

Christmas Lovefeast and Candlelight Service



First Methodist Church
900 Arendell Street
Morehead City, NC

December 3th, 2023 - 5:00 PM

**CHRISTMAS CAROL AND MORAVIAN HYMNS
ORGAN VOLUNTARY**

*** INTROIT**

*** HYMN**

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;

Chorus

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,
lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created; **Chorus**

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; **Chorus**

See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps; **Chorus**

GREETING

In the beginning was the Word.

AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD.

In Him was life,

AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF ALL.

The light shines in the darkness,

AND THE DARKNESS HAS NOT OVERCOME IT.

The true light that enlightens every one was coming into the world.

**HE WAS IN THE WORLD, AND THE WORLD WAS MADE
THROUGH HIM, YET THE WORLD KNEW HIM NOT.**

He came to His own home, and His own people received him not.

**BUT TO ALL WHO RECEIVED HIM, WHO BELIEVED IN HIS NAME,
HE GAVE POWER TO BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD.**

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth;

**WE HAVE BEHELD HIS GLORY, GLORY AS OF THE ONLY
SON FROM THE FATHER.**

John 1:1-14

(Our Love Feast is Served)

CAROLS

“O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM”

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.

Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

“THE FIRST NOEL”

The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in
fields as they lay; in fields where they keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep. Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
born is the King of Israel. Then entered in those Wise Men three,
full reverently upon the knee, and offered there, in his presence,
their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

“AWAY IN A MANGER”

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus
laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down
where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.
Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever,
and love me, I pray; bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

“IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR”

It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.
For lo! The days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time fore-told
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

MORAVIAN BLESSING

Come, Lord Jesus, our guest to be and bless these gifts bestowed by Thee.
Bless our loved ones everywhere and keep them in Thy tender care. Amen.

(Congregation partakes of coffee and buns)

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Waiting”

Chancel Choir

CAROLS AND HYMNS

“ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH”

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
See him in a manger laid, whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

“SING HALLELUJAH”

Sing hallelujah, praise the Lord sing with a cheerful voice;
Exalt our God with one accord, And in His name rejoice;
Ne'er cease to sing, thou ransomed host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost
Until in realms of endless light Your praises shall unite.
There we to all eternity shall join the angelic lays,
And sing in perfect harmony to God our Savior's praise;
He hath redeemed us by His blood, and made us kings and priests to God;
For us, for us, the Lamb was slain; Praise ye the Lord! Amen!

(The Cups are Collected)

*** HYMN**

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Angels Are Making Their Rounds”

Chancel Choir

MESSAGE OF THE CANDLE

CAROLS AND HYMNS

(Candle Lighting from Altar)

“HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING”

Hark! The herald angels sing. “Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing. “Glory to the new-born King.”
Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Risen with healing in His wings,
Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth,
Hark, the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King,”

“SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT”

Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child, Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.
Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, Wondrous star, lend Thy light;
With the angels let us sing Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

“MORNING STAR, O CHEERING SIGHT”

(The congregation will sing the words in bold capital letters)

Morning Star, O cheering sight! Ere Thou cam'st how dark earth's night!
**MORNING STAR, O CHEERING SIGHT! ERE THOU CAM'ST HOW
DARK EARTH'S NIGHT!**

Jesus Mine, **IN ME SHINE**; In me shine, **JESUS MINE**;
FILL MY HEART WITH LIGHT DIVINE.

Morning Star, Thy glory bright far excels the sun's clear light;
**MORNING STAR, THY GLORY BRIGHT
FAR EXCELS THE SUN'S CLEAR LIGHT;**
Jesus be, **CONSTANTLY**, Constantly, **JESUS BE
MORE THAN THOUSAND SUNS TO ME.**

Thy glad beams, Thou Morning Star, Cheer the nation near and far,
**THY GLAD BEAMS, THOU MORNING STAR,
CHEER THE NATIONS NEAR AND FAR,**
Thee we own, **LORD ALONE**, Lord alone, **THEE WE OWN,
MAN'S GREAT SAVIOR, GOD'S DEAR SON.**

Morning Star, my soul's true light, Tarry not, dispel my night;
**MORNING STAR, MY SOUL'S TRUE LIGHT,
TARRY NOT, DISPEL MY NIGHT;**
Jesus mine, **IN ME SHINE**, In me shine, **JESUS MINE.**
FILL MY HEART WITH LIGHT DIVINE.

“CHRIST THE LORD”

Christ the Lord, the Lord most glorious, Now is born: O shout aloud;
Man by Him is made victorious; Praise your Savior, hail your God.

Praise the Lord, for on us shineth Christ, the Son of righteousness;
He to us in love inclineth, Cheers our souls with pardoning grace.

(Congregation stands, holding candles high)

Praise the Lord, whose saving splendor shines into the darkest night;
O what praises shall we render for this never ceasing light.

