



**HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

DECEMBER 25, 2016

**CHRISTMAS SUNDAY MORNING
WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP**

“A Christmas Coat For Mac”

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Rev. Dr. David Lee, Pastor
Laura Sambito, DCE
Gibson Dixon, Director of Music
Anneliese Robbins, Church Admin.
10900 McCormick Road
Jacksonville, FL 32225
904-641-9622
hupcjax.org/hupc_jax@bellsouth.net

(This column and these notes are intended to enhance our worship with some inspiration and information.)

MERRY CHRISTMAS!
How glad we are to be invited to come to the house of our Lord on the day we celebrate His birth! Glory to Go in the Highest!"

The exquisite Boehm Nativity at the front of the room is the jewel of Dr. Dave's collection. It was a gift from Kinzey and Betty Reeves and is shared during the days of Christmastide.

As we gather today we will meet and greet one another with the music of the day.

You may wonder "how often does Christmas fall on a Sunday?" The answer is as often as any other day of the week. But because of 'leap years it is inconsistent. The next occasion will not be until 2022, then 2033, 2039, 2044, 2050, 2061, 2067, 2072, 2078, 2089, & 2095. Those last few are for our non-readers information!

Today is known liturgically as "The Nativity of Our Lord." On this day our 'come as you are celebration' is mindful of the shepherds who were the first 'come as you are' visitors to the new born Jesus. Our celebration will continue in the Dining Hall.

We welcome the Connor Family for today's lighting of the Advent and now Christmas Wreath which includes the reading of one of today's Old Testament Lessons from Isaiah 9:2-7.

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD --- DECEMBER 25, 2016

"ENTER WITH REVERENCE TO WORSHIP GOD"

MUSIC AND TIME OF PREPARATION

(Take this opportunity to pause for a moment and pray for God's presence among us today, our worship leaders, those who worship with you and for yourself.)

CHIMING THE HOUR

GATHERING AND WELCOME AS WE SHARE LIFE IN THE CHURCH

Merry Christmas!

Feliz Navidad

Sung Tan Chuk Ha

Mele Kalikimaka

Kala Christouyenna!

Joyeux Noel

Buone Feste Natalizie

Merry Christmas!

No matter how it is said it means the same.

Jesus Christ is Born Today!

PRELUDE AND BRINGING THE LIGHT

*CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING THE ADVENT-CHRISTMAS WREATH The Connor Family

Today we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We sing our Christmas songs, we share the story as it intermingles with our story. We hear the Christmas Angels their great glad tidings tell – Jesus Christ is born.

The prophet Isaiah declares for us in this great news of the coming of the light to us. Let us listen as we hear Isaiah 9: 2-7

Sisters and brothers on this Holy Morning we come to this place to hear the angels sing, to be in on the wonder of shepherds, to share the gifts of the wise men, to ponder in wonder these things in our hearts, but most of all to worship the new born king as we pray:

**"O little child of Bethlehem, we thank you for descending to us.
Born in the night, Mary's Child, a long, long way from home may
you find a home in our hearts this blessed Christmas Morn. Amen."**

* - Please stand if comfortable doing so

***CAROL NO. 41 "O Come All Ye Faithful"**

***PASSING THE PEACE (please remain standing)**

May the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

(At this time you are invited to share a sign of peace: a hug, a handshake, a kiss...)

***Choral Response:**

**"Good Christian friends, rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before Him bow, And He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!"**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath opened heaven's door, And we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!"**

CHRISTMAS MORNING PRAYER FROM THE STABLE OF BETHLEHEM

Day-breaking God, we come to meet you this happy morning.

**We come as the mighty and the lowly,
threadbare shepherds just in from the fields,
stately magi come on a caravan.**

We gather together around a baby in a manger in a stable behind a small town inn.

We gaze together upon a newborn infant fidgeting in sleep.
We hear the soothing hum of a mother,
the stalwart silence of a father,
the rustle of hay and the footfall of the cattle and the donkey,
the occasional flurry of wings in the rafters,
the almost silent padding of a cat on the floor,
the shifting weight of all of us gathered, watching.

What are you dreaming as you squirm in sleep?

