



MULBERRY STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Sharing the heart of God from the heart of downtown Macon.



The Church at Worship CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2025 | Five O'clock

Welcome to Mulberry Street UMC!

WELCOME TO THIS SERVICE OF WORSHIP!

We are a church on a mission to share the heart of God from the heart of downtown Macon by fostering healing for the broken places of life. Methodists have been worshipping Father, Son, & Holy Spirit on this corner since 1826.

You are invited to become a living part of this vital congregation.

Check out the back of the bulletin to see the news of the church!

CONNECT WITH US

Please fill out a Connection Card found in the back of the pew if you are visiting with us, would like to sign up for upcoming events, have a prayer request, or need to update your contact information.

If you are visiting with us for the first time, please find an usher to receive a welcome gift!

We invite you to visit us at
mulberrymethodist.org.

Stay updated on the Mulberry community by subscribing to our weekly newsletter! Visit **bit.ly/mul-news** to sign up.

Our 11:00 a.m. worship service is livestreamed on Facebook. You can download the Sunday bulletin at **mulberrymethodist.org/worship/bulletins.**

GIVING

You can make your offering to God by visiting **mulberrymethodist.org/give** or by scanning the QR code, which will take you directly to our church's secure giving website.



ACCESSIBILITY

Hearing Assistive devices are available and can be found in the narthex by the usher station. Please ask an usher for assistance locating them.

For information or comments on accessibility, contact Hunter Godsey at **hgodsey@mulberrymethodist.org.**

*The artwork on the cover is "Nativity Scene" by Gerard Van Honthorst.
<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=46662>*

*Please rise in body and/or in spirit. **Bold Type** indicates congregational participation



Entrance & Praise

Music of the Season

Welcome & News of the Church

Rev. Jack Varnell & Rev. Payton Stone

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Bernard & Wende Meyer von Bremen

* Hymn No. 234

O Come, All Ye Faithful (v. 1, 2, 3, 6)

ADESTE FIDELES

* Congregational Prayer

Rev. Stone

O God our Father, you have brought us again to this glad season, when we celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that his Spirit may be born anew in our hearts this night, and that we may joyfully welcome him to reign over us. Open our ears that we may hear again the angelic chorus of old. Open our lips that we, too, may sing with uplifted hearts. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill towards all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Proclamation & Response

* Hymn No. 246

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

Anthem

O Holy Night

Adolph Adam,
Arr. Shawn Kirchner

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! O, hear the angels' voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night divine.

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by the cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here come the wise men from Orient land.
The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger;
In all our trials born to be our friend.
He knows our need, to our weakness no stranger,
Behold your King! Before the lowly bend!
Behold your King, Behold your King.

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and his gospel is peace.
Chains shall he break and all bonds burst asunder,
For in his name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord! O praise His Name forever,
His power and glory evermore proclaim.
His power and glory evermore proclaim.

- Placide Cappeau, tr. John S. Dwight

* Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-20 (Pew Bible pg 832)

Rev. Jack Varnell

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!”

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

“The Christmas Gospel”

Rev. Varnell

Thanksgiving & Communion

Invitation to the Table

Rev. Stone

Confession and Pardon

Rev. Stone

All: Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to be an obedient church. We have not done your will, we have broken your law, we have rebelled against your love, we have not loved our neighbors, and we have not heard the cry of the needy. Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All pray in silence.

One: Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God’s love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Glory to God. Amen.

Offertory

Still, Still, Still

arr. Paul Manz

Make your offering to God online by visiting mulberrymethodist.org/give or in the offering plate.

* The Great Thanksgiving

Rev. Varnell

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.

Sung Communion A (pages 17-18)

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.
...as we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
...all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and for ever.
Amen. Amen. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

**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

*Children are welcome to receive communion at the discretion of parents.
Let an usher know if you wish to be served in the pew.
Gluten free bread is available on the pedestal at the base of the steps.
An offering plate along the sanctuary wall is available for a communion offering,
which is designated for the pastor's discretionary fund.*

Prayer after Communion

**Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have
given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength
of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our
Lord. Amen.**

Sending Forth

* Hymn No. 239

Silent Night, Holy Night

STILLE NACHT

*We share the light of Christ with the world! From the Christ candle will come
your light, brought to you by an acolyte to the end of your pew.
Please share along your pew as you receive.*

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, the 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!

* Benediction & Sending Forth

Rev. Varnell

Closing Voluntary

Let Earth Receive her King!

Richard Elliott

Keep up with us online!



Stay updated on the Mulberry community by subscribing
to our weekly newsletter!
To sign up, visit bit.ly/mulnews or scan the QR code.

You can find us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube at **@MulberryMethodist**
Visit our website at **mulberrymethodist.org** for our calendar,
service recordings, newsletter archives, and more!

REV. JACK VARNELL

Senior Pastor

REV. PAYTON STONE

Associate Pastor

ELISA REECE

Director of Family Ministries

DR. TERRE JOHNSON

Director of Music

DANIEL MCINTOSH

Organist

BETSY FITZGERALD

Harpist

MILLIE THOMPSON

Director of Communications

THE AINSWORTH CHOIR

WARREN & SUSAN DUNN

Communion Servers

ACOLYTES

Emily Carroll

Kate Evans

Sanford Horne

Baxter James

Will Magda

——— *About Our Worship* ———

Worship begins with God. When we gather for worship, God meets us and speaks to us, and we listen to God and respond. At Mulberry, our order of worship (liturgy) is divided into four movements.

In our “**Entrance and Praise**,” we come together in response to God’s invitation and prepare ourselves to hear God’s Word.

In our “**Proclamation and Response**” we are addressed by God through Scripture and our musical anthem; in this movement, we listen to readings from the Bible as well as a sermon, wherein God’s word is interpreted for the gathered community.

Once a month, we participate in “**Thanksgiving and Communion**.” In this movement, we come to the Table to celebrate what God has done in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, and we’re nourished by the special outpouring of grace offered in this sacred act.

The fourth and final movement is the “**Sending Forth**,” where we are blessed and sent into the world to share the heart of God with a world in need.

——— *Christmas Eve Prayer* ———

Christ, our God, whom humble shepherds worshiped at a manger, you are holy and most high, merciful and mighty. Startle us to wakefulness, that we may rejoice in your new and glorious dawn, and, in your holy name, act to mend this suffering world. Amen.


Mulberry Street
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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mulberrymethodist.org

Office Hours M-Th 8:30am - 5pm