Praise the Lord, God our salvation, Praise Him Who retrieved our loss;
Sing, with awe, and love's sensation, Hallelujah, God with us.

“JOY TO THE WORLD”

Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her king;
Let every heart prepare him room.
And heaven and nature sing...

Joy to the world! The Savior reigns;

Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods,
rock, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy...

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make
his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found...

He rules the earth with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love...

***BENEDICTION**

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

***The People Standing**

**A special thanks to those who donated their gifts and talents
this year in making the “Moravian Lovefeast and Candlelight Service” a meaningful
experience.**

COORDINATORS:

**Misty Penny
Kay Carter
Heather Boney
Dana Starling
Suzanne Miller**

COFFEE:

**Kay and Larry Starling
Bud & Vicki Daniels
Vicki Zetl
Kim McConkey
David Starling**

DIENERS:

**Ayla and Jason Webb
Savannah and Matt Penny
Laney and Michael Morgan
Julia and Craig Smith
Gilliam and Craig Parker
Anderson and Bobby Shatterly
Corinne duMont and Gavin Speares
Natalie duMont**

CANDLES:

**The candles were wrapped by
Deanna Grant, Nancy Willis, Kay Carter
Suzanne Miller and Heather Boney**

ACOLYTES:

**Owen Starling
Latham Everhart**

MUSIC:

**Ralph Wade, Jr., Director
Phil Routszong, Organist
Chancel Choir
Kailyn Boyd, Soloist**

PASTOR:

Rev. Powell Osteen

USHERS:

**John Boney
Randy Miller
Tom Carter
Tom Outlaw**

ASSOCIATE PASTORS:

**Rev. Sarah Williams
Rev. Patrick Whaley**

**A special thank you to all who have donated their gifts and talents in the past by
contributing the following items to the Lovefeast at our Church:**

CANDLE/COFFEE TRAYS:

**Maurice & Michelle Lindsey
Harry & Jean Bell
Gray Williams**

LACE CAPS:

Lynn Lupton

BASKETS:

Vickie Zetl

APRONS:

**Lynn Lupton, Coordinator
Daphne Faircloth
Susan Moran
Betty Jo Bailly**

**A special thank you to Carteret Community College Hospitality and culinary Arts
Center for their hospitality.**

LOVEFEAST CUPS

The authentic Moravian cups, which were obtained through The Salem Gift and Bookstore, were donated to First United Methodist Church in 1990. Additional cups were presented in November 1991.

In Loving Memory of Dr. Paul W. Boone, Pastor,
By a Grateful Church Family

In Loving Memory of Louise Mariner Leary,
By Michael & Elaine Leary Wright

*In Loving Memory of Charles Allen Bond
& Martha Chandler Bond*
By their daughter Martha Bond Hedgepeth & Family

In Loving Memory of Michael M. Willis
By Craig & Nancy Willis and their Families

A contribution was also made in loving memory of Ruth Kilbuck Patterson, born in Alaska of the first Moravian Missionaries sent to Alaska and the mother of Mrs. Charles B. Wade, Jr., by her family.

The cups are replicas of those which have been used for two hundred fifty years in Lovefeast in both the Moravian and Methodist Churches.

* * * * *

THE MORAVIAN LOVEFEASTS

The early Christians met and broke bread together to signify their union, fellowship and love. In 1727, the Moravian Church revived this practice, and it established the custom of celebrating the great church festivals by partaking together of a simple meal known as a "Lovefeast." The first Lovefeasts of the Moravian Church in North America were held in Savannah, Georgia, during the years 1735 to 1740. The first Lovefeast, in Wachovia was held on the evening of the arrival of the first Moravian colonists in North Carolina, November 17, 1753, at Bethabara.

The Christmas Eve Lovefeast, with its lighted candles, is one of the most beautiful services of the Moravian Church. The custom originated on the European continent at Marieborn in the year 1747, and spread throughout the Moravian world. The first Christmas Eve Lovefeast held at Bethabara was in 1753, and at Salem in 1771. In North Carolina, the candles were used for the first time in the children's Lovefeast at Bethabara and Bethania in 1762.

THE METHODISTS AND THE MORAVIANS

The Methodists have a strong tie with the Moravians. John Wesley first became acquainted with the Moravians during a storm-tossed crossing of the Atlantic. He was most impressed by the strong faith they displayed when their ship almost sank. It was Peter Bohler, leader of the Moravian group, who told Wesley that he must preach faith until he had it.

THE LOVEFEAST AT FIRST CHURCH

The first Lovefeast at First United Methodist Church was led by Dr. Paul W. Boone on December 11, 1988. Carl & Nancy Capps, Karlynn Morgan and Patti Norris helped introduce the service to First Church. It was well received, the Church decided to make it a regular part of its Christmas observance.