

We thank the following for their service during our worship service:

Lay Reader:	Susan Taylor
Acolyte:	Dorothy Gail McKinney
Crucifer:	Amelia Pardue

WELCOME! We're glad that you have chosen to worship with us today. Following this service, there is a covered-dish lunch in Aldersgate Hall. Please join us.

THIS MORNING'S PRELUDE contains two contrasting sections. The first sets the Nativity scene as the shepherds might have encountered it. The staccato chords in the right hand suggest the twinkling stars in the night sky. Their light shines around the manger and on the Christ Child, symbolizing the spiritual illumination he brings to earth. The second section features the pipe carol of the shepherds as they set off on their journey home, praising and glorifying God. The carol-like melody is a disguised form of the plainsong hymn *Puer nobis nascitur*, translated as "Unto Us a Child Is Born."

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God and in memory of Hilda Hedgecock, a beloved wife, mother, and Nana, by her loving and grateful family.

MEMBERS OF THE ALTAR GUILD serving in December are Mary Ellen Cross, Trisha Craig, Marie Crissman, Helen Ellington, and Beth Kelley.

THE PRAYER REQUEST CARDS are located on the tables in the narthex and may be placed in the offering plate or in the prayer request box in the narthex area, or you may email the prayer ministry team at prayer@frontstreetumc.org. A member of the prayer team will collect requests and offer prayers for requests given on the prayer request cards.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE AND CHRISTMAS OFFERING

This year, we will come together to enjoy one service of worship on **Christmas Eve at 5:00 p.m.** The service will include a reading of the Christmas story from Luke interspersed with the singing of Christmas hymns and carols. Ms. Melissa will lead our children in the acting out of a live nativity as the story unfolds. We will close the service with Holy Communion, candlelight, and the singing of Silent Night.

We will be streaming this service online. You can access it by clicking on the *Worship at Home* link on the church's website, and then click on the *YouTube* icon. A Christmas Eve offering will be taken. This year's Christmas offering will be divided between missions and the church budget.

OFFICE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The church office will be closed **December 23, 24,** and **27** for Christmas and **December 31** for New Year's Eve. Merry Christmas and happy New Year!

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes are available for pick-up outside the church office. PLEASE pick yours up by **December 31**. This will help in reducing our mailing costs. Thank you.

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 19, 2021		
<u>Sunday, December 19</u>		
8:45	Aldersgate Contemporary Worship	Aldersgate Hall
9:45	Sunday School	Classrooms
9:45	Aldersgate Praise Band Rehearsal	Chapel
11:00	Traditional Worship Service	Sanctuary
5:00	UMYF Christmas Party	Huneycutt's Home
<u>Wednesday, December 22</u>		
7:00	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
7:00	The Empty Chair Bible Study	Room 401
<u>Thursday, December 23</u> - Church Office Closed		
9:00	Sabbath Study	Chapel
<u>Friday, December 24</u> - Church Office Closed		
5:00	Christmas Eve Service	Sanctuary
<u>Sunday, December 26</u>		
8:45	Aldersgate Contemporary Worship	Aldersgate Hall
9:45	Sunday School	Classrooms
9:45	Aldersgate Praise Band Rehearsal	Chapel
11:00	Traditional Worship Service	Sanctuary

2021 CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE

A friendly reminder from the church office: in order for contributions to be included as a contribution towards your 2021 statement, please have mail postmarked or dropped at the church office NO LATER THAN **December 30**. All contributions received after December 31 will be applied to your 2022 statement.

Please note: when you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The **2022** flower calendar is available in the Welcome Center. If you are interested in placing flowers in the Sanctuary in honor or in memory of a loved one, please write your name on the Sunday you wish to put flowers in the church. For more information, please contact Linda Paul at 336-543-5081 (cell) or kpaul5@triad.rr.com (email).

LIVE-STREAMING

We are pleased to be able to live-stream our 11:00 a.m. worship each week for the benefit of those who are not able to be physically present. For those who would prefer to not be on camera, we endeavor to make the back half of the Sanctuary a non-video zone. The balcony is also available for non-video seating. If you have any questions about this service, please feel free to speak with Pastor Ross. For Aldersgate sermons, search Aldersgate@FSUMC wherever you find podcasts to listen to past sermons.

