

THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE
A United Church of Christ

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
December 28, 2025
10:00 A.M.

Reflection for the Fourth Day of Christmas

Dear Mrs. Carr:

Here again are pine trees, and the wind, and living rock and water! ... Miles and miles of trees scripture along the sky, a Bible that will one day be read! The beauty of its letters and sentences have burned me like fire through all these Sierra seasons. Yet I cannot interpret their hidden thoughts. They are terrestrial expressions of the sun.

John Muir, Letter from Yosemite Valley, September 1874



WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH!

As you enter the Sanctuary, please enter into a time of silent reflection and prayer to prepare for worship. Also please make sure your cell phone is off. Thank you. Again, welcome to the United Church.

WE GATHER

(May the first note of the Prelude be a call to prayer and stillness as we prepare for worship.)

Prelude

Carols of the Season

*Introit

Vamos todos a Belén (2x)
(*Please rise in body or spirit.)

Northern New Mexico

***Vamos todos a Belén, con amor y gozo,
Adoremos al Señor nuestro redentor.***

(Let us all go to Bethlehem, with love and joy. We will adore our Redeemer Lord.)

Welcome and Sharing of Our Life and Ministry

Breathing in God's Gifts of Peace, Hope, and Love

*A Time for Greeting and Regathering

Vamos todos a Belén (1x)

Northern New Mexico

Welcoming of Visitors and Breathing in God's Gifts Again

Musical Call to Worship

Go Tell It on the Mountain

African American/arr. David Angerman

The Call to Worship (congregation in bold)

Hear the words of the Prophet Isaiah:

"There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

**And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the awe of the Lord.**

"With righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.

For righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

"The wolf shall lie down with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
and the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them."

People of God, come. Trust in God's faithfulness and sing your hope and joy!

*Carol

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Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (1-2)

In Dulci Jubilo

WE PREPARE FOR NEW LIFE

*A Unison Prayer for Christmastide

Holy One, in this sacred season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child, your Word made new through all creation. We behold your glory, born in a humble stable, surrounded by common creatures. We and they are bathed in its radiance. Thank you for this Christmastide. Amen.

*Carol

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Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (v. 3)

In Dulci Jubilo

WE ENGAGE

A Psalm for the First Sunday of Christmas

Psalm 148

Hallelujah!

Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;

praise God in the heights!

Praise the Lord, all you angels;

praise the Lord, all you host!

Praise God, sun and moon;

praise God, all you shining stars!

Praise the Lord, you highest heavens

and you waters above the heavens! . . .

Praise the Lord from the earth,

you sea monsters and all deeps,

fire and hail, snow and frost,

stormy wind fulfilling God's command!

Mountains and all hills,

fruit trees and all cedars!

Wild animals and all cattle,

creeping things and flying birds!

Rulers of the earth and all peoples,

princes and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and women alike,

old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the Lord,

for God's name alone is exalted;

God's glory is above earth and heaven.

The Lord has raised up a horn for all people,

praise for all the faithful,

for all who come close to the Holy One.

Praise the Lord!

A Carol 141

Carol Our Christmas

Shirley Erena Murray/Reversi

A Christmas Reflection

Heaven and Nature Sing!

Silence

1. Now the heav - ens start to whis - per As the veil is grow - ing thin.
 2. Heav - y clouds that block the moon-light Now be - gin to drift a - way.
 3. Christ, e - ter - nal sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis - dom's seed,
 Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten To the stir - ring, faint with - in:
 Dia - mond bril - liance through the dark - ness Shines the hope of com - ing day.
 Come to bless with fire and fra - grance Hours of yearn - ing hurts, and need.
 Seed of prom - ise, deep - ly plant - ed, Child to spring from Jes - se's stem!
 Christ, the morn - ing star of splen - dor, Gleams with - in a world grown dim.
 In the lone - ly, in the stran - ger, In the out - cast hid from view:
 Like the soil be - neath the frost - line, Hearts grow soft to wel - come him.
 Heav - en's em - ber fans to full - ness; Hearts grow warm to wel - come him.
 Child who comes to grace the man - ger, Teach our hearts to wel - come you.