What world of possibility inhabits your dreams?

Are you dreaming a future for us?

Are you dreaming endless peace for a war-torn world?

Are you dreaming earth restored to balance?

Are you dreaming a banquet for the hungry?

Are you dreaming healing for our illnesses and relief for our pain?

Are you dreaming dignity for the devalued?

Are you dreaming work for the unemployed?

Are you dreaming restored life for the lost?

Are you dreaming calm for the anxious?

Are you dreaming restoration for broken relationships?

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" was originally written in Latin as **Adeste Fideles** is attributed to various authors, going back to the 16th century. It is, along with "Joy to the World" the most loved of the Christmas hymns.

In our final 'gathering act' we "Pass the Peace" as an act of caring, welcome, and mutual love. Please remain standing as we sing a verse of "Good Christian Friends Rejoice."

Basking in the gift of faith and forgiveness that comes to us this day we share the special responsive "Christmas Morning Prayer From The Stable of Bethlehem." The wonderful imagery of this prayer brings us from our place here to the place Jesus was born and to an awareness of how his birth changes the entire world. It asks questions of the new born Jesus. What are you dreaming...? We, too, are called to answer, "what are our hopes and dreams for the future, for 2017? May God bless our contemplation with the assurance of the incarnation.

The 'heart' of our worship is "The Proclamation of God's Word."

(We use the 'common lectionary' which is a guide that assigns readings over a three-year cycle. God's people are given the opportunity to hear and read along in God's Word from the Bible).

The choir is enjoying a much deserved day 'in the pews' with their families today. In the anthem place in the service we'll all stand and sing with full hearts 'Joy to the World!'

We stand for the reading of the gospel in a very old tradition of the church. In response to the Word read there is the 'preaching of the word for our living today.' This includes words for 'the young church' and all who gather. Our Choirs offer musical 'proclamations' in song.

After our Christmas Meditation, which is a story written for today by Dr. Lee, we will move over to the Dining Hall for the remainder of the service.

Are you dreaming a world of love and respect, communication and forgiveness?

Are you dreaming a world of song and dance, art and color, poetry and mystery, delight and awe?

What beautiful new world are you dreaming for us?

Is it the world in which you want to grow?

Now your eyes flicker and open.

Morning is upon us.

Day-breaking God, God of the awakened infant.

What dreams linger as you open your eyes from sleep?

We meet you in these wide-open still-focusing infant eyes.

We look into your eyes.

You look back at us.

What do you see?

Do you see your dreams?

Do you see the world in us waiting to be?

We would see Jesus this blessed Christmas morn.

And share his dreams for Joy in the world. Amen.

"THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD"

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON ISAIAH 52:7-10 (responsive)

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

***CAROL NO. 40**

"Joy To The World"

NEW TESTAMENT LESSONS

***Matthew 1:18-25**

(NT: p. 1)

TIME WITH THE YOUNG CHURCH

CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

"A Christmas Coat For Mac"



**"SHARING OUR OFFERINGS
AND**

A FEAST OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP"

("Go Tell It On The Mountain" serves as our invitation hymn to make our way across the courtyard to the Dining Hall to continue our service. Baskets for your offering are being held at the doors of the Dining Hall. As you enter, please fill each table beginning with those across the room.)

***CAROL OF INVITATION "Go, Tell It On The Mountain"**

Refrain:

**Go, tell it on the mountain Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain That Jesus Christ is born!**

- 1. While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens There shone a holy light. (Refrain)**
- 2. The shepherds feared and trembled When lo! above the earth,
Rang out the angel chorus That hailed our Savior's birth. (Refrain)**
- 3. Down in a lowly manger The humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn. (Refrain)**

IN THE DINING HALL

(please get a beverage as you enter and find a place at a table)

***A CHRISTMAS AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

"Emmanuel is come,

our long expected Jesus is born this day;

Joy to the world and come all ye faithful,

**Hark the Herald Angels from the realms singing
sweetly o'er the plain, Gloria In excelsis deo!**

Away in a manger,

in a the little town of Bethlehem,

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger,

This Infant Holy, Infant lowly, No crying he makes.

