THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

November 29, 2026

Hanging of the Greens *First Sunday of Advent* *Liturgical Color: Purple*

Chiming of the Trinity

Prelude *"The Holly and the Ivy" – arr. Larry Shackley* Emily Wallace

Welcome and Announcements Robby Templeton

*The Litany of the Greens Robby Templeton

Leader: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the King?

People: ***With branches of cedar, the tree of royalty.***

Leader: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the eternal Christ?

People: ***With garlands of pine and fir, whose leaves are ever living, evergreen.***

Leader: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of our Savior?

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

Leader: How shall we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Son of God?

People: ***By hearing again, the words of the prophets, who foretold the saving work of God.***

Leader: For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

People: ***Glory to God in the highest!***

*Hymn *"What Child Is This"* UMH #219

Call to Prayer

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

*Hymn *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"* UMH #211

Prayer of Dedication

Giving Tithes and Offerings

Offertory *"Longing for the Messiah" –Mark Hayes* Emily Wallace

*Doxology UMH #95

*Litany of the Advent Wreath

Pastor: Christ came to bring us salvation and has promised to come again. Let us pray that we may always be ready to welcome him.

People: ***Come, Lord Jesus.***

Pastor: That the keeping of Advent may open our hearts to God's love.

People: ***Come, Lord Jesus.***

Pastor: That the light of Christ may penetrate the darkness of sin.

People: ***Come, Lord Jesus.***

Pastor: That this wreath may constantly remind us to prepare for the coming of Christ.

People: ***Come, Lord Jesus.***

Pastor: That the Christmas season may fill us with peace and joy as we strive to follow the example of Jesus.

People: ***Loving God, your Church joyfully awaits the coming of its Savior, who enlightens our hearts and dispels the darkness of ignorance and sin. Pour forth your blessings upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May their light reflect the splendor of Christ, who is Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.***

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath The Matt Kolongowski Family

*Hymn *"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"* UMH #196

God Will Send a Righteous King: (Reading of the Cedar Tree)

Jeremiah 23: 5-6 Read by Randy Hillmann

In ancient times, the cedar was known as the tree of royalty. Today we often use cedar, along with other evergreens, pine, fir, spruce, juniper, and rosemary – which we prize for their fragrance as well as their symbolism of our expectation and hope of the coming of the Christ Child again. We place in the church as a sign of Christ, who reigns as King forever. When we light our tree, we remember that Christ is ever present and that he is the "Tree of Life". The lights on the tree remind us that the Christ Child came to earth as the "Light of the world." They are white reminding us that he is also the spotless, unblemished lamb.

The Prophet Declares a Child Will Be Born: (Reading of the Wreaths)
Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7 **Read by Susan Roberts**

Because the needles of 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 these wreaths of evergreens shaped in a circle, which itself has no end, to signify the eternal reign of Jesus Christ.

The Fourth Servant Song: (Readings for the Holly, Ivy, Mistletoe, and Poinsettia) Isaiah 53: 1-6 **Read by Don & Gayle Hocker**

Readings for the Holly & Ivy

For Christians, this passage from Isaiah reflects the sufferings of Christ, who saved us from our sins by his death on the cross, and his resurrection from the dead. Alongside mistletoe, Holly & Ivy adorn the windows of our church because unlike most plants, they bear their fruit in the winter. Holly & Ivy have become a symbol of Christ's Passion. The prickly leaves represent the crown of thorns, the berries represent the blood he shed for us, the bitter bark symbolizes the drink he was offered on the cross. We dare not celebrate the Holy Christmas season without tying it to what must surely follow, for it was to die that the infant came to earth. Apart from a tree, ivy could not survive. Ivy is therefore a symbol of our human weakness, clinging to Divine strength.

Readings for the Mistletoe

The evergreen most associated with healing in the ancient world was the mistletoe, at one time known as "All heal." Today it is remembered as the plant of peace. Originally, the kiss under the mistletoe was a kiss of peace, for when enemies happened to meet under mistletoe in the forest, they threw down their arms and exchanged a friendly greeting. It is in keeping with this meaning that we decorate this place of worship with mistletoe, in anticipation of the coming of the healing presence of Christ.

Readings for the Poinsettia

In Mexico, its native land, the Poinsettia is known as the Flower of the Holy Night because it blooms at Christmas time. The legendary account bears out the appropriateness of the name. It is customary in Mexico for families to bring gifts to the Church on Christmas Eve and offer them to Christ at the manger. Legend tells of a small Mexican boy that had no gift to bring to the Christ Child's manger in the village church.

Outside the church he knelt and wept. A priest found the boy and comforted him.
As the child stood, a small red leafed flower was in the very spot where the child only moments before had knelt.
The flower had not been there before and was seen as a gift from God. The boy carried the gift to the manger. Reality and legend may blur, but the poinsettia is still a beautiful symbol of God's love. The colors of red and green have always been the symbols of life. Green is the color of growth and red is the color of lifegiving blood. In the midst of the green and red leaves is the golden flower. Gold is the color of precious things. The red and green leaves remind us that God is the source of life, and because of our sin we have been cut off from the true source of life. The golden flower in the center is reminiscent of the star of Bethlehem and reminds us that Jesus came so that we might have life more abundantly. Taking our place in death, Jesus reunited us with God.

