

Weekly Calendar

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| Sun, Dec 21 | 11:00am | Sunday Worship - Rev. Stephen Heilakka preaching |
| | 12 :30am | Linger Lunch |
| | 12:45pm | Handbell Rehearsal |
| Mon, Dec 22 | 9:00am | Walking Women |
| | 11:00am | Stop ICE Raids Vigil |
| Wed, Dec 24 | 11:00am | Family Christmas Eve - Sanctuary |
| | 4:00pm | Christmas Eve Service - Chapel |
| Thu, Dec 25 | | Merry Christmas! - office closed |
| Sun, Dec 28 | 11:00am | Sunday Worship with Germantown Mennonite Church |



Christmastide Open House
Friday, December 26, 4-8 pm

After the busy-ness of Advent, Christmastide is a time to gather with friends and family. On the second day of Christmas the Stahls invite you to stop by their apartment for conversation, music and food. You can share your holiday left-over dessert or appetizer, or just bring yourself.

The Ace Building, 139 W Chelten Ave, Apt 508.

Call or text **218.269.5598** to gain entry at the secure Knox St entrance.

Pay-to-park spots are on Chelten Avenue and there may be open free spots on Price Street and in the Planet Fitness/Einstein Medical parking lot on Wayne Avenue. Please avoid parking on Knox Street.

Permission to podcast or stream the music in this service was obtained from CCLI via License #2983492.

The First United Methodist Church of Germantown (FUMCOG) is a diverse, urban community of faith that seeks to experience and worship God through Jesus’ message of love and inclusion and the mystery of grace expressed through his life. We affirm our commitment by working together, taking risks for social justice and peace in our community, our city, our nation, and our world.

Lead Pastor Rev. Alisa Lasater Wailoo • Interim Pastor of Spiritual Connection Rev. Stephen Heilakka
Office Administrator Michael Yancey • Director of Music Adrianna Barnett • Organist/Pianist Jodi Acker Bohr
Media Specialists Mandonnah Mahallati & Joey Ward • Exec. Assistant Tamia Walker



First United Methodist Church of Germantown
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Give Us Bread, But Give Us Roses
by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

DECEMBER 21, 2025 • 11 AM

FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH OF GERMANTOWN



First United Methodist Church of Germantown

Sunday, December 21, 2025 11:00AM

Welcome To All Coming To Worship!

All people of all ages are invited to full participation in the engaging worship and outreaching mission and ministry of the church. We strongly encourage all persons to sing the gender nouns and pronouns they prefer in referring to God.

Congregational responses are in bold type.

UMH - United Methodist Hymnal

Welcome & Acknowledgements

As a faith congregation, we acknowledge that this is a pivotal moment in American history and that our mission is clearly laid out in the Gospel of Jesus.

We acknowledge our mission to:

- seek justice for black and brown people of all genders and orientations
- dismantle systems of bias and racism
- call out those who protect the power of state-sponsored violence against black and brown bodies,
- and re-center the voices of the marginalized of our community and society.

We acknowledge our part in perpetuating white norms of language, style, worship, behavior, and culture, and, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we acknowledge the truth that Black Lives Matter.

We acknowledge that this service of worship is being held on the traditional lands of the Lenape people, and we pay respect to elders past and present.

We affirm the sacredness of Native people, their languages, their cultures and their gifts to the church and the world.

Prelude

Jodi Bohr

Call to Worship

Standing with body and spirit

One: We gather this day, waiting to hear, that indeed a child will be born in the City of David. Will we hear the glad tidings?

Choir: Nothing is impossible, nothing is impossible, nothing is impossible with God!

One: We remember this day, that you led your people from slavery into the promised land. We wonder, will we be delivered into the promised land?

Choir and All: Nothing is impossible, nothing is impossible, nothing is impossible with God. (repeat)

One: We gather this day to witness the New Jerusalem, where we trade hollow rituals for a life where justice and righteousness flow like a river. We gather this day and bind our souls to courage.

Choir and All: Nothing is impossible, nothing is impossible, nothing is impossible with God. (repeat)

Opening Hymn

Standing with body and spirit

UMH 577 - “God of Grace and God of Glory”

Connections and Announcements

Passing the Peace

All young ones and young at heart are welcome to come forward during this time for the children’s message.

