



Welcome to Urbana First United Methodist Church!

*Our mission is to journey with people to get them
connected to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; to
one another; and to the community, through
intentional discipleship!*

December 21, 2025

Fourth Sunday in Advent

10:30 a.m. Worship Service

The Light for All Nations

Liturgical Color: Purple

APPROACHING GOD'S THRONE

PRELUDE

Hannah Freeman-Choi, *piano*

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Paul Frank, *liturgist*

+CALL TO WORSHIP

Like water in the desert and dry land: worship refreshes us and makes us glad.

**Like the blooms that burst forth in the wilderness: worship leaves us
rejoicing with joy and singing!**

We gather to worship knowing it will give strength to the weak, open the eyes of
the blind, clear the ears of the deaf, allow the lame to leap and set us all on the
path called The Holy Way.

We worship with open hearts, inviting God to overwhelm us with joy.

(UMGNJ)

SEEKING GOD'S FACE

OPENING PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

All: 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 for ever and ever. Amen.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Rich & Marie Gouvert

+HYMN OF CELEBRATION *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* UMH no. 213

1. Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
 behold, the King of glory waits;
 the King of kings is drawing near;
 the Savior of the world is here!
2. Fling wide the portals of your heart;
 make it a temple, set apart
 from earthly use for heaven's employ,
 adorned with prayer and love and joy.
3. Redeemer, come, with us abide;
 our hearts to thee we open wide;
 let us thy inner presence feel;
 thy grace and love in us reveal.
4. Thy Holy Spirit lead us on
 until our glorious goal is won;
 eternal praise, eternal fame
 be offered, Savior, to thy name!

+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

All: I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; The third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERTORY

One Small Child
(arr. L. Larson; CCLI 10783)

Steven Crook, *soloist*

+PRESENTATION OF GIFTS & OFFERING

UMH no. 95

All: 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.

HEARING GOD'S VOICE

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Luke 2:22-40

Liturgist

CHORAL ANTHEM

No Eye Had Seen
(c. M.W. Smith)

Sanctuary Choir
Davion Williams, *music director*

THE MESSAGE

The Light for All Nations

Rev. Robert K. Freeman

TIME OF REFLECTION AND PRAYER

You are invited to come and pray at the altar, light a candle to illuminate your prayers before God, come forward for one of our liturgists for a blessing or remain where you are for a time of contemplation and reflection during the musical selection.

+HYMN OF RESPONSE *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light*

UMH no. 206

1. I want to walk as a child of the light;
I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world;
The star of my life is Jesus.

*In him there is no darkness at all; The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God; Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.*
2. I want to see the brightness of God;
I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of righteousness, shine on my path,
And show me the way to the Father. *Refrain*
3. I'm looking for the coming of Christ;
I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race,
We shall know the joy of Jesus. *Refrain*

SENDING FORTH

Rev. Robert K. Freeman

POSTLUDE

Hannah Freeman-Choi, *piano*

+Please stand as you are able

Scripture Lesson: Luke 2:22-40, Jesus Presented at the Temple (ESV)

²² And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” ²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸ he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹ “Lord, now you are letting your servant^[a] depart in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation

³¹ that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³ And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵ (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

³⁶ And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, ³⁷ and then as a widow until she was eighty-four.^[b] She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Return to Nazareth

³⁹ And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.



Urbana First UMC News and Announcements

WEEKLY PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayer is how we communicate with God. In prayer, we share our hearts. We also pause to listen for wisdom and guidance. As John Wesley wrote, "All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God." Please be in prayer for these members & friends of the Urbana First Community:

Homebound: Gladys Baxley, Gary and Anna Engelgau, Darla Kvidera, Jean Gates, Marjorie Mead, Joyce Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Ross

Prayer Concern: Shirley Gordon (surgery recovery), Nancy Moser, Averie Spencer (Infant health issues) and Family, Nancy Lopeman, Pastor Freeman, Nancy Merz, Steve Moser, Jean Gates, Naomi Roberts (*Mother Passing*)

SANDWICHES, SOUP, AND SHARING (Bible Study)

When: Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. (*returning in the Second Wednesday in January*)

Where: Urbana First UMC Parlor

Join us on Wednesdays for a time of fellowship, faith building, and food. This group is open for all to attend!

CHRISTMAS AT URBANA FIRST

All are welcome to join us for our Christmas offerings this year! We are very excited and hope to see you there.