So that we can declare forevermore:

Noel, Noel, born is the king in Israel,

And Rise up shepherds and follow,

To Go and Tell it on the Mountain,

Joy to the World, the savior reigns,

so good Christian Friends, REJOICE!

Christ the Savior is Born!

Christ the Savior is Born!

THE INVITATION TO OUR FELLOWSHIP

Christ our Lord invites all who love him, who are enamored with this story of his birth, who celebrate together this day to come.

We have heard some good news. It is sweet to our ears.

Come, together, let us taste the Christmas spirit. Let us bask in the glory of the newborn king.

Let's sing the first verse of "Go Tell It On The Mountain" and then begin to make our way over to the Dining Hall. We invite everyone to come in and proceed to the Fellowship Table for a cup of Hot Chocolate, Coffee, or Milk. After you get a beverage, please take a seat at the tables.

You are invited to place your morning offering in the baskets being held at the doors of the Dining Hall.

Upon entering the Dining Hall you are invited to pause and get a beverage and then move to a seat. Please fill in the tables from the screen side to the window side. Thanks!

When we are all seated we will continue with "A Christmas Affirmation of Faith" written for today. We declare our faith in our mighty God who chooses to become one of us in the child, Jesus.

(We will share our fellowship today "Logos" style. Please select an adult and younger server who will come up for cinnamon buns, plates and napkins.)

As we 'go into the world' we are charged and blessed with words of encouragement to take with us into our week ahead.

Our ongoing and new prayer concerns are listed on the back page of the bulletin. If, prior to the service, you wish to have attention given to 'special' prayer concerns please speak with the pastor.

Remembering not only our joy this day, but also the needs present around us we will gather together in the Prayers of the People. The prayer contains singing, and sharing by different groups.

As we lift our prayers let us keep in prayer, during this final week of 2016, those who are sick, those who are saddened, those who are in need of the very grace that we celebrate today.

THE BLESSING OF THE FEAST

Love brought Jesus to the earth, and love brings us to this Christmas table.

**Today as we share this Christmas fellowship,
may we also share with one another a joyful heart.**

May our Christmas fellowship be filled with sticky goodness.

And may the memories of today warm our hearts for years to come. Amen

(We will share our fellowship today "Logos" style. Please select an adult and younger server who will come up for cinnamon buns, plates and napkins.)

FELLOWSHIP

(As we are served and as we eat and drink and celebrate together, enjoy time to talk with your table-mates. You may want to share a favorite Christmas story or memory, or to remember a time when you felt close to God.)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Most gracious and loving God, you have brought us again to the glad season when we celebrate the birth of the beloved Child, Jesus the Christ.

Grant that Christ may be born anew in our hearts. Open our ears that we may hear again the angelic chorus of old. Open our lips that we too may sing with joy the angels' song.

All: (sing) ***"Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains, And the mountains in reply Echoing their joyous strains. Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo."***

O God of love, by the mystery of the word made flesh,

Men and Boys: you draw near and dwell among us.

Open our hearts that we may receive the gift of your presence in the birth of Jesus. Fill our lives with your love that we might care for the earth's children with the love you have for us all.

All: (sing) ***Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay close by me for ever and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in your tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with you there.***

O God of peace, send the love of Jesus the peace maker

Women and Girls: into our hurting and troubled world.

**Strengthen those who work for peace,
give courage to those who seek justice,
and touch us all with the hope of your reign.
Direct our steps that we may walk in the glory
revealed to us in Jesus Christ.**

All: (sing) **Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!**

**Hail the sun of righteousness! Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings. Mild He lays His glory by, Born
that we no more may die, Born to raise us from the earth, Born
to give us second birth. Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"**

***CHARGE TO GO AND SERVE**

Let's go out and proclaim it on the mountains,
in the valleys,
in the city streets,
beside the oceans and streams,
in the forests and the open fields,
in schools and parks and workplaces.
Let's go out and tell the good news:
Jesus Christ is born!

***HYMN OF PARTING NO. 38 "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear"**

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

Still through the cloven skies they come, With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats O'er all the weary world:
Above its sad and lowly plains They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds The blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load, Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way With painful steps and slow,
Look now! for glad and golden hours Come swiftly on the wing:
O rest beside the weary road, And hear the angels sing.

