

ALLENDALE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DECEMBER 21, 2025

3803 Haines Road North
St. Petersburg, FL 33703

(727) 527-6694

office@allendaleumc.org

www.allendaleumc.org

WELCOME

We are honored that you chose to worship with us today!

Allendale United Methodist Church is a *Reconciling Congregation*. We affirm the sacred worth of all people and strive to practice Christ's example of unconditional love without exclusion. All are welcome to participate fully in the life and ministries of this congregation. Whatever your race, ethnicity, economic situation, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, background or belief, age or condition of ableness, whether single or partnered, you are God's beloved and are welcome here. God calls us to acts of love, grace, and advocacy to promote healing and reconciliation. We are building a new Allendale: a place without barriers, a sanctuary for all.

Office Hours: Mon-Thu 9-4

If you have a special need, or you wish to visit with the pastor, please contact the office at (727) 527-6694 or office@allendaleumc.org.

Gender Pronouns: Asking and correctly using someone's preferred pronoun is one of the most basic ways to show your respect for their gender identity. When someone is referred to with the wrong pronoun, it can do harm.

Childcare/Nursery: Located in the courtyard, the first room to the right as you leave the sanctuary building. Children are welcomed and encouraged to stay in worship, even if they are noisy! The nursery is available beginning at 10 AM for children younger than kindergarten.

Children's activity sheets and fidget bags are available in the narthex.

Changing table is available in the Nursery.

Unisex/family restrooms are in the office hallway, accessible from the narthex, to the left as you exit the sanctuary.

The balcony is open for those wishing to have more social distancing.

Holy Communion is typically celebrated on the first Sunday of the month.

ASL Interpretation is available during worship to help make our service more inclusive and accessible. *ASL Version of our worship livestream:* www.allendaleumc.org/asl

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun Dec 21 Longest Night Solstice Service: *Keeping Vigil for Hope* (Sanctuary) 6 PM

Wed Dec 24 Christmas Eve Worship with Candlelight (Sanctuary) 6 PM

Sun Dec 28 Christmas Drag-led Worship Service (Sanctuary) 10:30 AM

Get more information about our upcoming events by visiting: www.allendaleumc.org/events

WORSHIP NOTES

TODAY'S LITURGIST:

REV. RUSS LEHMAN (he/him/his) is a retired United Methodist minister, splitting his time between the Peninsula-Delaware Conference and a Navy chaplaincy, with a brief stint in Idaho. Russ and his wife, Lois, have visited every state (with the possible exception of Nebraska), share four sons, and live with three Springer Spaniels. Russ' unique characteristic may be that he has served in the Marine Corp, Air Force, and Navy at various times.

TODAY'S MUSICIANS:

organist - Bill Lee
piano - Tru Mizzell
guitar/vocals - Dylan Dames

Contact tru@allendaleumc.org to join our band or choir

COMMUNION PREPARERS:

Lynda Beltz and Lynn Fruit

TODAY'S COMMUNION SERVERS:

Joe Ventimiglia, Steve Geis, Amy Mormino, Sandy Geis, Deborah Eldred, Gina Gibbs, Debbie Duty, Mark Frederick

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP AT 6 PM:

Join us at 6 PM on Wednesday, Dec 24, for a candlelit Christmas Eve service reflecting on Luke 2:1-20. As we light the final Advent candle, we'll celebrate that the good news of Christ's birth is louder than fear. In a world shaped by anxiety and algorithms, come be part of a joyful, unruly proclamation of peace, hope, and love.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONGEST NIGHT: KEEPING VIGIL FOR HOPE

The holidays can be loud, busy, and overwhelming—especially when you're carrying grief, fear, or loneliness that doesn't disappear just because it's December.

Tonight, Sunday, December 21 at 6 PM, the Sanctuary will be a quieter place.

Our Longest Night service is part of the Advent series "*What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent*". It offers space to slow down, sit in stillness, light a candle, and acknowledge what you're holding—without fixing it or rushing past it.

This is a service for those who need gentleness more than cheer, honesty more than celebration, and companionship more than answers. Come as you are. Hope will be held together.