TODAY, December 21st, 3:00 p.m.— **Jazzy Christmas Fellowship Hour**

TODAY, December 21st, 4:00 p.m.— **Community Lessons & Carols Service**

December 24th, 4:30 p.m.— **Christmas Eve Communion Service**

CHURCH VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2026

Nominations for church offices are welcome at any time.

According to the Book of Discipline, Individuals who undertake particular ministries including Ad Council and Lay Leadership Roles, should be persons of strong faith, dedicated to discipleship, and lover of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world. They should be persons who actively demonstrate or model the making of Disciples for the Transformation of the World.

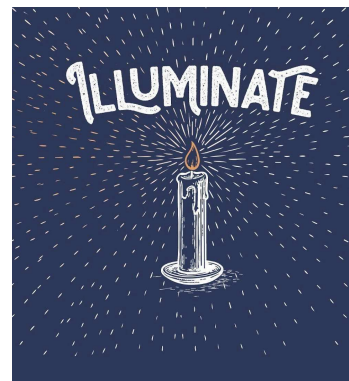
All church officers must be active members for at least one year prior to election, which occurs in November with all terms beginning in January. Terms of office are three years for Ad Council and Lay Leadership Roles. This year we invite our new members to submit names for consideration if you have just joined our Urbana First.

Consecutive terms are generally not permitted, but officers are eligible for re-election one year after completion of a term, Trustees can repeat another three-year term without a year off. Officer training is provided between December and January via Webinars, My Job Training, or upcoming seminars.

WEEK OF HOPE—2026 Summer Youth Mission (Cincinnati, Ohio)

When: June 14, 2026-June 19, 2026

Week of Hope are community service mission trips for youth. Students come alongside seasoned local ministries and nonprofits to make a lasting difference through meaningful community service. They'll learn Christ-like empathy and compassion for others as they meet the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of disadvantaged children, youth, and adults. As students serve in the name of Jesus, they'll develop friendships with the people they serve, with other teams, with their own youth group, and, most importantly, with Jesus.





CHRISTMAS

at Urbana First

JOIN US THIS
CHRISTMAS
SEASON FOR A
CELEBRATION
FILLED WITH JOY
AND FELLOWSHIP!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

6PM: BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

3PM: JAZZY CHRISTMAS FELLOWSHIP HOUR

4PM: COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS LESSONS
& CAROLS SERVICE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

4:30PM CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION SERVICE

Urbana First United Methodist Church • 304 S. Race St., Urbana

This Week at Urbana First

Sunday, December 21, 2025

Fourth Sunday in Advent

9:15 a.m.—Adult Sunday School (*Library*)

9:30 a.m.—Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

10:00 a.m.—Fellowship (*Parlor*)

10:30 a.m.—Worship Service

10:50 a.m.—Children's Church

3:00 p.m.—Jazzy Christmas Fellowship
(*Parlor*)

4:00 p.m.—Lessons & Carols Service
(*Sanctuary*)

Monday, December 22

6:00 p.m.—Community Group (*Parlor*)

Tuesday, December 23

6:00 p.m.—People's Chorus (*FH*)

6:00 p.m.—Dress Rehearsal (*Sanctuary*)

6:00 p.m.—Dulcimers (*FH*)

Wednesday, December 24

10:30 a.m.—No Midweek Bible Study

4:30 p.m.—Christmas Eve Service

Thursday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

Friday, December 26

Church Office Closed, Staff Sabbath Day
(*Sanctuary*)

Sunday, December 28

9:15 a.m.—Adult Sunday School (*Library*)

9:30 a.m.—Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

10:00 a.m.—Fellowship (*Parlor*)

10:30 a.m.—Worship Service

10:50 a.m.—Children's Church

Church Office Hours

Monday-Wednesday: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Daycare Hours: 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.



“Helping people to get connected to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, to one another, and to the community!”

304 South Race Street, Urbana, Illinois

217.367.8384—office@urbanafirstmethodist.org

WWW.URBANAFIRSTMETHODIST.ORG

REV. ROBERT K. FREEMAN, DIRECTING PASTOR

Parsonage: 217-607-8113

CHILDREN'S CENTER DAYCARE: (217) 367-0842

KATIE BEAULIN, DAYCARE DIRECTOR

RACHEL HARP, ASSISTANT DAYCARE DIRECTOR

Today's Worship Team

Pianist: Hannah Freeman-Choi

Liturgist: Paul Frank

Ushers: Rich Govert, David Gordan

Children's Church: Linda Bailey

Tech & Stage Team: Johnie Wilson,

Jack Marshall, Joseph Tingling

PowerPoint & Bulletin: Paige Banovz