



*"The Census at Bethlehem," Pieter Bruegel the Elder
Oil on wood panel, Flemish, 1566*

Christmas Eve

Williamsburg United Methodist Church

December 24, 2023

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DECEMBER 24, 2023

Christmas Eve

7:00 and 9:00 p.m.

We greet you this lovely Christmas Eve! From wherever you come, we are so grateful that you celebrate the Good News of the Nativity with us tonight.

PRELUDE

In Dulci Jubilo
(Dietrich Buxtehude)

INTROIT

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
(arr. Michael Praetorius)

Sanctuary Choir

WELCOME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

On this quiet night, as all the earth breathes and hopes,
we remember God's gift-giving to us:

the gift of an enduring promise,
the gift of resilient hope,
the gift of abiding presence,
and the gift of surprising joy.

We give thanks to God for the gift of Jesus, the Messiah.
O come, let us adore him!

*CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem

UMH 230 (red book)

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!**

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God of Light and Life, you call us to be still, to listen for and discern your voice.

We confess there are times when we ignore your whisper.

We sing "peace on earth, and mercy mild,"

**even as we lament a world weary of war and division;
we make choices that divert us from truthful and abundant living.**

And yet, though we were living in darkness, and lost in the ways of sin,
you were pleased to come and dwell with us, sending Jesus, our Emmanuel,
and so has he reconciled us with you, our Creator.

Glory to you, the earth-born King who calls us friends! Amen.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-7 (58 NT)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

As the Candle is lit, the congregation will sing:

**Angels announce with shouts of mirth
him who brings new life to earth.**

**Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming!
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way!**

GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:8-18 (58 NT)

ANTHEM

A Christmas Gloria
(John Behnke)

Sanctuary Choir

MESSAGE

The Long Way Home

Rev. Dave Rochford

A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS 2023

OUR OFFERING TO GOD

OFFERTORY

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
(Johannes Brahms)

*DOXOLOGY

UMH 94 (red book)

**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!**

TAKING THE BREAD AND CUP

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

(The minister continues this prayer of thanksgiving, concluding:)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might a-dored,
heaven and earth shine this night with the glo - ry of your light.
Loud ho-san-nas now we sing! In the high-est may they ring! Blest is your An-
oint-ed One, Christ, E - man - nu - el, your Son. Sing Ho-san - na
at his birth! Glo - ry on high, and peace on earth!

(The minister continues the prayer, recalling the institution of the Lord's Supper, concluding:)

And so, in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.



Dy-ing Christ de- stroyed our death. Ris-ing Christ re- stores our
life. Christ will come a- gain in glo - ry, bring-ing us the gift of new
life. Christ has died and Christ is ri - sen. Com - ing
still, he o - pens hea - ven.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his

heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,
all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever.



LORD'S PRAYER

UMH 895 (red book)

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.

BREAKING THE BREAD

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

COMMUNION MEDITATION *(Please join in the singing:)*

HYMN 184 <i>red book</i>	<i>Of the Father's Love Begotten</i>
HYMN 217 <i>red book</i>	<i>Away in a Manger</i>
HYMN 218 <i>red book</i>	<i>It Came upon the Midnight Clear</i>
HYMN 229 <i>red book</i>	<i>Infant Holy, Infant Lowly</i>
HYMN 237 <i>red book</i>	<i>Sing We Now of Christmas</i>

SHARING OF THE LIGHT *(please be careful to keep your lit candle upright)*

*CAROL

Silent Night, Holy Night

UMH 239 (red book)

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright.

Round yon virgin mother and child,

holy infant, so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;

glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!

Christ the savior is born, Christ the savior is born.

**Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

**Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**

*DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

*SENDING CAROL

Joy to the World

UMH 246 (red book)

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.**

**Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.**

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo

(J. S. Bach)

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Worship Leaders: Dave Rochford, Meghan Roth Clayton, Troy Sims, Zach Griggs

Director of Worship Arts: Lou-Anne Smith

Organist: Tom Marshall

Readers 7:00: Amelia Jensen **9:00** Hannah Rochford

Acolyte 7:00: J.D. Tressler

Greeters 7:00: Barbara Neary, Marilyn Riddle **9:00:** Steve Tingen

Ushers: 7:00: Roy Geiger, Janet Henke, Russ Henke, Chalonne Hoover, Tom Justice, Monty Mason **9:00:** Walter Hall, Bonnie Knizatko, Barbara Monteith, Marty Monteith

Communion Servers 7:00: Linda Baker, Anne Hardister, Karen Red, Lisa Rochford **9:00** Linda Baker, Karen Red, Ben Rochford, Hannah Rochford

Sound and Livestream 7:00 & 9:00: Jimmy McCarter, Lily Alexander, Anthony Williams, Josh Clayton

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Poinsettias may be picked up after the 9:00 p.m. service or after service on Sunday.