CHRISTMAS DRAG-LED WORSHIP:

The Sunday after Christmas at Allendale is always a little different. On December 28, worship will be led in part by drag artists.

They will help lead us in song, story, and prayer through joy, creativity, and embodied expression. This is worship that makes room for laughter and tenderness, beauty and truth. It reflects our belief that God meets us where we are, and that joy can be a healing, holy thing. You are invited!

STEWARDSHIP

PRAYERS

BIRTHDAYS:

Liam Oliver	Dec 22
Julie Johnson	Dec 23
Aurora Nikkel	Dec 24
Sophia Nikkel	Dec 24
Miguel Iturralde	Dec 25
Brad Hunsinger	Dec 27
Courtney Ross	Dec 29
Justin Miller	Jan 10
Lynn Fruit	Jan 12

Birthdays missing? Please contact the office

CONNECT WITH A PASTOR:

Rev. Andy Oliver, Pastor

Office hours: Tue - Fri *make an appointment at www.allendaleumc.org/andy*

Rev. David Franks, Minister of Pastoral Support, is on sabbatical. He will return March 1.

LICENSED THERAPISTS AND COUNSELORS:

available at Allendale's Counseling Center

Visit www.allendaleumc.org/counseling

PRESENCE

Previous Sunday: 119 in-person, 876 online

Live stream: www.allendaleumc.org/online

WANT TO JOIN ALLENDALE?

The next opportunities:

Sun Jan 11 at 10:30 AM

Sign-up at: www.allendaleumc.org/join

GIFTS

Give online: www.allendaleumc.org/give

Text-to-give: Text amount to 727-312-0808

Buy a shirt: www.allendaleumc.org/shirts



Give Online now by scanning this code with your phone's camera.

WITNESS

CANDLE OF PEACE HOPE AND JUSTICE:

During Advent, you'll find our Candle of Peace, Hope, and Justice in the narthex, paired with a weekly prayer that names the "barbed wire" policies squeezing our communities today.

This morning, we light the Candle of Peace, Hope, and Justice for all who do not yet know the depth of God's love for them, and for all who suffer when love is forgotten by people who are hurting, insecure, and afraid.

For Jewish siblings targeted by a father and son who opened fire on a beach in Sydney.

For families grieving profound loss, especially the Reiner family, who were met not with compassion and care but with anger and contempt unleashed through a President's social media account.

For children who are bullied, and for those who bully because they believe they must prove themselves instead of living into their deepest identity: beloved child of God.

May this candle remind each one of us—we are beloved, the reason God's heart beats and sometimes skips a beat.

And because we are beloved, we do not need to harm others to feel powerful or rule with cruelty and fear, but can and must live with compassion, courage, and humility.

Emmanuel, help us embody the love we proclaim.

And please enable every leader—

especially those who wield great power—to experience, claim, and live from this love.

We light this candle proclaiming the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. May Jesus strengthen us to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.

ORDER OF WORSHIP



What do
you fear?

WHEN YOU'RE AFRAID, GIVE ME YOUR HAND

Let us know you are here by going to www.allendaleumc.org/here or by filling out the attendance pad in your row.

PRELUDE Music Video

Show Up | Britt Kusserow |

WELCOME Rev. Andy Oliver

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SONG Allendale Band

Love > Fear | The Many |

CALL TO WORSHIP & AFFIRMATION OF FAITH Rev. Russ Lehman

TIME W/ CHILDREN & LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES Rev. Andy Oliver

Show Up | Britt Kusserow |

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & WORDS OF FORGIVENESS Rev. Russ Lehman

OFFERING Congregation

I Need You To Survive | Hezekiah Walker |
give online at www.allendaleumc.org/give

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Javonti Thomas

The Lord's Prayer | Mark A. Miller |

POEM Rose Cervantes

Tethered | Rev. Sarah A. Speed |

SONG Allendale Band

Fear All Around You | Anna Strickland |

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION & SCRIPTURE READING Rev. Russ Lehman

