Our mission is to build a community where all people are invited to know the love of God and sent to join God in transforming the world. Each Christmas, we have an opportunity to provide transformation through our Christmas Offering, a gift to which we contribute, beyond our regular church giving. This year, the transformation we hope for is right at the corner of 13th and Lavaca Street: our Family Life Center Kitchen.

Our kitchen is a workhorse. For nearly 20 years, every Tuesday and Thursday, volunteers have used this kitchen to prepare a hot breakfast for 250-300 people who are hungry in Austin. They crack eggs, bake biscuits, and wash dishes to do our part to ensure that no one is left hungry in this city. Many of you volunteer regularly at the Feed My People (FMP) Breakfast, and you know what a difference it makes. In partnership with Foundation for the Homeless (FHL), this breakfast is one of our anchor ministries—a point through which many people connect to FUMC, and a starting point for many other ministries of our church, including our Thursday morning worship service and At the Well, our new ministry for women experiencing homelessness.

Beyond the Feed My People Breakfast, our kitchen is used for youth ministry, First Steps, a variety of leadership meetings, and by other groups renting our facility. The kitchen is a crucial part of our ministry.

In order for these ministries to continue, our kitchen needs a full renovation. The air conditioning no longer works, causing volunteers to become overheated while serving. Several critical components of the kitchen are non-functioning or out of code. Our large freezer is beyond repair and needs to be replaced. Our dishwasher is unreliable, requiring frequent maintenance. Beyond appliances, the flooring is separating in several places, causing a tripping hazard.

Working with architects and designers, we estimate the cost of renovation to be $315,000. While this is a major project, it is not insurmountable. With participation from other congregations who care about the FMP Breakfast, as well as grant funding, we will have help, but the congregation of FUMC will be responsible for the greatest portion of the project funding—after all, it is OUR kitchen!

With that in mind, we have set an ambitious goal to raise the first $100,000 for the kitchen through our Christmas Offering. We need these funds urgently to get work started on air conditioning repair and other immediate needs. I am delighted to report that after receiving a $25,000 lead gift for this project, we have now reached $57,000 of our goal! We need everyone’s help to make this new kitchen a reality. I pray that you will join this generous donor in this effort of transformation this Christmas.

You can make your gift anytime between now and the end of the year by marking your check “Christmas Offering” and dropping it in the offering plate. You can also give online at fumcaustin.org/christmasoffering.

With great love,

Taylor
Pastor Taylor

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**CHRISTMAS OFFERING**

**What Can or Can’t Wait?**

As we move through this season of Advent, what CAN’T wait in our lives and in our world? What CAN wait, and be set aside for more urgent and important things? All are invited to answer these questions on the back wall of the Sanctuary or in the Family Life Center foyer.

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**MANNA BAG SALE**

**9:30-11:00 a.m. Sidewalk**

Our 4th and 5th graders show the love of Christ to those in need through the making and selling of Manna Bags for a $5 donation, with proceeds going towards the purchase of more supplies. Bags contain nutritious snacks, a pair of socks, and a note with God’s blessing. You can buy a bag to hand out to those you see on your path or donate toward additional bags that are heavily needed at the front office during the week. Your generosity helps fund this weekday part of our Manna Bag Ministry here at FUMC!

**Advent/Christmas Banner**

Help us create a colorful banner by participating in its creation in the Murchison Chapel. Stop by and add color to the banner with materials provided.

**Advent Visual Art Collection**

An Advent Visual Art Collection is available in the Murchison Chapel and Family Life Center foyer. All are invited to view a collection of 13 visuals inspired by Scripture texts for Advent. Artist statements are provided with theological reflections on the process for creating the artwork.

**WHAT CAN’T WAIT?**

**DECEMBER MISSION EMPHASIS**

**Christmas Offering**

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**First Steps**

A variety of leadership meetings, and by other groups renting our facility. The kitchen is a crucial part of our ministry.

