



ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
HANGING OF THE GREENS

November 30, 2025
10:00 AM Traditional Service

ASBURY

Since 1875

A United Methodist Church

Loving God, Growing Together, Reaching Out



Hanging of the Greens

Prelude: "Wake, Awake" J.S. Bach

Opening Prayer: Liturgist Sandra Fox

Heavenly Father, we long for the simple beauty of Christmas – for all the old familiar melodies, words, and symbols that remind us of that great miracle when He who made all things came one night as a babe, to lie in the crook of a woman's arm. But in that longing, let us even more yearn for your renewed presence among us as we celebrate and expect the coming of your Son. Amen.

Hymn: #211 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel " vs 1, 4, 6 & 7 congregation

Call to Worship Sandra Fox

How shall we prepare this house for the birth of Jesus?

With branches of cedar, the tree of excellence and strength.

How shall we prepare this house for the eternal Christ?

With garlands of pine and fir, whose leaves are ever living, ever green.

How shall we prepare this house for the prophet of Galilee?

With wreaths of holly and ivy, telling of his passion, death and resurrection.

How shall we prepare our hearts for this revelation of God?

By hearing again the words of the prophets and the promises of God.

For in the story of Jesus we see revealed the transforming power of God.

We are reminded anew of God's vision of wholeness, justice, and peace for all of creation.

Thanks be to God.



Reading 1: Paraments Marcia Parsons Numbers 4: 4-8, 13-14

Colors, paraments, and banners are some of the most important visual ways Christians have used to express their faith in worship. With the changing colors of the church year, they point to the significance of the season or festival being celebrated. The traditional color for Advent is purple, a color that signifies the sacred, and spiritual fulfillment. The objective in covering the altar with cloths of various colors is to help focus the attention of worshippers on the special nature of Christ as the Perfect Sacrifice.

Reading 1a: Paraments Marcia Parsons Mark 15:16-20

Hymn #196 : "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus " Congregation and Jeff Taylor trumpet

Action: White "Christ the King" Paraments removed. Purple paraments placed on altar, pulpit, & lectern. Eliza and Will Grant Taylor

One of the most heart-warming expressions of Christmas is the Nativity. The Nativity speaks of the mystery of God's wisdom. God chose to send his son into our world as a baby of humble birth, born in common surroundings. God reached out to all people, the poor and wealthy, the simple and wise, the powerless and the powerful. All who found him knelt in humility before him. Knowing God is possible because he came to us at our level.

Music: Hymn #217 "Away in a Manger" – Congregation

Action: Children & Parents will place the Nativity scene on the Altar

Children's Message- Don Stansfield

As we light these candles we symbolize God Emmanuel, God with us, whose transforming power heals the world of sin and evil. Jesus embodies hope and help for those held captive by oppression. His ministry guides us to personal peace and joy through the illumination of his message of the love of God.

Song: "Advent Candle Song" by Rilee Lamons / Emily Bell accompanist

Action: Light Advent Candle

Don Stansfield III & Children



Reading 3: Poinsettias Debby Hendrix Isaiah 40: 8

Most Christmas greenery reflects European traditions. But one colorful plant, which looks like a flaming star, the poinsettia, is a native to the American continent. It was named after Dr. Joel Robert Poinset, an ambassador to Mexico who first introduced it to the United States in 1828.

The enchanting legend of the poinsettia dates back several centuries, to a Christmas Eve in Mexico when a little girl had no gift to present to the Christ child in the town Nativity scene. Her cousin urged her to give a humble gift, so on her way to church she gathered some weeds she found along the road and arranged them into a bouquet. As she approached the nativity, a miracle happened: The weeds blossomed into brilliant flowers. The people of Mexico call the brilliant plants Flores de Noche Buena - Flowers of the Holy Night. The poinsettia, because of its many-pointed star shape, has become a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem. The red petals represent the blood shed by Christ on the cross and the green leaves symbolize the promise of eternal life offered to us through that sacrifice. Every time we see a poinsettia it should remind us Jesus came to restore peace.

Music: #216 "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming "

Offertory: Choir

Action: Poinsettias placed on flower stand Judy and Bart Reviere



Reading 4: Greenery -Kevin James Revelation 22: 13

Because the needles of the pine and fir trees appear not to die each season, the ancients saw them as signs of things that last forever. Isaiah tells us that there will be no end to the reign of the Messiah. Therefore, we hang wreaths of evergreens shaped in a circle, which in itself has no end, to signify that the kingdom of God, to which Christ so eloquently testified, is also without end.