Matthew 1:18-25, Isaiah 41:5-10

SERMON Rev. Andy Oliver

COMMUNION Allendale Band

Can Christmas Time Be Now? | Andy Oliver |

CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY Congregation

BENEDICTION Rev. Russ Lehman

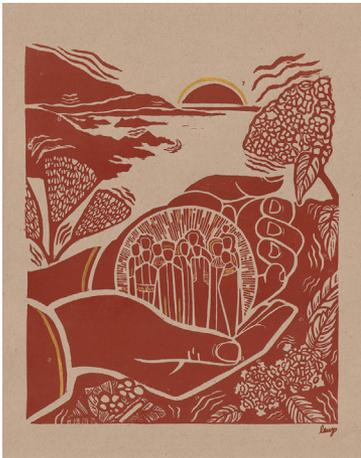
POSTLUDE Allendale Band



"In Too Deep" by Rev. Nicolette Faison

INSPIRED BY MATTHEW 1:18-25

I have struggled to sit with Joseph and how he processes all of this change with his new wife. This made me think of a Joseph who can't sleep well at night, as his mind is uneasy with the words of Gabriel in his ear.



"I Am With You" by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

INSPIRED BY ISAIAH 41:5-10

God's people are exiled under the thumb of a world power. Fearful artisans solder golden idols, hoping for security. But God is not found in the hands of the powerful or the shine of idols. God is present amid the rubble. God sides with the subjugated and disenfranchised. Despite the fear that causes the very earth to tremble, God accompanies the downtrodden, upholding them with a steady hand.

*Liturgy by A Sanctified Art
(portions adapted by Allendale)*

Rev. Andy Oliver, Pastor | andy@allendaleumc.org

Rev. David Franks, Minister of Pastoral Support | david@allendaleumc.org

Cameron Helwege, Creative Director | cameron@allendaleumc.org

Bruce Bordeaux, Director of Operations | bruce@allendaleumc.org

Diana Ong, Church Administrator | diana@allendaleumc.org

Tru Mizzell, Director of Music Development | tru@allendaleumc.org

Dylan Dames, Music and Organizing Associate | dylan@allendaleumc.org

Campbell Horn, Dylan Dames | Youth Directors

Bill Lee | Organist

Maddie Johnson | Sign Language Interpreter

Michaela George, Erin Giblin, Courtney Ross, | Nursery Attendants

Dr. Kate Pravera | Theologian in Residence

All of us in the Congregation | Ministers of the Gospel

THIS WEEK

Sun Dec 21

9 AM Adult Sunday School Class (Hybrid)

10:30 AM Worship Service (Sanctuary)

5:30 PM Youth Group

6 PM Longest Night Service (Sanctuary)

Mon Dec 22

9 AM Tai Chi (Community Center)

Tue Dec 23

2 PM Pilates (Bill W/Nursery)

Wed Dec 24

6 PM Impromptu Christmas Pageant (Sanct)

6 PM Evening Tai Chi (Community Center)

Thu Dec 25

Fri Dec 26

Sat Dec 27

Sun Dec 28

9 AM Grief Support Group (Wesley)

9 AM Adult Sunday School Class (Hybrid)

10:30 AM Worship Service (Sanctuary)

5:30 PM Youth Group

Recovery and Support Groups meet often at Allendale and are now listed on their own calendar: www.allendaleumc.org/recovery.

CLASSES & COMMUNITY

Grief Support Group - 12/28 at 9 AM

This group meets every other Sunday

"For Such a Time As This - An Emergency Devotional" by Amy-Jill Levine

In-Person Adult Sunday School Class- Sun at 9 AM

Virtual Class via Zoom - Mon at 6 PM

Join via Zoom: allendaleumc.org/mondayclass

Young Adult Discord - Online Group

Join at www.allendaleumc.org/youngadults

Stand For Democracy -each Mon at 4 PM

NW corner of 22nd Ave N and 34th St N

Social Justice Team - 3rd Tue at 6 PM

United Women in Faith - 1st Mon at 6:30 PM

United Methodist Men/Non-Binary - 3rd Thu at 6 PM

Wednesday Night Dinner & Classes are on break for the remainder of the year. Meals and classes will continue in January 2026.