The Mystery of Incarnation: (Readings for the Chrismon Tree)
John 1: 1-14 **Read by Robby Templeton**

Chrismon is a combination of two words, Christ and Monogram. Originally, only monograms of Christ were used to decorate the Chrismon tree. Since that time, churches and families around the world have developed many new symbols. All symbols are signs of Christ, from His genealogy, His life, His death, and His resurrection. All are in white and gold. White stands for Christ's purity and perfection. Gold refers to the majesty and glory of our Lord.

**Blessing of the Chrismon Tree*

Holy Lord, we come with joy to celebrate the birth of your son, who rescued us from the darkness of sin by making the cross a tree of life and light. May this tree, arrayed in splendor, remind us of the life-giving cross of Christ, that we may always rejoice in the new life that shines in our hearts. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lighting of the Chrismon Tree

***Closing Hymn** *"O Come, All Ye Faithful"* **UMH #234**
***Benediction**

***Postlude** *"O Tannenbaum" – arr. Vincent Guaraldi* **Emily Wallace**

*Please stand if you are able.

Prayer Concerns



Please pray for the world, the church, the UMC, First UMC, all who hold leadership positions, and the following persons:

Calvin Culbertson	Scott Tollison
Shot Taylor	Joe Swofford
Johnny Mack Swofford	Jane Stroud
Mrs. JoAnn McMillan	Donald Martin
Nedra Walker	Jane Rogers
Elizabeth Romano	

MINISTRY OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Betty Burnside – c/o Timothy Burnside, 569 Saddle Ridge Dr., Bethlehem, GA 30620-2042
Bruce Sumerel, M.D. – NHC of Laurens, 379 Pinehaven St. Ext. Rm. 112, Laurens, SC 29360

Memorial

In memory of: **Lavern Harry Pabst, Jr.** **Given by:** Jane Stroud

Staff Members	Staff Emails
Pastor: Rev. John P. Bolin	jpbolin@umcsc.org
Admin. Assistant: Karen Reeder	contact@firstmethodistlaurens.org
Financial Secretary: Lucy Crowder	finance@ firstmethodistlaurens.org
Accompanist: Emily Wallace	pedalstomper1685@gmail.com

Custodian: Lillie Philson
Ministers: All Members
Lay Liturgists: Susan Roberts, Robby Templeton, Don & Gayle Hocker, Randy Hillmann
Ushers: Sam Howell, Jim Moore
Nursery Helpers for November: Teresa Crabtree, Joanne Thomason

Poinsettias

The Poinsettias placed in our Sanctuary are given by:

Barbara Brown in memory of Thad Brown and Nannie Roberts.

Buck & Teresa Crabtree in memory of Otis & Essie Mills.

Calvin & Vicky Culbertson in memory of Ted Taylor and Laura & Harley Culbertson.

Randy & Kelly Hillmann in memory of Thad Brown and Nannie Roberts.

Sam & Ann Howell in memory and honor of Family and Friends.

Smith & Susie Patterson in memory of Dwight, Sr. & Mary Patterson.
Smith & Susie Patterson in memory of William B. & St. Claire Nettles.

Ellen Simpson & Family in memory of Jim Simpson.

Jane Stroud in memory of Jim Stroud.
Jane Stroud in memory of Otis & Margaret Madden.

Doris Taylor in honor of her precious Family.

Sissy Taylor in memory of Bill & Claire Taylor
Sissy Taylor in memory of Eula Mae Taylor.

Joanne Thomason in memory of Judson Thomason.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Hanging of the Greens – 1st Sunday of Advent
Sun., Nov. 29th at 10:30am

SPRC & Finance Committee Meeting – Sun., Dec. 6th immediately following the worship service in the Conference Room.

Church-wide Christmas Party – Sat., Dec. 12 at 4:30pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Church Council Meeting – Sun., Dec. 20th immediately following the worship service in the Sanctuary.

Morning Glories will have their final session of *Jesus in Me* will be on Wed., Dec. 2nd at 10:30am in the Conference Room.

Christmas Eve Service – Communion and Candlelight Service – Thursday, December 24th at 5:00p.m. – Service of Lessons and Carols

FOOD BANK
Tues. & Thurs. Noon-2PM
Please Consider Supporting by
Marking Your Donation "Food Bank"





FOOD BANKS DONATIONS
During the month of **Dec.**, we would like to give out loaves of bread in the food bank. Please leave your bread donations downstairs at the food bank or outside the church office.



DEVOTIONS FOR FOOD BANK: We will be placing a monthly devotion, *"The Bread of Life: Devotions for Everyday Strength"*, in the bags that we give out in the Food Bank. If you would like to write a devotion for one month, please let Susan Roberts or Karen Reeder know.

FRI. LUNCH BUNCH
** Meet at local restaurants at **11:30am**.
For out-of-town restaurants, please call
Jane Stroud or Sissy Taylor to carpool.



November 2026

November 27	No Meeting – Happy Thanksgiving!

December 2026

December 4	Trotters, Clinton
December 11	Twin Palmetto, Laurens
December 18	Chick Fil A, Laurens
December 25	No Meeting – Merry Christmas!

Offering Gifts, Tithes, and Offerings
Place in offering plates as they come by,
Mail to: *P.O. Box 203, Laurens, SC 29360*
Or Text "BOLD" to 73256



CONNECT WITH US
Worship: Sundays at 10:30am
Office Hrs.: M-Th. 8:30am-3pm
Phone #: 864-984-7696

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First United Methodist Church

West Main Street
Laurens, South Carolina

Sunday, November 29, 2026



Rev. John P. Bolin
Pastor