**With**

**love,**

Taylor
Pastor Taylor
ADVENT STUDY: VISIO DIVINA
10:00 a.m.
EDU Murchison Chapel

Visio Divina, Latin for “divine seeing,” is a method of meditation, reflection, and prayer through a process of intentional seeing. Visio Divina extends the 6th century Benedictine practice of Lectio Divina by the use of visual imagery. This class blends visual meditation with group discussion and Bible study.

CHILDREN’S CHOIR PRESENTATION
10:15 a.m.
Sanctuary

Carriers of the Light is a creative musical inspired by scriptural passages focusing on Jesus as the Light of Salvation. Through traditional carols and original music, it celebrates the passing of God’s light from Mary to Joseph to the animals in the stable, from Jesus to the Wise Men, and from God’s light from Mary to Joseph to the animals in the stable.

THIS SUNDAY (Continued)
CIVIL RIGHTS PILGRIMAGE MEETING
12:15-2:00 p.m. EDU Murchison Chapel

Our Civil Rights Pilgrimage is set for March 15-21, 2020. This seven-day trip for youth, adults, and families will take us through Jackson, Selma, Montgomery, Birmingham, and Memphis. Those interested in participating should attend this meeting to hear final details and logistics. Each meeting leading up to the trip, we will explore the lasting legacy of Civil Rights and deepen our understanding of what gets in the way. Today, we will be looking at the racism and how it is defined. Lunch provided. Register for the trip at fumcaustin.org/pilgrimage. A $250 deposit per person is due January 1.

MOBILE LOAVES & FISHES (MLF) 3RD SUNDAY
4:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. SAN MLF Kitchen

MLF serves daily, but this day is for those who want to try face-to-face service working with experienced volunteers. Join the Make-Ready Team from 4:00-5:00 p.m. (preparing food and loading truck) and/or the Truck Team from 5:00-6:30 p.m. (delivering food). Sign up at fumcaustin.org/mlf.

ENGAGE FOR YOUTH: CHRISTMAS PARTY
4:30-7:00 p.m. Family Life Center

All youth are invited to celebrate our last Engage of the year. There will be food, games, music, and a white elephant exchange. Please bring a gift that costs $10 or less. See you there!

HOLIDAY FEAST
7:00-8:30 p.m. FLC Garrison Chapel

FEAST is a monthly dinner gathering for young adults (roughly ages 20–65) to build community and dig into the more difficult side of faith together. Come join us for a special holiday FEAST and dive into a discussion of your favorite Christmas myths and traditions. We will have some great conversation with a side of ham and mashed potatoes. Crazy holiday attire is encouraged! Registration is requested at fumcaustin.org/feast.

DONATION OPPORTUNITIES
NOW-JANUARY 5
Children’s Christmas Giving

In the spirit of Christmas giving, our Children’s Ministry Team invites children to bring toy/ery items for the children and their families living at Casa Marianella. This is the only homeless shelter in Austin dedicated solely to immigrants. 65% of shelter residents, including children, are asylum seekers, many coming from immigration detention. Full-size items needed for children: toothbrushes, toothpaste and tearless shampoo and for adults: shampoo; conditioner; razors; and soap. Donations can be placed at the Christmas Tree in the Sanctuary Foyer through January 5. For more information, contact Erin Scarth at erin.scarth@gmail.com.

DECEMBER 22, SUNDAY
Cookie Collection

Cookie bakers are needed to provide guests at the Christmas Eve Breakfast with a treat. Our goal is 300 zipped bags with six cookies each! Make your chocolate chip (NO NUTS) cookies and package six per bag in a zipped plastic baggie. We will take a dozen or six dozen! Happy baking! Bring cookies to the church on Sunday, December 22. For more information, contact Pastor Cathy Stone at cathy@fumcaustin.org or 512-478-5684 (ext. 215).

Sock Collection

We are collecting new, white, adult-sized tube socks to give to our homeless neighbors at our annual Christmas Eve Breakfast. As you are out and about shopping, consider picking up a bag or two of socks. You may place donations in the collection bins located in the foyers of the Chapel, Sanctuary, and Family Life Center on December 22. You may also bring your 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.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
COLD WEATHER SHELTER FOR WOMEN

During the winter months, we provide shelter for women on Tuesday nights when the predicted overnight low is expected to be 35 degrees and wet or 32 degrees and dry. We have shifts to welcome and greet guests, provide soup/serve dinner, and act as overnight hosts. Sign up at fumcaustin.org/shelter.

