

LITURGICAL SEASONS

Worship at First UMC follows the liturgical calendar and is centered on the festive days of Christmas and Easter. For each of these festivals there is a season of preparation, a season of celebration, and a season of growth. Over the course of the year the colors in our sanctuary will change to mark the changing liturgical seasons. These colors indicate the tone or emphasis of worship on any particular day. The layout of the liturgical calendar is designed to give worship participants a sense of the overarching Christian narrative - beginning with Christ's birth, going through his death and resurrection, and culminating with the birth of the church.



ADVENT

Purple signifies the royalty of Christ as we prepare for the coming of the King of Kings.

CHRISTMAS

White signifies joy, purity, and Christ's glory.

SEASON AFTER EPIPHANY

Green signifies hope and peace, as well as the growth of the church.

LENT

Purple signifies repentance and discipleship to Jesus.

EASTER

White signifies the joy of the resurrection and Jesus' glory.

PENTECOST

Red signifies the work of the Holy Spirit.

SEASON AFTER PENTECOST

Green signifies our growth in faithfulness.

*Liturgical Season text courtesy of First United Methodist Church of McCamey. <http://firstumcmccamey.weebly.com/church-year.html> (accessed August 16, 2017).

**Diagram courtesy of <http://www.holyinn.org/faith-formation/our-faith/the-liturgical-calendar/> (accessed August 16, 2017).

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT FUMC MONTGOMERY

We are delighted you have chosen to worship with us today. Our focus is on worship, discipleship, outreach, and care. If you are visiting, we hope you will consider becoming a member of our church either by profession of faith or transfer of church membership. To join, please come forward at the end of the service, indicating your desire, or for more information about joining our church family, please contact Rev. Gillian L. Walters at glwalters@fumcmontgomery.org or 334-834-8990.

A FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION:

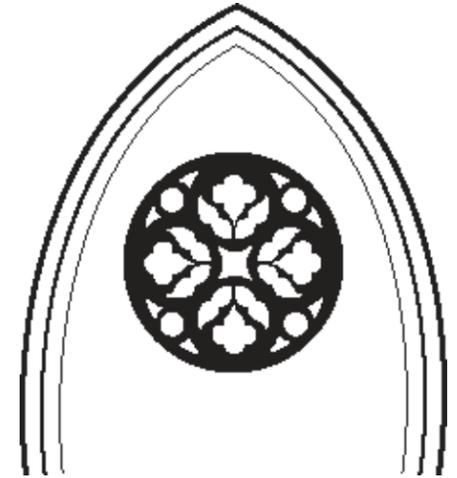
Why do you do the same things over and over again in worship? Doesn't it lose its meaning if you say it again and again?

Sometimes difficult times come up in our lives, and we don't have a Bible with us. Tragedy or conflict arises and we need God to guide us. When we have God's words and our foundational beliefs inscribed on our hearts it means that we can call on them in those difficult situations.

Every Sunday in the call to worship we repeat "The Lord be with you. And also with you." When visiting with someone whose wife was sick, we prayed together and read scripture. But sometimes in those situations, when we don't have words of our own, we can call on these words we have repeated time and again. After we had prayed, and he was waiting for his wife to move from this life to the next he held my hand and said, "The Lord be with you," and I responded with the only thing there was to say, "And also with you."

Every Sunday we say the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles Creed, and other scriptures so that they will be inscribed on the tablets of our hearts. Proverbs 7:2-3 says, "keep my commandments and live, keep my teachings as the apple of your eye; bind them on your fingers, write them on the tablet of your heart."

To learn more about FUMC and events happening at FUMC Montgomery, visit fumcmontgomery.org. If you would like to subscribe to our digital newsletter, contact Leslie Shannon at lshannon@fumcmontgomery.org or 334-834-8990.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

a Stephen Ministry congregation

EXPLANATORY BULLETIN FOR GUESTS AND NEW MEMBERS

*Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world.*

Dr. Jeremy K. Pridgeon
Senior Minister

Reverend Gillian L. Walters
Associate Minister

Reverend Lucas S. Tribble
Associate Minister

Reverend Ben A. McDavid
Associate Minister

Reverend Ed J. Deabler
Associate Minister

Dr. Joshua H. Coble
Organist/Assistant Director of Music

Dr. Karl K. Stegall
Pastor Emeritus

Dr. James H. Seay
Director of Music

Dr. C. Jason Borders
Theologian in Residence

Bishop David W. Graves
Bishop of Alabama-West
Florida Conference



Reverend R. Allen Newton
District Superintendent of
Montgomery-Prattville District

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EXPLANATORY BULLETIN

A REFERENCE FOR GUESTS AND NEW MEMBERS

Gathering

Prelude

This is the music that gives us time to slow down from the business of life and center our hearts and minds for worship.

Introit

This word comes from the Latin word “introitus” which means entrance. This is the song the choir sings just before the choir and clergy enter into worship.

*Processional Hymn

This is the hymn that is sung while the cross-bearer and acolytes enter followed by the choir. The word “acolyte” comes from the Greek word “acolouthos” which means follower, because they follow in the cross and carry in the light, reminding us that we are all called to be followers of Jesus. The acolytes light two candles which represent Jesus’ humanity and his divinity.

*Call to Worship

A scripture is read that reminds us why we gather for worship and calls us together with a common purpose.