Children’s Message

Sung Response

UMH 196 - “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus” v.1

Gathered Prayer

Celeste Zappala

Sung Response

UMH 196 - “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus” v.2

Contemporary Reading

From Richard Rohr’s “*Preparing for Christmas: Daily Meditations for Advent*”
(see insert for full text)

Scripture Reading

Matthew 1:18-25

(see insert for full text)

Hymn

Standing with body and spirit

UMH 219 - “What Child is This”

Sermon

Rev. Stephen Heilakka

Courage; Nothing is Impossible with God

Congregational Reflection

*Where or to whom do you turn when courage is called for in your life?
Where or how do you hear Jesus inviting you to, “try this?”*

Advent Wreath Lighting

Sung Response

“Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning”

Invitation to Offering

Offertory Anthem

FUMCOG Choir

“Confortare” by George Dyson

Doxology

Standing with body and spirit

UMH 94 - “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Offering Prayer

Generous God, we thank you for not waiting for us to get it right, but rather offering your son to us as we are. Come, Lord Jesus, come again into our hearts! Take these gifts and our lives that we may be honest, accountable, faithful, gracious instruments of repair in our broken world.

Closing Hymn

Standing with body and spirit

UMH 206 - “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

Benediction

Postlude

Jodi Bohr

The altar flowers this Sunday are given by Alan Symonette in memory of his mother, Lucille Brown for her birthday. She would be 101 on December 22.



Thank you for joining in worship today. You are invited to remain in your pew during the postlude to quietly reflect during this final movement of worship or to move peacefully into your afternoon. You are also invited to Pilling Hall immediately following the postlude for Linger Lunch.

Robert Bauer, liturgist

Geo Andujar, tech

Ann Perrone, tech

Barbara Revere, tech

Dan Ross, tech

Jodi Bohr, piano & organ



Insert for Sunday, December 21, 2025

Staff Gift

Every year the SPRC (Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee) collects donations from the Congregation to present to our very wonderful staff who assist our clergy. It is a token from us to acknowledge the hard work of our dedicated staff. Our music, our publications, our bookkeeping and office and building administration are in their capable hands. The SPRC and Pastor Alisa encourage you to thank them for all they do every day to make FUMCOG thrive! If you wish to contribute, please send a check to FUMCOG clearly marked STAFF GIFT in the memo line, to the church office, FUMCOG/sprc 6001 Germantown Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19144-2111. Or you can place cash or checks in the specially marked basket after the services in the Sanctuary. We will distribute to the staff shortly after Christmas. Thank you for your wonderful generosity!

KIDS AT FUMCOG

All children are beloved and welcomed here. We offer three ways for your child(ren) to engage:

- * Join in the new "Nursery Ministry." All kids 6 and under are invited to join Ms. Lanette in Pilling Hall immediately following the Children's Message.
- * Enjoy a "Kid Activity Bag". Just ask an usher.
- * Play in the "Children's Space" in the Sanctuary's back corner.

We are so glad you and your family are here!

Want to Connect?

Use this QR code to access our link tree. From there, you can follow us on Facebook, Instagram or YouTube, fill out an online connect card or easily reach our website: www.fumcog.org

If you're looking to do any of that while you're here, you can connect to wifi using the following: **WIFI: Fumcogsanc** **PW: FUMg3rm2020**



Staff and Office Information

Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday from 9:30am-5pm

The office will be CLOSED on:

Thu, Dec 25 & Thu, Jan 1

Pastor Alisawailoo@fumcog.org
Rev. Stephen Heilakka.....heilakka@fumcog.org
Dwight Woolford.....info@dwcleaningco.com
Joey Ward.....vga.collective@gmail.com
Mandonnah Mahallati...fumcogtech@gmail.com
Adrianna Barnett.....music@fumcog.org
Jodi Bohr.....organ@fumcog.org
Michael Yancey.....office@fumcog.org
Tamia Walker.....assistant@fumcog.org

Upcoming Dates

- Wednesday, Dec 24
Kid-friendly Christmas service, 11am
Candlelit Chapel service, 4pm
- Sunday, Dec 28
Worship with Germantown Mennonites, 11am
- Sunday, Jan 18
MLK Jr. Sunday, 11am



Prayers for FUMCOG Friends and Family

Please know that we are thinking about and praying with you.

For the family of **Ernest Chang** who passed away on November 26. We especially pray for his wife, Mabel, his daughter, Theodora, and son-in-law Russ. Theo and Russ are regular worshippers with FUMCOG online.

Prayers of healing for **Kim, Karima, Bridgette, Nate, Betty, & Joy.**

Prayers of comfort for the **Marshall family**, the **Byrd family**, **Isaac & the Carlton family.**

Prayers of clarity for **Skyy & Diane.**

For **Paul T.**, friend of the Stahls, following the death of his wife, Linda.

For **Pete Sullivan**, assistant Pastor of Christ Haven Church and Tim Gibson's friend. Pete's health has been getting worse.

For the family of **Rebecca Tagart Kilmer**, who passed away. Rebecca is the mother of Christina Young, mother-in-law of Larry and grandmother of Macy and Mercury.

For **Donald Knotts**, who is healing from cancer.

Prayers of healing for **C. Gloria Akers** as she continues her cancer treatments.

For Barbara Mitchell's and Ruth Thornton's niece, **Elaine Crooks**, as she recovers from heart surgery.

