisemiers@gmail.com.

SHOP FOR SOCKS

We are collecting new, white, adult-sized tube socks to give to our homeless neighbors at our Christmas Eve Breakfast. As you are shopping, consider picking up a bag or two of socks to donate. Place your donations in the collection bins located in the foyers of the Chapel, Sanctuary, and Family Life Center on December 11 and 18. You may also bring donations to the church office Monday - Wednesday from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. or Thursday from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

FAMILY PROMISE December 18-25

Servant hearts are needed to help with Family Promise, a shelter program of Foundation for the Homeless that provides transitional shelter for families experiencing homelessness. FUMC provides a place for families to live in our Family Life Center. Volunteers of all ages provide meals, serve as overnight hosts, and host in other ways. This year we will host families the week before Christmas. We will have some special activities planned during the week and hope you and your family will give the gift of time this Christmas. Sign up at fumcaustin.org/familypromise.



Christmas Offering: **WE'RE GOING TO BUY AN RV!**

WHAT?!

We've been growing our partnership with Mobile Loaves & Fishes' innovative residential program called Community First! Village. This 27-acre master-planned community provides affordable, permanent housing and a supportive community for disabled, chronically homeless persons in Central Texas. The village provides a place for our homeless brothers and sisters to heal, to rediscover hope, renew their purpose, and restore their dignity. Most importantly, it's a place they can call home.



WHY AN RV?

For 17 years, Mobile Loaves & Fishes has been lifting up the chronically homeless into gently used RVs located in RV park communities throughout Austin. Today, these homes are now nestled in the Community First! Village, with plans to lift up 250 friends by the end of 2017. Housing at Community First! Village is provided through an innovative mix of affordable housing options in Canvas Cottages, Tiny Houses, and RVs.

When we asked our partners at Mobile Loaves & Fishes what they need most, they didn't hesitate: "We need RVs." Other housing options at the village do not include indoor plumbing, so no bathroom or running water. In contrast, RVs are fully refurbished and outfitted to provide an all-in-one home with a bathroom and kitchen, especially convenient for those with more serious disabilities, as well as those who are older and have greater health challenges as a result of living for years on the streets. While Community First! Village has fully funded all other types of housing, they still need many more RVs to provide homes for those in greatest need.

WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

The cost of an RV is \$25,000. While we know this is a stretch for us, we know that your generosity toward those in need is unparalleled. This Christmas, you are invited to do what we do best—turn outward to our community, bind together, and do something that will change someone's life forever. Join us in this partnership with Community First! Village to house some of our most vulnerable neighbors.

Your gifts, marked "Christmas Offering," may be placed in the offering plate, brought by or sent to the church office, or made online at fumcaustin.org/rv. Funds received in excess of our goal will help support our Emergency Assistance Fund, which is necessary to serve our neighbors in 2017.