***BENEDICTION**

***RESPONSE**

For lo, the days are hastening on, By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song Which now the angels sing.

* - Please stand if comfortable doing so



As we 'go into the world' we are charged and blessed with words of encouragement to take with us into our week ahead.

Our Hymn of Parting is "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear,." Which is a poem and Christmas carol written by Edmund Sears, pastor of the Unitarian Church in Wayland, Massachusetts. Sears' song is remarkable for its focus not on Bethlehem, but on his own time, and on the contemporary issue of war and peace. Written in 1849, it has long been assumed to be Sears' response to the just ended Mexican–American War. As we go we bring our own focus to bear on the need for peace in our world and a better 2017, and finally the culmination of that 2nd Advent when Jesus come again in glory when with one voice the whole world will 'give back the song which now the angels sing.

Now, go and enjoy the day. Go filled with Good News and be the children of God. Go and announce to all you see that 'on this day in the city of David there is born to YOU a savior who is Christ the Lord. Gloria in Excelsis Deo!!"

HIGHLANDS' HIGHLIGHTS
This Week at Highlands
Week of December 25 - December 31, 2016



This Week's Calendar of Events:

Today:	10:00 a.m.	Worship and Fellowship
Monday – Tuesday:	Office will be closed	

“WELCOME ONE ANOTHER, AS CHRIST WELCOMES US!”

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WELCOMES YOU! We are so glad that you are here and worshipping with us this morning. We are privileged to have you with us and would invite you to a time of Fellowship in our Dining Hall after worship. Please do us a favor by signing the Friendship Register and mark appropriate boxes. There are also visitor cards in the pew racks. **FIRST TIME VISITORS – WE HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU!** Thanks!

MEMBERSHIP AT HIGHLANDS is open to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives and who wish to join in the worship and ministry of this church. The pastor or any member of the Session would be more than happy to discuss this with you.

A NURSERY IS PROVIDED IN THE FAMILY LIFE building for those who wish to have their children cared for during worship. Parents receive a 'silent pager' for peace of mind and will be paged in case of any need. Highlands takes great care in caring for your children.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH FOR AGES 3 THROUGH 1ST grade is in the Family Life building after "A Time with the Young Church," except on Communion Sundays. A nursery is provided for infants through two years of age in the Family Life Center. Worship folders for young Highlands' worshipers can be found at the usher's stand. PARENTS please help your children with their worship experience. **WE LOVE OUR CHILDREN AT HIGHLANDS** and want to keep them safe! Please help us with this goal by ensuring that **all children are supervised by an adult while on the playground at all times.**

DEVICES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEARING ASSISTANCE AT THE USHER'S STAND.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

MERRY CHRISTMAS! How glad we are to be invited to come to the house of our Lord on the day we celebrate His birth! Glory to Go in the Highest! **WELCOME TO HIGHLANDS ON THIS CHRISTMAS SUNDAY MORNING!** You may wonder "how often does Christmas fall on a Sunday?" The answer is as often as any other day of the week. But because of 'leap years it is inconsistent. The next occasion will not be until 2022, then 2033, 2039, 2044, 2050, 2061, 2067, 2072, 2078, 2089, & 2095. Those last few are for our non-readers information!

Today is known liturgically as "The Nativity of Our Lord." On this day our 'come as you are celebration' is mindful of the shepherds who were the first 'come as you are' visitors to the new born Jesus. Our celebration will continue and conclude in the Dining Hall.

What an amazing Advent we have shared!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

YOUR 2017 FLOWER CHART is posted in the Dining Hall. The cost for 2017 is \$30.00 per week. The additional \$5.00 will help defray costs for 'special occasion' flowers. Thanks. You can also pick up some **Offering Envelopes for 2017.**

LOGOS AND WELLNESS IS TAKING A BREAK UNTIL JANUARY 11, 2017. We looking forward to seeing you in the new year!

PLEASE BRING YOUR 2017 STEWARDSHIP INFORMATION. Your Church Resources and Management Committee would appreciate your doing so as soon as possible. Thanks!

