

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Algona, Iowa
Second Sunday in Advent
December 8, 2019

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

***OPENING SONG:** “Savior of the Nations Come” #168

SHARING JESUS’ PEACE

CALL TO WORSHIP (read responsively)

One: The Reign of God is drawing near:

Many: The prophet calls us to change our lives!

One: Prepare the way for the Lord:

Many: A just and peaceful path!

One: Welcome one another, for Christ welcomes you:

Many : For the glory of God!

OPENING PRAYER (read together)

Holy God, we long for your peace, and trust in your promise; we hear your call to turn toward you. Meet us here and fill our minds with your wisdom and our hearts with your peace, that our worship together may open us to the challenge of your dream of wholeness for all. In the Name of the One who is coming, we pray. Amen!

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (read together)

God, you call us to turn our lives around, and work with patience and diligence to prepare the way for your Reign, but we get discouraged and give up too soon. You call us to collaborate in community to prepare the way for your Reign, but we neither trust nor honor the gifts of others. You call us to be full of joyful confidence to prepare the way for your Reign, but we burden ourselves with anxiety and fear. Forgive us, God, and lead us in the ways of patience, community and joy. Amen.

A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION AND REPENTANCE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (read responsively)

One: Hear the good news: Jesus, savior from sin, is present with us in the painstaking work of the Reign of God, forgiving our weakness, rebuilding our relationships, restoring our joy.

Many: We will celebrate this great grace! Thanks be to God, we are forgiven.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 3:1-12

***MIDDLE SONG:** “Blessed Be the God of Israel” #158

***AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (read together)

We believe in God, creator and lover of the earth, origin and destiny of us all.

We believe in Jesus the Christ—God coming to us in the fragile promise of a baby yet unborn—who emerges as the herald of hope, God's laughter in the face of despair.

Plunged into death and hell, he broke free the captives, and is leading the way to the land of promise where justice and peace will flourish.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who implants the seed of truth, brings us to birth as the body of Christ, and empowers us to confront and transform all that is corrupt, degrading and deceitful.

We believe in the coming reign of God. Announced by the Baptist, it has drawn near to us in Jesus, and will be consummated in the glorious marriage of earth and heaven, when all who have passed through the world's deep sorrow will be raised from the waters, robed in righteousness, and gathered into the joyous fulfilment of God's desire. For the coming of that day on this day, we work and pray: Come, Lord Jesus, Come! Amen.

GLORIA PATRI #734

FOCUS SCRIPTURE Romans 15:4-13 read from the *Good News Bible*

MESSAGE: “From a Particular Point of View” Pastor Burtnett

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING

***DOXOLOGY**

Words #44

***DEDICATION OF OFFERING**

***CLOSING SONG** "Shalom, My Friends"

#714

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

The Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Prayer of Confession (adapted), Words of Assurance (adapted), and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are from *Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ*. The Call to Confession is from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Affirmation of Faith is by Nathan Nettleton.

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Organist: Liz Reynolds

Lector: David Burrow

Worship Leader: Pastor Burtnett

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December Radio Sponsor: Mick and Kris Schlievert

Birthdays: 12-8 Connie Schwab

**First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Algona, Iowa**



"Where No One Is A Stranger"

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PEACE

Leader: Watch and wait for Christ's coming! Light candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, remembering the promises of God with prayer.

People: We light this candle in hope. (*Light the first candle.*)

We light this candle for peace. (*Light the second candle.*)

Leader 1: From Isaiah 11:1-10. A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

Leader 2: The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious. Let us pray:

All: Faithful God, you are at work to restore all of creation in its intended harmony. Give us your shalom that we may be reconciled to all enemies in the peace that passes all understanding through Christ Jesus our Lord. God of promise, God of hope, into our darkness come. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Donations to the Christmas family will be taken until the 15th of this month.

Today after church is the annual cookie sale.

The annual Hospice of the Heartland "Lights of Life" program will be today, December 8 at 2 pm at the hospital. Donations of \$10 for a light should be sent to Hospice of the Heartland.

Our Daily Bread for the next three months is in the Fellowship hall.

The mitten tree will be up for this month. Hats, scarves, mittens, etc. are welcome. Children's mittens should be waterproof.

Next Sunday the 15th will be the last day of Sunday school until after the holidays. This is also the day to give donations for the Christmas Family. Finally, after church we gather for soup and caroling.

The signup sheet for next year's radio sponsors is in the parlor.