For **children, youth, educators and parents** traumatized by ongoing school violence. As community members, may we work to change US laws to limit access to guns of war.

For **Katreise Ruffin**, a scout parent who is recuperating from open-heart surgery.

For **Wayne Varnadore** who is improving each day.

For Tim Gibson's aunt **Selma Cooper** who is sick.

For **Jean Young**, Barb Revere's longtime friend, from Omaha, Nebraska, as she's receiving treatment for Acute Myeloid Leukemia.

For **Ken Espejo**, who is recovering after his open-heart surgery.

FUMCOG Social Racial Justice Award 2026

For 28 years, on Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday, FUMCOG has awarded a FUMCOG or community member with the Social Racial Justice Award. This award is given in recognition of the work of an individual making a significant contribution toward resolution of issues of injustice and motivating others to engage in this work. It has been the practice of the award committee, composed of former recipients of the award, to keep the name/s of the current year's award recipient/s a secret until Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday. Last year, the committee decided to revise that practice.

It is with great pleasure that we announce that Christine Schaeffer and Ken Weinstein will be the recipients of this year's Social Racial Justice Award. We warmly invite you to attend morning worship on January 18, 2026, to hear about the noteworthy contributions Christine and Ken have made to resolving issues of injustice. A reception will be held following morning worship where we can personally thank Christine and Ken for their contributions. Please join us!



Scripture Reading

Matthew 1:18-25

18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. 19 Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. 20 As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." 22 Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

23 Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, And they will call him, Emmanuel. (Emmanuel means "God with us.")

24 When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife. 25 But he didn't have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. Joseph called him Jesus.

Contemporary Reading

The longer I have tried to follow Jesus, the more I can really say that I no longer believe in Jesus. I know Jesus. I know him because I have often taken his advice, taken his risks, and it always proves itself to be true! Afterward we do not believe, we know. Jesus is not telling us to believe unbelievable things, as if that would somehow please God. He is much more saying to us, "Try this," and you will see for yourself that it is true. But that initial trying is always a leap of faith into some kind of action or practice. The only way that we become convinced of our own sense of power, dignity and the power of God is by actually doing it—by crossing a line, a line that has a certain degree of non-sensicalness and unprovability to it—and that's why we call it faith. In the crossing of that line, and acting in a new way based on what we believe the kingdom values are, then and only then, can we hear in a new way and really believe what we say we believe in the first place. In the years ahead I see Christianity moving from mere belief systems to an invitation to "practices" whereby we then realize things on a new level. (Jesuits call them "exercises," Methodists call them "methods," Gandhi called them "experiments with truth.")

— Richard Rohr, Preparing for Christmas: Daily Meditations for Advent

Do you have extra 2026 calendars?

Unitarian Universalist Outreach program can use them! They will distribute them to their clients. UU Outreach supports almost 350 adults in the northwest who are living in their homes through workshops, support services and connections. There is a box in Pilling Hall for your calendars.

Mennonite post-Christmas Service

Join us on Sunday, **December 28** at 11am for our 11th annual joint worship with the Germantown Mennonite Church located at 21 W. Washington Ln, Philadelphia, PA 19144. This year we will worship with them in their sanctuary and Pastor Alisa will be preaching. We will not have worship in FUMCOG's Sanctuary that day.

This joint service dates back to 2014 when our denomination still failed to allow same-gender weddings and GMC opened their doors for Ruth and Barbara's marriage. Last year, with our church law changed and now all-inclusive, we renewed their vows in our sanctuary. We will continue celebrating love through this ecumenical end of service. Hope you can join.



REMINDER

There are hearing assistance devices located in the back of the church near our tech crew. If you need one, please ask an usher and they will be more than happy to help you receive one.

Church Directory Photos

Laura Stahl will be available after worship on Dec 21 and 24 to take your family's photo for the church directory. If you prefer to send one, please email laura.morganstahl@gmail.com or text 218.269.5598.



Stewardship Update

We rejoice to share that we have received 65 pledges. Thank you to all of generous partners in God's work of love and liberation. We are ¾ of the way there! If you have not yet had time to pledge, you can find and complete a commitment card in worship, online <https://www.fumcog.org/giving>, or simply email our financial secretary, Bonnie Andrews, at andrewsbonnie@comcast.net.

Weekly Vigils

The prayer vigils to stop ICE raids is still going strong! Join Pastor Alisa, other clergy, and community leaders at the ICE office on Mondays at **11 am**. Pastor Alisa is glad to help with rides to ICE Philadelphia Field Office, 114 North 8th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107. Call her for more information (267-405-1383).

ICE Raid Hotline

Juntos, a Latine community organizing group, has a community-run rapid response hotline for folks who witness an ICE raid. Please share widely with your friends and neighbors: (814) 205-3293.