



# HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

DECEMBER 24, 2023

10:30 A.M. SERVICE



### ALL ARE WELCOME

*Highlands United Methodist Church affirms that nothing can separate anyone from the love of God. We invite all to worship, wonder, and discover God's grace as we aspire to create a safe space for all to participate fully in the life of this community of faith. We are called to shine as a beacon of hope, grace, belonging, and respect for all people. Regardless of age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family, financial status, nationality, physical or mental ability, past or future, there is room for you at Highlands.*

*This Advent & Christmastide, the following are given to the glory of God*

**Sanctuary Chrismon Tree:**

In honor of Ben and Alice Thistle, and Marion, Roe, and Frances Jacques, given by their grandparents, Renee Peacock & Steve Bair.

**Front Lawn Christmas Tree:**

Given by PJ & Steve Ellis

**Sanctuary Advent Wreath:**

In memory of John & Ann Roberts, given by Valerie & Warren Nash and family

Given by Scott & Laura Williams

**Greenery in the Chancel and over the High Altar:**

In memory of Robert & Carol Forrester, given by The Forrester family

In memory of our parents, Barbara & Jim Short, given by their family

In memory of our parents, Bobbie & Wayne Smith, given by their family

In honor of Jack & Lisa Reed, given by The Forrester family

In honor of Rick Phillips and The Choir given by Dr. Brian L. Bellenger

In honor of Mary Elizabeth Neal, Lindsay Dawson, and Polly Dawson, given by Don & Kelley Neal

In honor of Mary Elizabeth Neal, Lindsay Dawson, and Polly Dawson, given by Les & Mitchie Neel

Given by Kathy Burdette, Jeff & Celia Davenport, and Mark Chambers & Joy McPherson

**Wreaths in the Sanctuary:**

In honor of Reggie Holder and PJ Ellis, given by Suzanne Hoye

Given by Mark Chambers & Joy McPherson

**Wreaths on Exterior Doors:**

In memory of Judy Mills, given by The Soong family

In memory of Dr. Charles Tyndal, given by Tutter Tyndal

In memory of Abigail L'Eplattenier, given by Dick & Lynn L'Eplattenier

In honor of Nancy & Eric Barkemeyer, given by Dan & Nancy Hill

In honor of Mary Elizabeth Neal, Lindsay Dawson, and Polly Dawson, given by Les & Mitchie Neel

In honor of the welcoming congregation of Highlands UMC, given by the Five Points Business

Alliance and Five Points South Neighborhood Association

**Poinsettias:**

In memory of Jimmy Lennon, given by Dinah Hughes

In memory of Betsy Smith Watson, given by Winston, Tyra, Neal & Madora Pirtle

In memory of Thomas Neal Johnson, given by Winston, Tyra, Neal & Madora Pirtle

In honor of Kathi Ash, given by Betsy Mackin

In honor of Sarah and James Darby, given by Matt Darby

In honor of Ms. Nancy Harris, given by The Soong family

Given by Cinda York

**Additional Greenery:**

In memory of Kenneth Heath, and Ann & Michael Shacka, given by Sonya Heath Shacka

In honor of Bess, Reed, Mack, and Sam Forrester, given by Tate & Kirk Forrester

In honor of Mary Elizabeth Neal, given by the Highlands Children's Program

In honor of Lauri Soong and the Atrium Catechists, given by the Highlands Youth Program

Given by Ann Day Hunt and Denise Williams

# ORDER FOR HOLY COMMUNION

PREACHING – REGGIE HOLDER

LITURGISTS – THE REVEREND MIKAH HUDSON, LESLIE WILLIAMS

CHOIRMASTER AND ORGANIST – RICHARD PHILLIPS

VERGER – BRIAN BELLENGER

**\*Those who are able, please stand. Words in bold are spoken or sung by the congregation.**

*Serving for Altar Guild:* Valerie Nash • *Serving as Ushers:* Mark Chambers, Michael Lalor

