

# *Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church*

*Where All the People are Ministers of Christ*

***Our vision is to seek to live and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to nurture persons of all ages and circumstances for faithful discipleship, and to transform faith into service to others.***



December 22, 2024

*Reverend Dennis Morgan*

7801 Church Lane, Toano, Virginia 23168

757-566-0162

Adult Sunday School begins at 9:15am.

**Welcome to our worship service!** Mt. Vernon has been worshipping our Lord and serving the Greater Williamsburg Community since 1887. If we can be of any assistance to you, please let us know.

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024 “Behind Every Great Church 10:15am  
There is Prayer”

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Worship Leader

Donna Wilson

\*Please stand as you are able. Please read in Unison in **Bold**.

### THE PEOPLE GATHER

Prelude & Meditation

Organist, Carol Kendall

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Words (Leader):

The very air we breathe is filled with joyous expectation.

The One who has done great things for us is with us  
now. Glory to God in the highest!

”

\*Introit “Light the Advent Candle” TFWS #2090 (v.4)

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle – Love (responsive)

When the angel Gabriel visited Mary, announcing God’s plan for her to conceive and give birth to the Messiah, “Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’” (Luke 1:34) And yet, only a few months later, Mary sings to Elizabeth, My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on, all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name (Luke 1:46-49). We, like Mary, hear God’s call to be part of making God’s dream for our salvation and flourishing a reality, and we question, “How can this be? I am only...” Yet, like Mary, the “onlys” that make us hesitate are gifts God can and will use as God’s love transforms us into bearers of good news.

**We wait as people who have encountered divine Love that disrupts the status quo and ushers us into abundant life marked by mutual love and peace that flows from the flourishing of all people.**

We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, and the love that transforms us. May Love grow within us, transforming us into bold witnesses of God's salvation with our voices and our lives.  
**Amen.**

*[Light the four outer candles of the Advent wreath.]*

\*Call to Worship: (responsive)

When Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, their lives were forever changed.

**Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and Mary proclaimed faith in God, her savior.**

The children they carried in their wombs heralded expectation and hope for the world.

**We are heirs of this expectation and hope. We are heirs of this promise of God.**

Come! Let us worship.

\*Opening Prayer (unison)

**God of joyous expectation, come to us this day. May the miracles in our lives fill us with wonder. May an encounter with your goodness and grace cause our hearts to leap within us. Receive us into the arms of your mercy, that we may feel you near us and rest secure in your many blessings. Amen.**

\*Hymn of Praise "Angels We Have Heard on High"

UMH# 238

## PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

\*Prayer for Illumination (unison)

Rev. Dennis Morgan

**We thank you, O God of sacred stories, for the witness of holy scripture. Through it, you nurture our imaginations, touch our feelings, increase our awareness, and challenge our assumptions. Bless, we pray, our hearing of your word this day. Speak to each of us; speak to all of us; and grant that by the power of your Spirit, we may be hearers and doers of your word. Amen.**

Gospel Lesson

Luke 2:1-11

Rev. Dennis Morgan

Prayers of the People and the Church

Rev. Dennis Morgan

\*Hymn of Meditation “O Come, All Ye Faithful” UMH #234

**The Message**

“Love Thy Neighbor”

Rev. Dennis Morgan

## RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Special Music

The Choir

Offertory Prayer: (unison)

**Glorious God, source of every good gift, bless our tithes and offerings this day. May they lift up the lowly, fill the hungry with good things, and bring strength and mercy to those in need. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.**

\*Doxology (unison)

UMH #95

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

\*Affirmation of Faith for Advent (unison)

**I believe in the spirit of Christ, for it is the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose birth we celebrate;  
I believe in the lights of Christmas,  
for they remind me of him who is the Light of the world;**

**I believe in the greenery of Christmas, for it symbolizes the eternal life of those in Christ;**

**I believe in giving gifts at Christmas, for it is in keeping with the greatest gift the world has ever known;**

**I believe in being childlike at Christmas, for Jesus said we must become as children to enter the kingdom of heaven;**

**And I believe in the angels' song about peace on earth among persons of goodwill, for when my will is good, as it is at Christmas, I feel a peace and joy in my heart that is unlike anything else in all the world.**

**It *has* to be the peace and joy of God! Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

**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.**

An Advent Prayer (responsive)

Rev. Dennis Morgan

It is hard to wait patiently, O God, for the gift of your promised salvation. We long to nurture the joyous expectation that Mary and Elizabeth discovered in their greeting, but we have grown accustomed to living with disappointment.