*Invocation

This is the prayer in which we call on and invite the Holy Spirit to come and guide us as we worship God.

*Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles’ Creed

We recite the “Apostles’ Creed” together every week, because it reminds us of what we believe. There are some things that we might disagree about, but these are the things that are central to our faith. The name “apostles’ creed” gets its name from the belief that the apostles recited it. Scholars believe it was recited by the church as early as 150 AD.

One common question that people often ask about the “Apostles’ Creed” is “Why do we say that we believe in the holy catholic church” if we are not a part of the Catholic denomination. The reason we say that is because the word “catholic,” as it is used here with a lower case “c,” means universal. It is not referring to the “Catholic” denomination (with an upper case “C”). So another way to say it would be “I believe in the church universal that extends across the globe.”

*Gloria Patri

Often times our prayers become focused on asking God for things we want or need. We sing this prayer each Sunday because it gives us an opportunity to turn our attention from asking God for what we need to praising and glorifying God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Welcome and Parish Notices

These are announcements of upcoming ministry opportunities and other information for the good of the whole.

Registration of Attendance

Collecting the attendance allows us to know when guests are with us so that we can reach out to and welcome you. When we have your address we bring first time guests an apple pie as a sign of welcome!

Concerns of a Caring Fellowship

We pray for church members who have been in the hospital, who have lost a loved one, and those who have celebrated a marriage or a birth.

Sacrament of Baptism

In the Methodist church we baptize people of all ages. Often people wonder why we baptize infants as well as adults. The reason comes from our understanding of how God’s grace works. We believe that before we choose God, God chooses us. None of us can do anything to earn that grace, and this is most evident in the baptism of an infant. A child can’t take care of itself, let alone earn God’s grace. Baptism is a sign of entering into the family of Christ. When the child grows up they have the opportunity to make a profession of their faith at the end of Confirmation. Confirmation is a class in which they learn about what we believe as followers of Jesus Christ in the United Methodist Church.

Responsive Reading

A Psalm is read from our hymnal. The leader reads the light print aloud, and the congregation joins in the bold print. There is a refrain from the psalm that is sung. Liturgy is the name for the order and customs of a church service. The word liturgy means “work of the people” which reminds us that worship is supposed to be a participatory act of the whole congregation, and not just one person doing all the talking. That is part of the reason why we have responsive readings and other opportunities for the congregation to lift their voices in worship and praise to God.

Pastoral Prayer and Lord’s Prayer

This is the prayer offered by the minister in the course of the service for and on behalf of the congregation. It is concluded with the Lord’s Prayer.

Offertory

This is the song that is sung while the offering is collected. As we worship our God, the offering is an opportunity to give out of thankfulness to God. If you are a guest with us, we do not expect you to give. We are grateful that you are offering up your time in worship and praise to God with us this morning.

*Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

During the presentation of tithes and offerings the choir and ministers turn to face the cross reminding us that all that we have first came from Jesus and that we are offering it back to him.

*Doxology

Doxology comes from two Greek words “Doxa” meaning “glory” and “logia” meaning “a collection of sayings.” So the doxology is a collection of sayings bringing glory to God.

*Prayer for Our Nation

This is a prayer for our nation asking for God’s freedom and holy light to shine on us. Our God is a God of all nations, and in addition to praying for our nation we also want to pray for the healing of all nations (Rev 22:2). If you want to see some hymns in our hymnal that speak to this, turn to page 428 and 437.

Children’s Minute

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” The children’s minute is a time to make sure that all the children know that Jesus loves them and so do we! The children will come forward during the children’s minute to hear a lesson about the scripture for the day that is geared toward them. After the children’s minute is over they can either return to sitting with their parents or go to the chapel behind the sanctuary for children’s church.

*Hymn of Preparation (and/or Act of Praise)

This is another opportunity to praise God and to prepare our hearts for the scripture reading.

*Gospel Lesson

When the Gospel is read we stand up, much as you would stand when an honored guest enters the room. When the Gospel is read we want to honor the hearing of God’s good news, and we do so by standing.

Sermon

We believe that God’s word is revealed in the spoken and visual word. During the sermon ministers speak to a scripture passage and trust God to use them to inspire, challenge, comfort, and teach.

Holy Communion

Communion is the visual representation of God’s good news that Jesus laid down his life that we might have life and have it abundantly. The bread represents his body and the fruit of the vine represents his blood. In the Methodist Church we have an open table where all, no matter your background, are invited to partake in holy communion. We use grape juice and not wine because we want everyone to feel welcome at the table and that includes those who struggle with addiction.

You are not expected to have your life in order before you come to take communion. If we waited for that then the communion line would be empty. We come to receive communion not because of our works, but because of God’s grace. We believe that communion can be a way that someone might first experience the grace of God that is present in their lives, and for that reason we don’t want to keep anyone from the table.

*Hymn of Invitation

While we sing this hymn anyone who wants to join the church is invited to come forward. Additionally, the cross-bearer and acolytes take the cross and light back out. As they exit the sanctuary and take the light out with them, they remind us of our call to take Jesus’ light with us out into the world.

*Benediction

This is a sending forth and a charge to apply in our lives what we have heard and seen proclaimed during the worship service.

*Choral Response

The choir has a closing response. It is often a sung “Amen.” The word Amen means “let it be so.” In other words, let all that we have said and proclaimed be so. Let it be practiced in our lives.

*Postlude

This is the final music played at the end of the service.