GREETERS AND USHERS
Want to be a greeter or usher? Join our team that continues to make FUMC one of the most welcoming congregations in Austin. Serving as a greeter or usher is an excellent opportunity to meet other members, make new friends, and welcome visitors to FUMC. Your commitment would only be one Sunday a month at either the 9:00 or 11:00 a.m. service from January-June 2020. To sign up, contact Richard Bettis at richard.bettis44@gmail.com or 512-657-7641 and he will send you all the information.

AUDIO/VISUAL (AV) TEAM

We all enjoy the seamless use of media in our worship services—both visuals on the screens and sound we can hear. This team needs two volunteers at the media center in the balcony each week: one to run worship slides and one to adjust audio. No experience is necessary and training is provided. Commitment is one Sunday per month from 8:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. with a break from 10:00-10:45 a.m. All of the slides are provided and your role is to operate the slideshow and/or audio. If you are interested, or know of someone who might be, contact Dave Ballbach at dave@fumcaustin.org.

JANUARY 25, SATURDAY
Point in Time Count

Each year, the Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) plans and leads the Point in Time Count, an annual census of people experiencing homelessness. Early in the morning, hundreds of volunteers will head out across Austin/Travis County to count every person experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Volunteers will count people sleeping in cars, tents, parks, under bridges, and on the streets. The information from this count is used to guide public policy and is vital for securing resources to help end homelessness in our community. ECHO is a coalition of stakeholders that plans, develops, prioritizes, and implements systemic, community-wide strategies to end homelessness in Austin and Travis County. Let’s join ECHO in this critical activity for understanding and planning homelessness services in Austin and Travis County. Together, we can end homelessness in our community! Learn more and register at austinecho.org. For more information, contact Pastor Cathy Stone at cathy@fumcaustin.org or 512-478-5684 (ext. 215).
PRAYER

WITHIN OUR CONGREGATION
Stephanie Benold
Sandy Bowles
Kathy Morales
Mari Perez
Ken Santos
Sally Watkins
Dai Wood

Those struggling with grief:
during this holiday season
Condolences to Len Reese and
Rebecca Yoho on the death of their friend, Jackie Fleming.

BEYOND OUR CONGREGATION
Cart Ashmo’s friend,
Elissa Marek
Grady Badger’s sister,
Tonya Basler Stout
Cheryl Bais’ niece,
Lauren Stafford
Bob Block’s friend,
Tim Sullivan
Debbie Block’s cousin-in-law,
David Schieve
Foy Brown’s sister,
Jo Rene Altenburg
Melba Cox’s daughter,
Sandra Helton
Sarah Crane’s mother,
Evelyn Roger
Melanie Dow’s nephew,
Tim Sullivan
Debbie Dow’s cousin,
Jonas Elswanger
George Gaston’s friend,
Dr. Robert Wootton
Victoria Grogan’s mother,
Connie Payne’s family members,
Robby Wheat
Leroy Jones’ friend,
Jeff Young
Gary and Nancy Tidwell
Doak Thomas

END-OF-YEAR GIVING REMINDER
Our church office will be closed December 24-January 1, but we will be open 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. on December 30 and 31, to accept year-end gifts. Ring bell at preschool entrance to let us know you are here. Please note that IRS regulations require that contributions for 2019 must be mailed and postmarked no later than December 31, 2019. Contributions received after January 1 or in the mail and postmarked in 2020 will be considered 2020 gifts.

SAFE GATHERINGS CERTIFICATION
Do you still need to be safety certified? If you are not already, but you want to work in ministry with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, then the answer is YES! This includes Sunday School, mission trips, care ministries, and chaperoning/driving. Parents of children and youth are HIGHLY encouraged to get certified. This Agu covers the cost, but our cost is going up 50% in January, so now is the time to do it. To find out how to get certified, visit fumcaustin.org/minstries/conference-safety-training or contact Emily Buchanan, Safety Policy Administrator, at emily@fumcaustin.org.