**We yearn to feel our hearts leap within us as your Spirit stirs our slumbering souls, but we have allowed ourselves to find solace in lesser things.**

**Fill us with your grace, that we may give birth to hope and joy, and that we may abide in your peace and love. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.**

## **SENDING FORTH**

\*Hymn of Celebration “Joy to the World”

UMH #246

Extinguishing the Candles

Benediction

Rev. Dennis Morgan

Postlude



**A DONATION HAS BEEN MADE IN  
MEMORY AND/OR HONOR OF:**



**In Honor/Memory of June Lois Kasperek, by Dale Kasperek.**

**In Honor of Delores A. Morgan, by Pastor Dennis Morgan**

**In Memory of James T. Morgan, by Pastor Dennis Morgan**

**In Memory of Lanny Smith by Betty Smith.**

**In Memory of Bill Welch, by Donna & Corky Wilson**

**In Memory of Sarah Welch, by Donna & Corky Wilson**

**In Memory of John Wilson, by Donna & Corky Wilson**

**In Memory of Rosemary Wilson, by Donna & Corky Wilson**

**In Memory of Herbert Oran Farinholt, by Karen Hobgood & Family**

**In Memory of Clarice Scott Farinholt by Karen Hobgood & Family**

**In Memory of Edwin & Virginia Hawkins, by Suzanne Latimer.**

**In Memory of Mike Latimer, by Suzanne Latimer.**

**In Memory of Stan Hawkins, by Suzanne Latimer.**

**In Memory of George Latimer, by Suzanne Latimer.**

**In Memory of Kent Glindemann by Al & Kathy Glindemann.**

**In Memory of Charlie Sears by Bonnie Sears**

**In Memory of Wilbur & Lillian Reash by Bonnie Sears**

**In Memory of Roy & Anna Jane Sears by Bonnie Sears**

**In Memory of Val Carr by Bob & Fran Delo**

**In Memory of Celia Prince by Bob & Fran Delo**

**In Memory of Matthew Fulks by Bob & Judy Fulks**

**In Memory of Brenna Reid, Emily Reid, and BuBu Reid by Greg & Vanessa Reid**

**In Memory of Miriam Middleton by Bob & Carole Dishman**

**In Memory of Jack Middleton by Bob & Carole Dishman**

**\* Please stand as you are able.**  
**Hearing Assistance Devices** are available in the Narthex

**Stewardship for week of December 15th: \$20,872.15**

*We sincerely hope you have felt the presence of the Lord in our Worship Service this morning.*

*We appreciate your attendance and support.*

*Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church*

*7801 Church Lane*

*Toano, VA 23168*

*757-566-0162*

**Pastor Contact Information:**

**Rev. Dennis Morgan**

**603-490-5992**

**dennismorgan@vaumc.org**

**Pastor office hours:**

Monday 3pm-6pm

Thursday 10am-1pm

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## Announcements/Missions

- **Christmas Eve:** Christmas Eve service will be held December 24, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.
- **Fellowship Time:** Fellowship Time will be held every third Sunday of each month in the Fellowship Hall after worship service.
- **Cereal..Cereal..Cereal:** We will concentrate on collecting ONLY cereal donations to St. Olaf's & PGO Food Pantries, so please consider picking up an extra box or two of cereal each week and deposit it in the basket in the narthex. It's a need that we can help to fulfill. Thanks!
- **Bridge Group:** 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.- 8 p.m. Tuesdays, Fellowship Hall.
- **Mt. Vernon Church Christmas Cards:** For the first time, Mt. Vernon UMC is selling Christmas cards featuring images of our church taken by its own members. There are two designs: 1) One of the church at night taken on Christmas Eve; and 2) one of the church on a snowy day enhanced by a cardinal and the word PEACE. Each pack has 8 cards with verses & envelopes and sells for \$10. To see pictures of the cards and the verses within, please go to the church website at <https://mtvernontoano.org>. Then scroll down to the pictures and click to enlarge.  
We are also selling packs of note cards that feature a sketch of the church on the cover. The note cards are blank inside and also sell for \$10 a pack. Envelopes are included. If you would like to purchase cards, they will be available to pick up in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings after the worship service. Proceeds from this fundraiser will go to the church's general fund. Please support our church by purchasing a pack of cards and sharing these greetings during the holidays!