*Serving as Lay Readers:* Susan Crow, Broughton Davenport, Leslie Williams

*Serving as Acolytes:* Lizzy Glenn, Ann Harper Nash

*Serving as Communion Stewards:* Jeff, Celia, and Broughton Davenport

*Sacred Dancers for the Advent Season:* Camille Baxley, Elizabeth Baxley, Polly Dawson,

Emmalynne Hudson, Ann Harper Nash, Estelle Sides, Julia Stowe, Millie Taylor

PEALING OF THE TOWER BELLS

*Kara Cargile, chimer*

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

The Reverend Mikah Hudson

*Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people;  
for to you is born this day a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*

**O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

PRELUDE

*Chorale Prelude on STILLE NACHT*

*Franklin Eddings (b. 1934)*

*Silent Night*

*Pei-Ju Wu, violin*

*Richard Phillips, organ*

\*HYMN IN PROCESSION 234

**O Come, All Ye Faithful**

*Verses 1–3 and 6*

ADESTE FIDELES

*Descant Setting: Sir David Wilcocks*

*Organ Improvisation: Noel Rawsthorne*

\*COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

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

*Let us pray: God, faithful and true, make us eager in expectation, as we look for the fulfillment of your promise in Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.***

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

*Fantasy on PERSONET HODIE*

*Phil Lehenbauber (b. 1960)*

*The Sacred Dancers*

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

*May these words reveal Christ to us. **Thanks be to God.***

\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Angels We Have Heard On High**

GLORIA

*Refrain*

**Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

**\*GOSPEL LESSON**

*The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke. Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

The Lesson

Luke 2:1-20, KJV

*The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

**THE HOMILY & CHILDREN'S MOMENT**

Reggie Holder

**Children of all ages are invited to participate. Following the Children's Moment, all children will return to sit with their families.**

**\*HYMN 219**

**What Child Is This**

Verse 1

GREENSLEEVES

Organ Improvisation: Noel Rawsthorne

**THE HOLY COMMUNION**

**\*INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION & PEACE**

*God in Christ breaks down the walls that make us strangers to ourselves and divide us from one another. We are the body of Christ. Around this table, we enact our faith. The Communion Table is open to all who are in love with God and their neighbor and seek forgiveness and healing in this broken world.*

*The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. And also with you.*

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM**

**Baloo Lammy**

*The Choir*

*Written in honor of my child's birth, Lucy Phillips in 1993, and rescored for full choir this year for her 30th birthday.*

REFRAIN: Baloo, baloo, baloo lammy.

*This day to you is born a Child of Mary meek the Virgin mild that blessed bairn.*

*So, loving and kind shall now rejoice both heart and mild. REFRAIN*

*A star appeared this blessed morn and unto us a Child is born to heav'n.*

*He'll lead us from near and far so follow, follow that wondrous star. REFRAIN*

TRANSLATION: Baloo, Lammy – Lullaby, Little Lamb

Richard Phillips (b. 1959)

Text, Traditional Scottish Carol

**\*DOXOLOGY WITH ALLELUIAS 94**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**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.*

*...Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.*

**THE LORD'S PRAYER 895**

## BREAKING OF THE BREAD

### RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

Please come forward as directed by the ushers to receive the sacrament. Holy Communion will be served by intinction; clergy will dip the bread into the cup and place in congregants' hands. Congregants are welcome to kneel at the chancel rail for prayer before returning to their seats. Reflecting our conviction that God's grace is for all people, everyone is invited to the Lord's table.

### MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

*The congregation is invited to sing along with The Choir.*

#### COMMUNION HYMN

#### O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

*The Choir and Congregation*

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.