Reading 4a : Isaiah 60: 13

Green represents renewal, new life, freshness, and rebirth. Plants such as pine, fir, holly, ivy, and mistletoe are called evergreens because through the seasons of the year they remain ever-green, ever-alive. The early Christians placed them in their windows to indicate that Christ had entered the home. It is no wonder then that we deck our sanctuary with evergreens during Advent season. Advent is the season of preparation for the ever-coming Christ, God's gift to us of renewal and transformation.

Congregational Song: "The Holly and the Ivy" See page 6 for lyrics.

Action: Window swags & candles placed, candles lit, sprays on altar. Doris & Brian Allen / April & Leslie Allen

Reading 5: Bells-Amie Serral Moyer

Exodus 28:33-35, 2 Samuel 6:5, Zechariah 14:20

In 400 AD Paulinus of Nola introduced bells to the Christian church as a way to call the faithful to worship or prayer. Today bells are used for many purposes in the church. Steeple bells will chime the hours reminding us to focus our thoughts on Christ during the week. They are also rung in celebration of marriage or peal out the sadness of our loss after a funeral. Church bells ring victorious on Easter that Christ conquered death. Various types of bells are used to make music and cheerful noises in today's worship, much like the time of David. It has become tradition to hear bells during Christmas in celebration of our joy at Christ's birth. Most importantly the bells should remind us that Jesus is the High Priest whose priesthood is eternal.

Music: "Carol of the Bells" Ed Logan

Reading 6: Chrismon Tree John Reviere Matthew 4:16, Psalm 1:3

Today, the Christmas tree is the center of our festivities. Glittering with lights and ornaments, it is a part of the beauty and meaning of Christmas. The tree is a symbol of eternal life, the lights remind us that Jesus is the light of the world and He called us to be a beacon in the darkness. Christmas is the feast of love, where we share gifts with each other as Christ shared the gift of eternal life with us.

Handmade Christmas tree ornaments have been popular since the first Christmas trees were used in sixteenth century Europe. The last half century has seen the use of various traditional symbols of the Christian faith as the motif of the ornaments. These symbols of Christianity are monograms composed of various combinations of letters of the name Christ or titles for Jesus. They are sometimes called Christograms or Chrismons.

Chrismon ornaments are gold and white and made from a variety of materials with a range of traditional symbols. This ancient practice of creating and using the ornaments has become a way for families and churches to retain a sense of the sacred amid the secularization of this important Christian holiday.

Hymn: #230 "O Little Town of Bethlehem " Congregation

Action: Tree Lighting –Rodney Bell



Closing: Sandra Fox

Isaiah 9: 6 & 7

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore the zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

Music: #234 "O Come All Ye Faithful " Congregation

Sending Forth: Reverend Bowers

Postlude: "Wake, Awake" Paul Manz

"The Holly and The Ivy"

The holly and the ivy,
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown.
O the rising of the sun
And the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing of the choir.

The holly bears a blossom,
As white as lily flower,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,
To be our sweet Saviour.
O the rising of the sun
And the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing of the choir.

The holly bears a berry,
As red as any blood,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ,
To do poor sinners good.
O the rising of the sun
And the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing of the choir.



Advent & Christmas at Asbury

Downtown Christmas - Southern Sanctuaries — Friday, Dec 5 | 6- 8pm |

Sanctuary Advent Study: "What Do I Want for Christmas?"

— Saturdays, Nov 29-Dec 20 | 9:30-12:00 | Fellowship Hall

2nd Sunday in Advent—December 7th

3rd Sunday in Advent—December 14th D.S. Rev. Scott Spence Special Speaker

4th Sunday in Advent—December 21st Bishop James E. Swanson, Sr. Special Speaker

Blue Christmas Service—6:00—7:30 pm | Chapel

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion (Traditional) — Dec 24 | 5:00pm | Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion (Contemporary) — Dec 24 | 11:00pm | Fellowship Hall

Christmas Day—December 25th Reserved for Family & Friends

Year-End Worship & Testimony Service—December 28th

As we enter the season of Advent,
we remember that God fills His
people with hope, strengthening us
with joy and peace as we trust in Him.

The prophets spoke of a coming Savior
who would bring light into our darkness,
guiding our hearts into a deep and
lasting peace.

The angels proclaimed this good news
as a message of great joy for all people,
announcing that God's promised
salvation had arrived.

And in the fullness of time, God's love
was revealed as He sent His Son into
the world so that we might find life
through Him.

May these Advent weeks renew our hope,
peace, joy, and love as we prepare
our hearts for Christ's coming.

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