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DOWNLOAD CHURCH LIFE
Church Life allows members to review their contact information, access a church directory, schedule one-time or recurring giving, view giving history and pledge commitment, and access the church calendar. Plus, the Church Life mobile app—conveniently at your fingertips—provides similar access to church information using your same Church Life login. Visit fumcaustin.org/churchlife.

SIGN UP FOR 2020 ALTAR FLOWERS
Honor someone you love and appreciate, remember a departed loved one, or celebrate special days or events in your life or the life of the church. The cost is $65 and the available dates for the first of the year are January 5, 12, and 26; February 9, 16, and 25; and March 1, 8, and 29. To sign up, contact Tammi Kellberg at tammi@fumcaustin.org or 512-478-5684 (ext. 226).

CHURCH NEWS

BAPTISMS

Miles Warren George, son of Michael and Molly George and brother to Caleb, was baptized into Christian discipleship on December 8.

Sally Lynn George, daughter of Jon and Emily George and sister to Jake, was baptized into Christian discipleship on December 8.

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CALENDAR

DECEMBER

22 Sunday
Contemplative Service
9:00 a.m. EDC Murchison Chapel
Sanctuary Services: Holiday-Wear Sunday
9:00 and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary
Wait! That’s Not the Christmas Story!
10:00 a.m. SAN Wesley Hall

24 Tuesday
Feed My People Christmas Eve Breakfast
6:30 a.m. FLC
Feed My People Christmas Eve Service
8:00 a.m. FLC Garrison Chapel
Christmas Eve Noon Service
12:00 p.m. EDC Murchison Chapel
Church Office Closes for Christmas Holiday
1:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve Family Service
4:00 p.m. Sanctuary
Christmas Eve Candlelight Services
6:00, 8:00, and 11:00 p.m. Sanctuary

25 Wednesday
Church Office Closed
Merry Christmas!

26 Thursday
Church Office Closed
Christmas Holiday
Feed My People Fourth Tuesday Breakfast
4:45-7:00 a.m. FLC Great Hall
Feed My People Breakfast Worship
6:30 a.m. FLC Garrison Chapel
At the Well Ministry
7:00-11:00 a.m. FLC

JANUARY

5 Sunday
Sanctuary Services
9:00 and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary
Epiphany Party
10:00 a.m. FLC Great Hall
Epiphany Sunday Clean-up
12:00 p.m. SAN Main Floor
Financial Peace University Information Session
12:15 p.m. FLC Garrison Chapel
Conversations on Racial Justice
4:30-6:00 p.m. FLC Garrison Chapel

15 Sun Manna Bag Sale
9:30-11:00 a.m.
Advent Study: Visio Divina
10:00 a.m.
Sanctuary
Children’s Chair Presentation
10:15 a.m.
Sanctuary
Civil Rights Pilgrimage Meeting
12:15 p.m.
Sanctuary
Mobile Loaves & Fishes (MLF) Third Sunday
4:00 p.m. /5:00 p.m.
Sanctuary
Sidewalk Café Christmas Party
4:30-7:00 p.m.
Church Office Closed
7:00-8:30 p.m.
FUMC Choir Room

16 Mon Curtis Higgins Prodigals Study Group
6:30-8:00 p.m.
FLC Room 105

17 Tues Feed My People Breakfast
4:45-7:00 a.m. FLC Great Hall
Book Study: Just Mercy
6:30-7:45 p.m.
FLC Great Hall

18 Wed Deadline for FUMC Weekly and eNews
9:00 a.m.
Wednesday Morning Bible Study
10:00 a.m.
Sanctuary
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7:00-8:30 p.m.
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FUMCAUSTIN.ORG
**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**DECEMBER 19, THURSDAY**  
*Blue Christmas Service*  
7:00 p.m.  FLC Orcchon 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 loved ones or face the “happy” holidays feeling blue with grief or depression. Senior Pastor Taylor Fuerst leads this special service on the longest night to acknowledge our grief and longing for hope.