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WE RESPOND

Sharing Our Gifts

Angels We Have Heard on High

Trad./arr. Thomas Quigley

WE GO OUT IN PEACE

*Hymn 132

Joy to the World! (1-2)

Antioch

*Benediction

*Musical Benediction 132

Joy to the World! (v. 3)

Antioch

Soli Deo Gloria—To God Alone the Glory.

WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE!

We're glad you've joined us this First Sunday of Christmas. **Please join on our annual outdoor "Blessing of the Trees" after the service and also enjoy stay for the time of fellowship and refreshment after the service.** If you're a visitor, we invite you to fill out a yellow visitor card and take a copy of the January newsletter. We also invite you to join in the life and ministry of The United Church in the New Year. Again, welcome!

Sharing leadership are: Rev. Talitha Arnold, Senior Minister; Michelle Schumann, Music Director/ Pianist; Dana Bender, Director of Family Ministry; Heather Eaves and Javier Ortiz, Soloists; Liturgists to be announced. You were greeted by Pam Hyde, Karen Wilbanks, and Sunday Aide Irene Guilbeault.

Kids United will explore the scripture (Matthew 2:13-23) for the day and learning the song, "Angels Watching Over Me."

Church Office Closed for New Year's Holiday – December 30 through January 2

A friendly reminder, the office will be closed Wednesday, Dec. 30 through Friday, Jan. 2 in celebration of the New Year and also to allow staff to finish end of the year work. The office re-opens Monday, Jan. 5, 2026. If a pastoral emergency arises, please call the church office (505-988-3295) to leave a message and your call will be returned. Please hold all other calls until after the holidays. Thank you.

Year-End Giving

To claim a charitable deduction for 2025, checks or online donations must be received or postmarked by Dec. 31. Checks received after Dec. 31, 2025 can't qualify for a charitable deduction for 2025, even if predated 2025. (Sorry!) You can also visit our website (www.unitedchurchofsantafe.org) and click on the "give now" button to contribute online. Many thanks!

Home by Another Way – Next Sunday is Epiphany Sunday

According to Matthew's Gospel, when the Magi (or Kings or Wise Ones) were searching for the Christ Child, they got way off-track and ended up in King Herod's court, because that's where conventional wisdom told them to find a new king. (Not a good idea to tell the old king there's a new kid on the throne.) Herod wanted them to return to him once they found the child, but the Wise Ones finally wised up and "went home by another way." (Matt. 2:1-11) As we begin a new year, how might we find our way home in a new way?

Drop-in Choir Next Sunday—Come at 9:00 to Rehearse, Sing in the 10:00 service
All welcome!

Epiphany Get-Acquainted Sunday – Jan. 4

After 10:00 worship, stick around for an extended coffee and conversation time. We'll set up tables and have snacks (cheese, crackers, fruit), and extra coffee! Bring your leftover Christmas goodies. Plan to sit a spell and get to know your United neighbors!

Adult Forums in the New Year

Immigration and Refugees: What's Happening at the Roundhouse?

Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday – Jan. 18

United's Immigration and Refugee Task Force provides an update on legislation proposed for the month-long Legislative session (starting January 19). Learn how you can make your voice heard and make a difference.

Jan. 26 – What in the World Are We Doing? United's Outreach Ministries

From providing books for public school children and cleaning up the Santa Fe River to cooking for Santa Fe shelters and advocating for immigrants, the United Church is at work in the world—and all around Santa Fe. This is an opportunity to learn more about some of United's outreach ministries—and find out how you can help!

Memorial Service for Royce Stewart – Saturday, January 24 – 10:00 am

On Saturday, January 24, the United Church will hold a Memorial Service to give thanks for the life of Royce Stewart and commit his soul to God's care and keeping. If you would like to help as an usher or greeter, please let Talitha know. Thank you.

A Final Reflection

If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.

Rachel Carson (1907 – 1964)

Marine Biologist, Author, Conservationist