FRONT STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Our Mission:

Knowing Christ • Growing in Christ • Sharing Christ



Pastors

Rev. Ross Carter
Rev. Stephan Margeson

Children's Minister

Melissa Miller

Youth Minister

Chris Huneycutt

Minister of Visitation

Leslie B. Peavy

Organist/Director of Music

Dr. Matt Brittain

Choir Director

PO Box 2597 Burlington, NC 27216 Church Office: (336)-227-6263

www.frontstreetumc.org

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THE WORSHIP OF GOD
DECEMBER 19, 2021
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Welcome: It's time to celebrate, we are in the presence of God. We invite you to joyfully prepare your hearts to receive God's love and to feel connected to the Body of Christ this day. Please take a moment to sign the pew pads. We'd like to keep you informed of what we are doing, so please give us your email, too.

All in attendance are required to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status.

* Please stand as you are able.

ELEVEN O'CLOCK

GATHERING AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS

PRELUDE **La Nativité du Seigneur** Olivier Messiaen
 II. Les Bergers (1908-1992)
 ("The Shepherds")

"Having seen the child lying in the manger, the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God." -St. Luke

CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVELY)

Leader: It's almost Christmas! How quickly this time has come upon us!

People: We are breathless. There's still so much to be done.

Leader: Calm your spirits. Take time to hear the wondrous news.

People: Open our ears to hear the wondrous story!

Leader: Believe in the good news!

People: We believe and rejoice! God's love is here with us! Amen.

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN **No. 234 (STANZAS 1-3)**
 O Come, All Ye Faithful **ADESTE FIDELES**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH Jim and Martha Brannock

CALL TO CONFESSION

When the Lord comes, He will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness, and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Therefore, in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (IN UNISON)

Lord, we are so excited. Christmas is almost here. We want to jump ahead to the exciting and wondrous event. We are impatient to hear the whole story. Slow us down again, Lord. Cause us to look at the blossoming of the branch and remind us that your love is blossoming in our lives. As we hear Mary say "Yes," help us to remember that you also call us to be those who will bear the good news to those in need. Forgive us when we forget to do that. Heal our wounds and bind up our spirits. Enable us to go into your

world offering our lives, our gifts, our talents, for your glory. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

PERSONAL CONFESSION AND MEDITATION (IN SILENCE)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (IN RESPONSE TO CONFESSION)

Leader: God's love and faithfulness have been at work in you. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are healed and forgiven!

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are healed and forgiven!

All: Glory to God. Amen.

MISSION MOMENT Kerry Richmond
 Positive Attitude Youth Center

TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

All children are invited to come forward to the chancel steps.
Children ages 4 – first grade may then depart
for Children's Church in Room 309.

ANTHEM **Love Came Down at Christmas** Edwin Fissinger
 Chancel Choir (1920-1990)

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we our Godhead,
Love incarnate, love divine;
Worship we our Jesus:
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine;
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea, and gift and sign.

-Christina Rosetti (1830-1894)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (IN UNISON)

Gracious God, as we turn to your Word for us, may the Spirit of God rest upon us. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON **Micah 5:2-5a** OT Page 865
 ***Luke 1:39-45** NT Page 57

SERMON **"The Blessing of Home"** Rev. Ross Carter

CALL TO PRAYER

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: Let us pray.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Thank you for your support of the mission and ministry of the church. If you would prefer to make your contribution via Text-to-Give, just text your offering amount to FSUMC's dedicated number, 336-489-GIVE (4483).

OFFERTORY **See, Amid the Winter's Snow** arr. Dan Forrest
 William Inabnit, tenor (b. 1978)

See, amid the winter's snow,
Born for us on earth below,
See, the tender Lamb appears,
Promised from eternal years.

Hail, thou ever-blessed morn,
Hail redemption's happy dawn,
Sing through all Jerusalem:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."

Lo, within a manger lies
He who built the lofty skies,
He, who, throned in light sublime,
Sits amid the cherubim.

Sacred infant, all divine,
What a tender love was thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss,
Down to such a world as this.

-Edward Caswall (1814-1878)

* DOXOLOGY **LASST UNS ERFREUEN**
All Singing: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ,
whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! UMH No. 94

* AFFIRMATION FROM I TIMOTHY UMH No. 889

Leader:

There is one God
and there is one mediator, Christ Jesus,
who came as a ransom for all,
to whom we testify.

People:

This saying is sure
and worthy of full acceptance:
That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,
and was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated in the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed in throughout the world,
taken up in glory.
Great indeed is the mystery of the gospel. Amen.

* HYMN No. 179 **O Sing a Song of Bethlehem** **KINGSFOLD**

* BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE **Toccata on Antioch** Craig Phillips
 (b. 1961)