**DECEMBER 22, SUNDAY**  
*Holiday-Wear Sunday*  
9:00 and 11:00 a.m.  Sanctuary  
Let’s spread the Christmas spirit! All are invited to wear fun and crazy holiday clothes with festive fabrics. We’ll see who shows up Monday before Christmas.

*Wait! That’s Not the Christmas Story!*  
10:00 a.m.  SAN Wesley Hall  
Join Dr. Brad King for a deep dive into the Christmas story that we all know and love. While the popular versions of this story are, in Brad’s words, “a mess of mixed up myths,” he also insists that a more accurate version of the story is just as beautiful and even more relevant to Christian life and love. In addition to riveting conversation, we will have plenty of hot cocoa and cookies to keep everyone’s spirits high! Register at fumcaustin.org/christmasstory.

**DECEMBER 24, TUESDAY**  
*Feed My People Christmas Eve Breakfast*  
6:30 a.m.  FLC Great Hall  
Breakfast will be held from 6:30-8:30 a.m. Our guests enjoy coffee and Christmas music beginning at 6:00 a.m., breakfast will be served at 7:00 a.m. Volunteers are also needed to prepare food and decorate on Monday, December 23. Many in our congregation have made these volunteer opportunities a significant part of their Christmas season. Spaces fill fast, so sign up now at fumcaustin.org/christmasevebreakfast.

*Feed My People Christmas Eve Service*  
8:00 a.m.  FLC Garrison Chapel  
All are welcome to gather for an early morning service following the Breakfast. This casual service is a great way to celebrate Christ’s birth through hymns, a short message with conversation, and Holy Communion.

*Service Project Sunday*  
10:00 a.m.  SAN Wesley Hall  
Let’s heal the rear caring for our neighbors! All ages and stages are invited to gather for conversation and projects that will make a difference in the world. All Sunday School classes are invited to participate. There will be no regular Sunday School for children or youth.

**JANUARY 5, SUNDAY**  
*Ephiphany*  
10:00 a.m.  FLC Great Hall  
Start your new year with joy by celebrating Christ’s light in the world with your church family. Families, individuals, children, and adults are all welcome! Children and youth will not have regular Sunday School class that day, so bring the whole family to the party! Sign up to bring cupcakes and other food items at fumcaustin.org/epiphany.

*Financial Peace University Information Session*  
12:15 p.m.  FLC Garrison Chapel  
Come learn about the 9-week financial education class offered by Dave Ramsey. Financial Peace University, watch an introductory video, and pick up your materials for class beginning on Tuesday, January 14. Register at fumcaustin.org/university.

**JANUARY 7, 14, 21, AND 28, TUESDAYS**  
*Book Study: Shameless*  
6:30-7:45 p.m.  FLC Room 104  
Join Pastor Cathy Stone as we read this book by Nadia Bolz-Weber. Raw and intimate, Shameless offers a full-blown overhaul of our harmful and artificial ideas about sex and our bodies. If you have been mistreated, confused, angered, and/or wounded by the shaming sexual messages so prevalent in religion, this one is for you. Register at fumcaustin.org/shameless.

**JANUARY 8-19, WEDNESDAYS**  
*invitation to Genesis*  
6:30-8:00 p.m.  FLC 103  
What does it mean that God began the world by creating? What does it mean that God created woman first? How did we lose sight of this world and what can we do to reconcile ourselves and others to God’s creative vision? What do you think you know about the stories we think we remember? Come explore these questions and more in a 7-week study of Genesis with Amy Wink. This study is designed to engage participants with the Living Word and to help us understand the challenges we face in creating the world God imagines. Cost is $15. Register at fumcaustin.org/genesis.

*January 11, SATURDAY*  
* Becoming a Better LGBTQ+ Ally  
9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon  SAN Wesley Hall  
All Ally training provides a basic framework of understanding lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ+) persons and the unique challenges they often face. This training is designed to create dialogue regarding what it means to be an effective ally. Participants are encouraged to explore their own biases, build their knowledge and understanding, and develop empathy. Whether you already consider yourself an ally, or want to become one, this training can help you learn how to be a better neighbor within the FUMC community and beyond. A $15 donation at registration is requested. Register at fumcaustin.org/ally.

