

Hanging of the Greens & Moravian Love Feast

THE METHODIST LOVE FEAST



In apostolic times, Christians periodically observed a common meal called agape, from the Greek word meaning love. The Love Feast continued as an important part of Christian worship for centuries, but eventually almost faded away.

Then in 1727, a little band of Moravians, gathered by Count Zinzendorf, reintroduced it. Moravian missionaries and immigrants carried the custom to America, and it was here on August 8, 1737 – only ten years after its reintroduction – that John Wesley shared the Love Feast and was greatly impressed with the service. The following year, after he experienced the "heart-warming" awakening at Aldersgate, Wesley introduced the Love Feast to the people called Methodist, and among the rules adopted for the Society was a provision for the Love Feast to be held at regularly appointed times. The most significant feature of those early Love Feasts was not the "simple meal" or the candles (which were used only at Christmas), but the personal testimonies of the power of divine love to transform human life. The Love Feast quickly became a normal feature of the evangelical revival in England and America. For over two hundred years, it has been an important part of the Methodist heritage in America, as well as in England and other parts of the world.

Wednesday, November 29, 2017 ~ ~ 6:30 p.m.

Prelude

Coventry Carol
Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Handbell Choir

Welcome

Prayer

*** Call to Worship**

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of our Savior?

With evergreen garlands whose leaves are ever living, ever green – a symbol of eternal life.

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the Son of God?

With wreaths that form a never-ending circle to remind us that God's love is eternal.

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the Christ Child?

With flowers that show us the life of our Savior, the sinless one born for us.

How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the Prince of Peace?

With the lighting of candles that remind us that Jesus is the light of the world shining in a darkened world of suffering and sin.

*** Hymn "In the Bleak Midwinter"**

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth flee away when he comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

The Evergreens
Wreaths and the Advent Wreath
The Christmas Tree and Chrismons

* Hymn "Lo' How A Rose E'er Blooming"

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming, as those of old have sung.
It came, a flower bright, amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.

O Flower, whose fragrance tender the sweetness fills the air
dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.
True man yet very God, from sin and death now save us,
and share our every load.

The Poinsettia
Christmas Bells

* Hymn "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"

I heard the bells on Christmas Day,
their old, familiar carols play;
and wild and sweet the words repeat
of peace on earth, good will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
had rolled along th'unbroken song
of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way
the world revolved from night to day,
a voice, a chime, a chant sublime
of peace on earth, good will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong, and mocks the song
of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
the wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
with peace on earth, good will to men."

Candles

* Hymn "I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light"

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

(chorus) 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.

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.

(chorus)

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.

(chorus)

Homily

Rev. Suzanne Dornsmith

Lighting of the Moravian Star

Moravian Blessing

Come Lord Jesus, our Guest to be,
And bless these gifts bestowed by Thee.
Bless our dear ones everywhere,
And keep them in Thy loving care.
Amen.

Music for the Love Feast

Chancel Choir

Celtic Silent Night
Celtic Advent Carol
Long Ago, Prophets Told
People Look East

* Candle Anthem "Morning Star, O Cheering Sight"

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 nations 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,
Our dear 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.

Benediction

Postlude

Improvisation on "In dulci jubilo"

J. S. Bach

* Please stand as you are able.

Our thanks to everyone who participated in this service this evening.

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Mandy Jones, Senior Pastor, Suzanne Dornsmith, Associate Pastor;

Justin Snyder, Director of Music; M.L. Marley, Organist;

Chancel Choir, Hand Bell Choir

Readers: Seren Dornsmith, Will Parker, Vera Smith, Lauriel Tello

DIENERS

(German for "One who waits at Table")

Nancy and Alan Cress, Laura and Scott Crowell, Toni Fagart,

Monica Hughes, Neal Jones, Vanessa and Foster Lynch,

Nancy and Mike Mills, Will Parker, Edward Peurifoy, Travis Smith,

Ruth Suddreth, Emily Wicker

YOUTH

Rebecca Dyer, Grace Parker

ACOLYTES

Seren Dornsmith, Riley Hughes

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pat Baker, Larry Beacham, Melissa Cayado,

Janet Coward, Toni Fagart, Don Howard, Glenda Long,

Jane Moulton, Felix Pérez-Alvarez, Ed Peurifoy,

Sid Rauch, Anne Scarboro

*Our appreciation is expressed for all the donations
that helped make this service possible.*

*(There are wet towels in the back of the sanctuary in case of an emergency.
If you do not wish to keep your candles, please deposit
them in the container in the Narthex.)*

Forest Hill United Methodist Church
265 Union Street North
Concord, NC 28025
www.foresthillumc.org ~ 704-782-1109

FOREST HILL UMC ADVENT/CHRISTMAS 2017

Sunday, December 3rd

Alternative Gifts for Sale (before & after both worship services)

Sermon Series: The Gifts We Need - The Gift of Faithfulness

Singing Saints Christmas Concert ~ 3 pm
Main Sanctuary

Monday, December 4 ~ 11 am & 7 pm

Book Study: *The Soul of Christmas* by Thomas Moore

Thomas Moore invites us readers to get in touch with our own mystical side, to recreate the Nativity in our hearts and to experience what is possible if human beings really love each other. Start reading now and join us at 11:00 or at 7:00 to discuss this beautiful Christmas book. There are books still available in the narthex.

Friday, December 8 ~ 7 pm

Piedmont Choral Society Christmas Concert ~ Main Sanctuary

Sunday, December 10

Alternative Gifts for Sale

Sermon Series: The Gifts We Need – The Gift of Guidance

Piedmont Choral Society Christmas Concert ~ 3 pm
Main Sanctuary

Monday, December 11 ~ 11:30 am

Caregivers Christmas Lunch ~

Administrative Building

Our entire congregation is invited to this potluck Christmas lunch to which we invite our shut-ins and their families. After our meal together, we share communion and sing a few Christmas carols!

Sunday, December 17

Alternative Gifts for Sale

Sermon Series: The Gifts We Need – The Gift of Joy ~ 9 am

Christmas Pageant: “Re-writing Christmas” ~ 11 am

Birthday Party for Jesus for cast, family, and friends ~ 12 pm – Fellowship Center

Thursday, December 21 ~ 6:30- 8:00 pm

Narrow Gate Christmas Dinner

We will need volunteers on December 21 to peel potatoes, help cook the meal, set the tables, cut desserts, greet our guests, serve the meal, enjoy worship together, and clean up. We will also need home-made desserts to serve! Please sign-up in either sanctuary or call the church office.

Friday, December 22 ~ 2 pm

Christmas Caroling

Everyone is invited to meet in the Parlor to prepare and head out in a caravan to carol to some of our shut-in members. All singing abilities welcome!!

Saturday, December 23 ~ 2 pm

Prison Ministry Christmas Bag Packing

Come help fill the bags with Christmas cheer to send to the inmates in the jail in Cabarrus County. It's a quick mission project so don't be late!!!

Sunday, December 24

Sermon Series: The Gifts We Need – The Gift of Mercy

10 am – Breakfast in the Fellowship Center

11 am – Worship in the Main Sanctuary

Sunday, December 24 ~ 5 pm & 9 pm

Christmas Eve Services

Worship with Communion & Candle Lighting - Main Sanctuary

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