EVERY SUNDAY AFTER WORSHIP OUR FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE AND FRIENDS DO AN EXCELLENT JOB of keeping the coffee, juice and the plates full of goodies ready for us to enjoy. Let's show our appreciation by making a \$\$ donation in the basket and/or by bringing some baked goods to share. (store bought is ok!) Would you like to be a part of the Fellowship Team? Speak to Clara Whitaker or Dene Ritter. Thanks!

OTHER ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE

MICAH'S BACKPACK IS STRONG AND STEADY and packing for 51 kids at 3 schools! We have a very dedicated group of volunteers, food donors and financial supporters! Thank you all for all you do and for everyone's encouragement to help hungry children. Thanks to some wonderful woodworkers who read about Micah's in the Florida Times Union last January, we will be adding a handmade toy to each child's backpack this Christmas. Read more about it in the next newsletter.

THANKS AGAIN for all your support for the **Highlands Baby Shower Mission Project**. Our goal was 20 gift bags and we were recently able to meet that goal. We are already working on our next twenty gift bags, can you help? Thanks Again!!!

ARLINGTON COMMUNITY SERVICES: ACS needs the following items for Holiday Food 2016: hams or turkeys, canned hams, stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, canned yams/sweet potatoes, canned fruit, cans or packets of gravy, jello, broth, dry potatoes in packet or box, canned potatoes, evaporated milk, pasta sides, peanut butter, pork and beans, canned tomatoes, and tuna or hamburger helper. Eleven jars of jelly were collected this week. Every grocery order going out of ACS has a jar of HUPC jelly! Now that's MISSION!!

YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE IS LOOKING for a few items for the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance kits. They are collecting nail clippers (no metal files or emery boards), bars of soap (bath size in wrapper), and toothbrushes (singles in original package). With the help of the youth, fifty packages were recently sent to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Thanks for your continued love and support of this very basic and much needed program.

THANKS FOR YOUR EXCELLENT SUPPORT OF HAITI!!

PRAYER CONCERNS AND TODAY'S SERVICE

SPECIAL PRAYERS: PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK: Bill Byers, Jan Walters, Nancy Hoot, Marilyn Reed, Jan Johnson, Al Hummel, Bill Duval, Pat Strader, Cathy Pate's son, Hank Greene, Rufus Taylor's brother, Fay Sweeney (9960 Atrium Way, Unit 529, 32225), Linda Youmans (c/o Teri Grimm, 4206 Harbour Island Dr. 32225), Kit Fink, Kenneth Moon, and Bruce Marley, Justin Marley (grandson.), Lamar Lewis, Randy R. and his family, Louise Keen is now residing at Brookdale Southside (9601 Southbrook Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32256). Jacob Loerop's email is jloerop50@comcast.net. Jacob's address is **IT3** Loerop, Jacob CVN 68 USS Nimitz Unit 100103 Box 1751 FPO AP 96620. Joey Guckenberger's email address is joeybsa@yahoo.com. Joey's address is ETSN Guckenberger, Joseph, CVN 71 USS Theodore Roosevelt, Unit 100250 Box 2078, FPO Appreciate 96632-5020. Amelia Powell's address is: AT2 Powell, Amelia N., VAQ-140, Unit 200107 Box 142, FPO AP 96601. Amelia's email address is: amelia.powell@cvw7.navy.mil.

PRAYER BEARS: Prayer Bears and Caring Critters are available in the Fellowship Hall after each service.

MEMBER CARE: Nancy Moewe is our Prayer Ministry Contact. Nancy's information is: Email: nmoewe48@gmail.com. Her cell phone number is 904-707-8064. Email requests can be sent directly to Nancy, but please also call her or the church office if it is an emergency request. As always, prayer requests can be made as well by completing the gray slips in the church pews, calling the church office, using the church website (hupcjax.org under "Contact Us") or by notifying your Shepherd.

FAMILIES WE ARE PRAYING FOR THIS WEEK: Nancy Moewe, Ryan Moewe and family and Barbara Moon.

OUR VOLUNTEERS THIS MORNING ARE: Greeters: The Robbins Family. Children's Church Leader: Erika Conner.