#### COMMUNION HYMN

#### It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

CAROL

*The Choir and Congregation*

It came upon the midnight clear, the glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold,  
"Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all gracious King."  
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

#### COMMUNION HYMN

#### The First Noel

THE FIRST NOEL

*The Choir and Congregation*

*Descant Setting: Sir David Willcocks*

The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

### INTRODUCTION OF CLOSING HYMN

#### \*HYMN 239

#### Silent Night, Holy Night

STILLE NACHT

*Tom Mitchell, Kyle McKinnon, Charles Butterworth, Chuck Butterworth, Craig Butterworth – guitarists*

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!

\*BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

VOLUNTARY

*Fantasia on ADESTE FIDELES*  
*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

*Frederick H. Candlyn (1892–1964)*

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*Special thanks to Catie Barron for coordinating our Sacred Dancers throughout the Advent season.*

WE WELCOME OUR GUEST MUSICIAN TO HIGHLANDS!

*Pei-Ju Wu, violin, is a member of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra.*

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# Christmas at Highlands

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Sunday, December 24, 2023 – Christmas Eve

4:30 PM – The Music of Christmas Choral Concert

5:00 PM – Service of Holy Communion and Candlelighting

The Church Office will be closed December 25-26, 2023 for Christmas.

Sunday, December 31, 2023 – The Sunday of the Epiphany

9:00 AM – Community Breakfast for New Year's Eve

10:30 AM – Service of Lessons and Carols

– *There will be no Sunday School, Atrium, or Nursery.* –

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, January 1, 2024.



All are invited to prayerfully consider giving to support the ministries of Highlands in 2024.

Complete a pledge card or make your pledge online at [www.highlandsumc.net/pledge](http://www.highlandsumc.net/pledge).

*All pledges are requested by today.*

### **Welcome to Highlands!**

Thank you for joining us in worship today! If you would like to learn more about the ministries of Highlands, please fill out an information card found in the pews, or speak with a member of our staff in the coming week. We welcome the opportunity to be in conversation with you.

Staff contact information – [www.highlandsumc.net/staff](http://www.highlandsumc.net/staff)

### **Community Ministries New Year's Eve Breakfast**

Ring in the New Year with a Community Breakfast on Sunday, December 31 in the Fellowship Hall. Both church members and guests from our Community Ministries program are invited to enjoy a New Year's sit-down breakfast from 9 to 10 AM. We will wrap up in time to move upstairs together for worship at 10:30 AM. We have several volunteer opportunities, including providing doughnuts, fruit, and pastries, serving, hosting tables, and setup and clean up. If you'd like to help out, contact Mark Chambers. We hope you'll join us for breakfast!

Contact: Mark Chambers – [markc205@yahoo.com](mailto:markc205@yahoo.com)

### **Church Retreat - February 17-18, 2024**

Join the Highlands family at Camp Sumatanga for a relaxed time of fellowship, community, and worship this Presidents Day Weekend – February 17-18, 2024. There will be activities for the whole family, plenty of time to spend in nature, worship, and tons of fun! Registration is open now at [www.highlandsumc.net/church-retreat](http://www.highlandsumc.net/church-retreat) or scan the Happening at Highlands QR code.

Cost: Adults – \$125 | Children and Youth – \$60  
Children under 2 free; \$350 registration cap per family

### **2023 Year-End Giving Guidelines**

Please consider this important reminder regarding giving to Highlands. In order for contributions to be tax deductible for 2023, they must:

**By mail:** be postmarked on or before December 31.

**Online:** be completed by midnight (CST) December 31 at [www.highlandsumc.net/giving](http://www.highlandsumc.net/giving).

**Hand Delivered:** be delivered to the church office no later than 4 PM on Friday, December 30 or placed in the offering plate on Sunday, December 24.

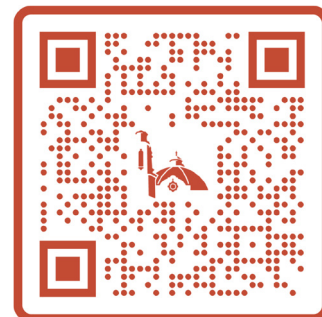
If you would like to make a gift of stock to the church, we have accounts with Charles Schwab and Morgan Stanley. Please contact Tyra Pirtle in the church office ([finance@highlandsumc.net](mailto:finance@highlandsumc.net) or 933-8751 x103) and she will provide you with the church account number and transfer codes. Your contributions to the church are greatly appreciated!

