



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT,  
DECEMBER 14TH, 2025 | 8:30AM & 11:00AM

✠ please stand as you are able

PRELUDE *He Shall Feed His Flock* HANDEL / ARR. ANDERSON

WELCOME & MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

CALL TO WORSHIP LUKE 1

My soul magnifies the Lord;

**my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

The Mighty One has done great things.

**Holy is God's name!**

✠ HYMN *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* UMH 218

✠ APOSTLES' CREED UMH 881

✠ GLORIA PATRI

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

8:30 TONY AND JULIE BRUNSON

11:00 JAKE, LANE, SIMS, ELLA RATLIFF

We light these candles as a symbol of the joy to be found in your kingdom on earth. For the Lord elevates the lowly, releases the captive, and brings sight to the blind. We rejoice in his justice and mercy, faithful to all generations.

**Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

OFFERTORY *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* ARR. BY DOCKERY

*\* To support Embrace Alabama Kids, you may place your offering on the prayer rail or use the bulletin's QR code to give online*

✠ DOXOLOGY

*Children 4 years old and up can meet at the side door for Children's Church. They are to be picked up immediately following the service in the Pier Room upstairs in the Education Building.*

# PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ~ THE LORD'S PRAYER

## LESSONS AND CAROLS

*\*Indicates Congregation May Join*

*Born a Savior, Born a King*

*Deliver Us, Lord!*

*Prepare the Way*

*No Golden Carriage*

*\*Carols of the Angels*

*He Is Born the Prince of Peace*

*\*Christmas Benediction*

*Born a Savior, Born a  
King Reprise*

✠ HYMN

*Joy to the World*

UMH 246

✠ BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Ukrainian Carol*

ARR. FEDAK

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### ASSISTING IN WORSHIP TODAY

**STEPHEN MINISTERS:**

(8:30) Lisa Latourette  
(11:00) Ann Claunch

**GREETER:**

(11:00) Carol Willis

**PRESIDING:**

(8:30) Rev. Michael Precht  
(11:00) Dr. Kristen Curtis  
Wright

**LITURGIST**

(8:30) Emily Garner  
(11:00) Steve Pearson

**USHER:**

Head Usher, Mark Woodrow  
(8:30) Penn White

**MUSIC**

Chancel Choir  
Director, Tom Hood,  
Accompanist, John  
Richardson

**MEDIA:**

Colin Richardson  
Hackett Robertson

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*The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in honor of Katie Robertson,  
our Worship Coordinator.*

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During this Christmas season, please consider contributing to our Staff Love Offering, a special gift of appreciation for the dedicated staff who serve our church throughout the year. Your generosity allows us to bless them collectively with a Christmas gift as a thank-you for their faithful leadership and ministry. If you would like to participate, please designate your gift "Staff Love Offering" on your donation or by using the QR Code in the bulletin.

## THIS WEEK

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14

8:30am Christmas Cantata  
9:45am Sunday Schools  
9:45am Coffee with the Pastors  
11:00am Christmas Cantata  
11:00am The Gathering Worship  
2:00pm Discovery Drama Team

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 15

9:15am Walk and Talk with Jesus  
10:00am Knit or Crochet  
3:00pm Grief Support Group

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16

7:00am SALT Breakfast Club  
9:30am Twelve Disciples Study  
9:30am Caregivers Support Grp.  
6:00pm Anchored in Hope

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17

9-11:00am TJ's Food Ministry  
1:30pm Dr. Ann's Bible Study  
5:00pm Youth Choir Practice  
6:00pm Chancel Choir Practice

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18

9-11:00am TJ's Food Ministry

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19

9:30am Reservation Nursery  
11:00am-1pm Community Café

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

8:30am Traditional Worship  
9:45am Sunday Schools  
11:00am Traditional Worship  
11:00am A Gathering Christmas  
2:00pm Discovery Drama Team

## SAVE THE DATE

### Rita Sweatt Speaks | January 7<sup>th</sup>

Rita Sweatt brings the Book of Ruth to life in a moving dramatic monologue. This timeless story highlights Ruth's perseverance and God's enduring faithfulness. The event will be held at 5:45 pm. in the CLC Fellowship Hall. Register today using bulletin QR Code or church website.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Christmas Poinsettias | Order by December 16<sup>th</sup>

Poinsettias will adorn the Sanctuary and CLC on Sunday, December 21. If you would like to place a poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one, please complete the form online using the bulletin QR code or call the church office.