**Our church office will observe the Christmas and New Year Holiday
From Monday, December 25 through Monday, January 2**

Our building will remain open for sponsored groups via assigned access codes.

Those with a pastoral emergency may contact Pastor Meghan Roth Clayton.

Welcome to Williamsburg United Methodist Church

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A PART OF WUMC?

Speak with any of our Pastors, Revs. Meghan Roth Clayton, Dave Rochford or Troy Sims, after the service or call 757 229-1771. They will be delighted to get to know you.

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP 8:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Live streaming of worship...

will be available each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. <https://www.williamsburgumc.org/worship/livestream-services>, and the recorded service will be available at <https://www.williamsburgumc.org/worship/sunday-worship> by mid-afternoon Sunday. Upon entering the Sanctuary, understand that we are posting images to our media platforms. If you are uncomfortable with this, please let the ushers know you need to sit in an area away from camera angles. We are happy to accommodate!

Assisted listening devices...

are available from the ushers. Those with a "*t-coil*" switch in their hearing aids can simply activate the switch. Please advise an usher if you have this need.

Need a Quiet Place During Worship?

Next to the Chapel, the Den is open as a quiet place during Worship. It's equipped to watch worship livestream, has a partitioned feeding area and a diaper changing station for parents and caregivers.

Nursery

Care is available for Pre-K and younger in the Seedlings Room 207. Our trained and background-checked care providers are ready to welcome your little ones during Worship and Sunday School.

CLASSES, GROUPS, AND BIBLE STUDY...

Please see the church website at www.williamsburgumc.org for a variety of choices. These are conducted both in person and by Zoom. We are always eager to welcome guests and new friends.

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church held every second Tuesday, 5:30–7:30 p.m. This is an all-age worship experience that includes crafts, games, Celebration Time and dinner. Questions? Contact Zach Griggs

FAMILY MINISTRIES

We are committed to walking alongside families of all kinds on the lifelong journey of faith. Children are invited to grow in relationship with God and each other through Messy Church, Children's Worship, and fun fellowship events. Youth meet weekly on Wednesdays during the school year to grow as disciples through study and service, and to have fun together. Resources are available for parents and caregivers, and Zach would love to talk with you anytime about the joys and challenges of family life. Contact Zach at zgriggs@williamsburgumc.org to learn more.

Interested in Youth Choir? Contact Anthony Williams awilliams@williamsburgumc.org

PRAYER

Contact the church office to speak to a pastor or submit a prayer request via the church website. Prayer concerns will be added to the prayer chain if desired or shared with the pastors and our intercessory prayer group. Prayer cards are located at Connection Corner and in the Narthex.

SUPPORT AND CARE

We are a Stephen Ministry Church and provide trained, strictly-confidential lay pastoral care for our congregation and community. Contact one of the Pastors for information on how you can be connected to one of our Stephen Ministers 757 229-1771.

On the Cover: for his "The Census at Bethlehem," Pieter Bruegel depicted yet another Bible story as a contemporary event – in this case, set in a mid-16th century Flemish village. Close inspection reveals children playing on the ice and throwing snowballs. Men drink at a makeshift bar, while a census-taker processes a crowd by an inn. At right foreground stands a shadowed man beside a small hut, holding a clapper (used at the time by those with leprosy to warn away others). A begging bowl sits in the mud by his door.

And among them, seemingly unnoticed, Joseph leads a small donkey with Mary astride it, who alone regards the viewer as if she were pondering something.

OUR CHURCH STAFF

Nethea Calloway, *Full Charge Bookkeeper* (x 351)

Josh Clayton, *Digital Media Specialist* (x 256)

Meghan Roth Clayton, *Pastor of Congregational Care* (x 261)

Zach Griggs, *Family Ministries Coordinator* (x 251)

Cornelia Jude, *Director Respite Care* (x354)

Thomas Marshall, *Organist* (757 713-0584)

Laura Pittman, *Director Kid's Morning Out* (x208)

Nancy Reynolds, *Administrative Assistant* (x 252)

Dave Rochford, *Lead Pastor* (x 260)

Michelle Roy, *Dir. of Congregation & Community Engagement* (x 250)

Troy Sims, *Minister of Discipleship* (x 258)

Lou-Anne Smith, *Director of Worship Arts* (x 107)

Greg Whiteside, *Business Manager* (x 355)

Anthony Williams, *Assoc. Dir. of Worship Arts, Dir. Early Childhood Music* (x 108)

Kristina Wolf, *Lead Childcare Provider*

757 229-1771



Merry Christmas

from our

WUMC Staff