

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Christmas Eve Worship

Mark your calendars for worship on December 24! We will have a family-friendly service with a children's Christmas pageant at 11 a.m. followed by a service of carols, candlelight, and communion at 7 p.m.

### Staff Love Offering - Last Day

Our church has traditionally recognized the efforts of our staff with a love offering at Christmas. Today is the last day to give toward this offering. The ways to give are on the back of the bulletin.

### Lessons and Carols

Join us for worship Sunday, Dec. 31 at 11 a.m. for a service of Lessons and Carols. We will hear familiar, uplifting scripture, sing all of our favorite Christmas carols, and share in Holy Communion. Children (and people of all ages) are welcome to wear pajamas and bring toys for a "toy blessing" during the children's moment.

### Advent Angel Tree

This year our Advent Angel Tree will support the teachers and classrooms at Lake Forest Elementary School, a local Title I school that appreciates our partnership and support! Each angel on the tree has the name of a teacher and their classroom wishlist. Pick an angel and then bring gifts back unwrapped with your angel attached and place them under the angel tree before Dec. 25. Contact Candace, [cjohnson@ssumc.org](mailto:cjohnson@ssumc.org), with questions!

### Sunday Supper and Study

Join us Jan. 14 - Feb. 18 for six weeks of Sunday evening connection over scripture and supper. Pastors Kate and Kyle will lead an engaging video adult bible study from 4:30-5:30 p.m. on Animate: Practices, digging into various Christian practices: Serving, Community, Worship, Food, Sacraments, and Prayer. Children will have the opportunity to engage in age appropriate lessons around these themes as well. Dinner will follow from 5:30-6 p.m. Register today at [ssumc.org/grow!](http://ssumc.org/grow!)

### Ways To Give:

- Offering Plates: Make a check out to the church or prepare your cash offering.
- Online: Give securely at [ssumc.org/give](http://ssumc.org/give), or by scanning the QR code.
- Text to Give: Text [ssumc.org/give](http://ssumc.org/give) to 73256.



### Ways To Pledge:



- Offering Plate: Fill out a physical pledge card and put it in the offering plate.
- Online: Pledge securely at [ssumc.org/pledge](http://ssumc.org/pledge), or by scanning the QR code.

## SERVING IN WORSHIP

Rev. Kate Floyd	Senior Pastor
Candace Johnson, M.Div.	Dir. of Family Ministries
Margaret, Evan, and Tara Scullin	Advent Wreath Liturgists
Amy King	Liturgist
Catherine Giel	Pianist
Courtney Stanley	Soloist
The SSUMC Chancel Choir	

### Mailing Address

PO Box 720139 • Sandy Springs, GA 30358

### Street Address

86 Mt. Vernon Highway • Sandy Springs, GA 30328  
404.255.1181 | [ssumc.org](http://ssumc.org)



## December 17, 2023 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Christ was born into a weary world, bringing good news of great joy for all people. As Advent comes again to our weary world, we ask, "How does a weary world rejoice?" From the opening chapters of Luke's Gospel, we find answers: we acknowledge our weariness, we find joy in connection, we allow ourselves to be amazed, we sing stories of hope, we make room, we root ourselves in ritual, and most importantly, we trust our belovedness. We share the good news that Joy always arrives. And so, this Advent, we will hold space for our weariness and our joy. We will seek a "thrill of hope" in our hurting world. We will welcome joy—even if, like the prophet Isaiah, we cry out for comfort (Isaiah 40:1). Join us this Advent as we find many ways to rejoice.



**SANDY SPRINGS**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Visit us online at [ssumc.org](http://ssumc.org)  
phone: 404.255.1181 • fax: 404.255.0283

## GATHERING

*The flowers on the altar are given to  
the glory of God.*

### PRELUDE

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### OPENING WORDS & MUSIC

"O Come O Come Emmanuel"

–United Methodist Hymnal (UMH) #211

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

How does a weary world rejoice?

**We sing songs of hope.**

**We allow hope to change us, to strengthen us.**

**We tell the stories of what could be.**

**We listen for God's word.**

**We resist the temptation to give up or give in.**

**We remember Mary's song.**

**We gather for worship.**

**We hope. We hope.**

**Against all odds, we hope.**

Friends, this is the day that the Lord is still making.

**Let us worship holy God.**

### \*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gate" –UMH #213

### ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

## LISTENING

### CHILDREN'S MOMENT

*We invite children ages 4-10 to meet our volunteers  
in the narthex before going to room 211 for  
Children's Church. Caregivers will pick them up in  
211 after worship.*

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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.**

### \*HYMN OF PREPARATION

"My Soul Proclaims that God is Good" –see insert

### \*SCRIPTURE

Listen for the word of God:

**Our Ears are Open!**

*Luke 1:46-55, 67-80*

This is the Word of God for the People of God:

**Thanks be to God!**

### SERMON

## RESPONDING

### \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

**We believe**

**that hope can change the world.**

**We believe**

**that God uses ordinary people,  
like an unwed teenage mother,  
for extraordinary good.**

**And we believe**

**that each of these ordinary people  
can make a difference.**

**We know that grief, fear, and suffering abound.**

**We know that suffering quells joy and makes it  
harder to hope.**

**But we choose hope anyway.**

**In the face of hardship,  
we hope together.  
We hope with God.  
We hope for a better world.  
This is our song.  
We believe; help our unbelief.  
In Christ's name we pray, amen.**

### OFFERTORY PRAYER

*Ways to give and pledge are listed on the back of  
this worship guide. Thank you for your generosity!*

### OFFERTORY MUSIC

"The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came"

–Basque Carol

### \*DOXOLOGY:

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

## DEPARTING TO SERVE

### CLOSING HYMN

"Blessed be the God of Israel" –UMH #209

### BENEDICTION

### CHORAL RESPONSE

### POSTLUDE

*Liturgy adapted from prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are)  
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