### **NEW! Happening at Highlands Link Hub**

Check out all the great things that are “happening at Highlands” and find links to event registration forms, volunteer sign ups, this week's worship bulletin, and more – all in one convenient place.

Links include:

Generosity of Spirit Pledge Form  
New Year's Eve Breakfast Info  
Church Retreat Registration  
Community Ministries Wish List  
The Highlands UMC Podcast  
Contact Information Updates



### **KEEP IN PRAYER**

Kathi Ash

Peggy Carey

Martha Satterwhite

Leo Bolack, grandson of Jettye and Jon Davis

Denny Bearce

Susan Gaskin

Carol & Arthur Stephens

Billy Ray, father of Suzanne Hoye

Britton Buckner

Nina Reeves

Kathleen Thompson

Bill White, brother of Reina McFarlin

Gayle Byrne

Nancy Sawyer

Tutter Tyndal

Suzanne Norris, mother of Steve Norris

**OUR SYMPATHY** to Jennifer Shelor and family in the death of her father, Neil Shelor; to Tutter Tyndal and family in the death of her sister, Anne Cook Langstaff; to the family and friends of Pat Quellhorst.

Contact information for those listed is available on the ShelbyNext Membership Directory. For help connecting to the directory, visit [www.highlandsumc.net/shelbynext](http://www.highlandsumc.net/shelbynext) or contact Mary Elizabeth Neal at [maryelizabeth@highlandsumc.net](mailto:maryelizabeth@highlandsumc.net).



# WELCOME TO HIGHLANDS!

## ALL ARE WELCOME



A Reconciling Congregation with the Reconciling Ministries Network – [rmnetwork.org](http://rmnetwork.org)

Highlands United Methodist Church is a community of disciples of Christ; a beacon of hope, inviting all to become new persons in Christ to be sent into the world to share the Gospel and to serve our neighbors; and a sanctuary for those in need of God's love and grace.

Highlands United Methodist Church affirms that nothing can separate anyone from the love of God. We invite all to worship, wonder, and discover God's grace as we aspire to create a safe space for all to participate fully in the life of this community of faith. We are called to shine as a beacon of hope, grace, belonging, and respect for all people. Regardless of age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family, financial status, nationality, physical or mental ability, past or future, there is room for you at Highlands.

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### INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

The message of the Hebrew prophets, Jesus, Paul, and the early church was always a message of welcome and inclusion for all. The image of God's kingdom is of something small and insignificant growing into something larger and of great significance. The oppressed, the alien, and the outcast were all welcomed, included, and cared for. In this sense, our faith is built upon the idea of gracious hospitality. Followers of Jesus are not about walls of exclusion but bridges of grace and acceptance. Ours is a faith of invitation, for all to come to know Jesus as the living Christ who overcomes all brokenness, sin, and even death, offering a way to make all things new. This invitation extends to you. If you desire to explore what this means for you, please speak to a member of the clergy after the service or sometime this week. We welcome the opportunity to visit with you.

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### OFFERING

#### Cash or Check Giving:

- Giving envelopes are available in the pew racks.  
Checks may be made payable to HUMC.

#### Electronic Giving:

- Text GIVE to 205-900-3040. A link will be provided for a simple, quick way to give with one click.
- Visit [www.highlandsumc.net/giving](http://www.highlandsumc.net/giving) to give using a debit, credit card, or bank account.

#### Sustainable Giving:

- To set up automatic monthly bank drafts, contact financial manager Tyra Johnson-Pirtle at [finance@highlandsumc.net](mailto:finance@highlandsumc.net).



SCAN THE CODE WITH YOUR MOBILE  
DEVICE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT'S  
HAPPENING AT HIGHLANDS!

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