**JANUARY 12, SUNDAY**  
*Baby Brunch*  
10:00-11:00 a.m.  SAN Wesley Hall  
Have a newborn or child under 18 months old? Our Children’s Ministry invites you to come enjoy this fun filled event with fellowship and food. We are excited to partner with you as you begin this incredible journey with your child. Please RSVP to childcare@fumcaustin.org.

*Coffee with the Pastors*  
10:00-10:45 a.m.  SAN Parlor  
Want to connect deeper in our FUMC community? Come visit with the pastors and other church members in a more intimate setting. This casual gathering is a great way to learn what’s happening in the church. All are invited and no preparation is necessary. Stop by to grab a cup of coffee and discuss the church community.

**JANUARY 14, MARCH, TUESDAYS**  
*Financial Peace University*  
6:30-8:00 p.m.  FLC Garrison Chapel  
What if you had an emergency fund, were debt-free, investing, and making wise spending decisions for your family’s future? With Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University, you can take control of your money. Freedom from debt is part of being able to follow Christ. Join members Ellis and Lara Pittman for this personal finance class with a faith perspective. Cost is $99 per family. Register at fumcaustin.org/university.

**JANUARY 15, APRIL, WEDNESDAYS**  
*Disciple I Fast Track: New Testament*  
6:30-8:00 p.m.  FLC Room 104  
Join Pastor Cathy Stone at the New Testament portion of the class begun last fall. Spots are available for anyone who is ready to commit and delve deeper. Returning class members have already purchased their materials for class. New students are also welcome. Register at fumcaustin.org/disciple. Childcare will be provided with rsvp to childcare@fumcaustin.org.

**JANUARY 19, SUNDAY**  
*Movie Night: Loving*  
5:00-8:00 p.m.  Sanctuary  
Our Social Justice Team and youth invite you to watch Loving, the story of Richard and Mildred Loving, a couple whose arrest for multiracial marriage in 1960s Virginia began a legal battle that would end with the Supreme Court’s historic 1967 decision. A short discussion will follow the movie. In support of the upcoming MLK Community March the following day, we will collect canned goods and/or non-perishable food items to be donated to the local Texas Food Bank. Register at fumcaustin.org/movie Night. Childcare is available by emailing childcare@fumcaustin.org.

**JANUARY 20, MONDAY**  
*MLK Day Community March*  
9:00 a.m.  MLK Statue, UT Campus  
This annual March celebrates Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s legacy, while uplifting diversity and multiculturalism in our culture. Following a short program at the MLK Statue, we will march to the historic Huston-Tillotson University, where exciting activities are planned. We can arrange carpools. Contact Pastor Cathy Stone at cathy@fumcaustin.org.

**JANUARY 31- FEBRUARY 1**  
*Pre-Teen Sexuality Workshop: Wonderfully Made*  
6:30-8:00 p.m.  FLC Great Hall  
Pre-teens are tough. Changes are happening to bodies, minds, and emotions which make it hard to know exactly what is going on. Wonderfully Made provides kids ages 10-12 the opportunity to ask questions about growing up and learn faith-based answers. Cost is $50. To register, contact Lara Greene at Lara@fumcaustin.org.

**DECEMBER 24, TUESDAY**

*Christmas Eve*  
* neon Service  
12:00 p.m.  EDU Murchison Chapel  
For those who are ready to celebrate the birth of Christ early in the day, this traditional service features carols, scripture reading, and Holy Communion. 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  
Experience the traditions of Christmas carols, the Nativity story, Holy Communion, and a candlelit Silent Night in this 45-minute worship service especially designed for families with young children. Includes an invitation at the end for children to enjoy a special treat in Wesley Hall while parents experience time for quiet reflection. Childcare provided.

*Christmas Eve*  
* Candlelight Services  
6:00, 8:00, and 11:00 p.m.  Sanctuary  
These traditional services feature carols, choral offerings, Scripture, Holy Communion, and candle lighting to celebrate Christ’s birth. Childcare provided at the 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. services only.  

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