### Bible Collection | Deadline December 24<sup>th</sup>

Hope Community and Page & Palette Bookstore are collecting Bibles to distribute throughout the year. To donate a Bible (soft-cover only, please), simply leave it in the golden-colored donation boxes in CLC or Office lobbies. For more info: Jolene Schmitt, [mjds1214@gmail.com](mailto:mjds1214@gmail.com)

### Elementary Retreat at Blue Lake | Register by Jan. 5

3rd-6th graders are invited to an unforgettable weekend at Blue Lake, *January 30-February 1!* This year's theme is "Echo"—discovering how to share God's love in the world around us. Register using the bulletin QR code. For more info: Jenna Hood, [jenna.hood@fairhopeumc.org](mailto:jenna.hood@fairhopeumc.org)

### Discovery Weekend | January 23<sup>rd</sup> -25<sup>th</sup>

Discovery Weekend is a spiritual retreat that helps middle schoolers experience God's love in a fun and meaningful way. This church-wide event relies on many hands. If you'd like to get involved, please contact Miles([students@fairhopeumc.org](mailto:students@fairhopeumc.org))!

### Embrace Alabama Kids | Special December Offertory

Throughout the month of December, our communion offering will support **Embrace Alabama Kids**, a ministry of the United Methodist Church providing safe homes, hope, and healing for children and families across our state. If you feel led to give, place your donation on the prayer rail during worship or use the QR code to donate online.

### College Scholarship Deadline | January 11<sup>th</sup>

Please have your application for the 2026 school year submitted by January 11<sup>th</sup>. For additional information email [scholarships@fairhopeumc.org](mailto:scholarships@fairhopeumc.org)

# PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

MEDICAL PERSONNEL | FIRST RESPONDERS | MILITARY PERSONNEL

## HOSPITALIZED:

Pat Lee

**Monthly Finance Report:** Through October, income and expenses remain on track with our 2025 budget. We anticipate ending the year with a small increase in reserves.

## End-of-Year Giving

As we approach the close of the year, we invite you to prayerfully consider your end-of-year gifts to support the ministry and mission of Fairhope UMC. Your generosity helps us finish the year strong and continue sharing Christ's love with our church family and community. All gifts received or postmarked by December 31 will be credited to the 2025 giving year.

If you would like more information about church membership, contact one of our pastors or attend **Coffee with the Pastors on December 14<sup>th</sup> @ 9:45AM in the Christian Life Center Parlor.** Look for directional signs on Sunday morning.



**ONE LINK. ALL THE INFO.** Want to sign up? Volunteer? Register your kids? RSVP for an event? Scan the QR code to access all of Fairhope UMC's resources in one place! Stay in the loop...**SCAN NOW!**



**"LOVE BOLDLY, CASTING THE LIGHT OF JESUS INTO THE WORLD"**

REV. MICHAEL PRECHT, SENIOR PASTOR  
DR. KRISTEN CURTIS WRIGHT, ASSOCIATE PASTOR

REV. SHEILA BATES, SOUTHWEST DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT  
BISHOP L. JONATHAN HOLSTON, ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE

155 SOUTH SECTION STREET FAIRHOPE, AL 36532  
FAIRHOPEUMC.ORG • 251-928-1148



# THE GATHERING

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT \*

DECEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>, 2025 11:00AM AT FAIRHOPE UMC

## ASSISTING IN WORSHIP TODAY

**Preacher:** Rev. Michael Precht

**Liturgist:** Jennifer Jones

**Communion Servers:** Emily & Doug Garner

**Music:** Shea White and Praise Band

**Media and Sound:** Cole Jones, Karl Langley, Jamie Waldhour

**Stephen Minister:** Brian Norris

**Ushers:** Rick Fitzhugh, Charles Searce, Phil Webb

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*\*Advent is the four-week season in the church year when we prepare our hearts and lives for the coming of Christ. It's a time of waiting, hope, and expectation as we remember Jesus' first coming in Bethlehem and look ahead to his promised return. Throughout these weeks, the church marks the journey with candles, Scripture readings, and special songs as reminders of God's light breaking into our world. All of this preparation culminates on Christmas Eve, when we celebrate the birth of Christ anew.*

OPENING SONG      *Angels We Have Heard on High*

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

LUKE 1

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

LAURA, CALEB, HANNAH, ANDREW, AND MARY STEELE

SINGING OUR PRAISE

*Do You Hear What I Hear*

*Light of the World*

*Winter Snow*

*Children 4 years old and up can meet at the gym door for Children's Church.  
They are to be picked up immediately following the service in the Pier Room upstairs in the Education Building.*

SCRIPTURE      *Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11*

SERMON      *When Blessings Don't Feel  
Like Blessings*

CONFESSION AND PARDON

Merciful God, you promise good news to the poor and release to the captives, but we confess that we struggle to see your blessings when life feels heavy or unfair. We question your timing, doubt your goodness, and cling to resentment more than trust.

Forgive us when we overlook your quiet work of healing and renewal. Open our eyes to the blessings that grow from your grace, and make our hearts glad in you again.

Hear the good news: Christ came not only to comfort the brokenhearted, but to bind them up and make them whole. In him we are forgiven, restored, and set free.

**Thanks be to God!**

THANKSGIVING

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ~ THE LORD'S PRAYER

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

BENEDICTION

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**FAIRHOPE**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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