

First Congregational United Church of Christ
"Where No One Is A Stranger"
Second Sunday of Advent
December 5, 2021
315 S. Moore Street, Algona, IA 50511

PRELUDE
RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

One: Today we light the second Advent candle, the Bethlehem Candle. This candle is offered in honor of the birthplace of Jesus as well as the many places where Jesus is born in the hearts of believers. While Bethlehem was so busy with commerce that it had only a stable to offer Jesus, let our Bethlehems be places of warmth and welcome. In honor of Bethlehem we light this candle.

(a purple candle is lit)

Prayer

Dear God, who comes to us through Jesus at Bethlehem, enable us to open our hearts so that we may have Jesus in us. We give you thanks for the places where we meet him. Amen.

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (read responsively)

One: A messenger calls, "Prepare the way of the Holy One."

Many: Blessed be the Holy One, who brings light into the deepest darkness.

One: A prophet proclaims, "Make a way in the desert for the coming of God to live in our midst."

Many: Blessed be the Holy One, who comes to live among us in peace.

Everyone: Let's worship the one who calls us into light!

***OPENING SONG:** "Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates" #176

***OPENING PRAYER** (prayed together)

Redeeming Keeper of Promises, your messengers remind us that you are the source of peace, justice, mercy, and loving kindness. As we prepare for your coming in your Son Jesus, help us shine as the radiant body of Christ, that we may be light for a gloomy, broken world. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

God of the loving heart, we confess before you those places in our hearts where we have refused you entrance: people we have refused to love; habits we never get around to changing; good things we have left undone; and ways in which we hurt you, ourselves, and others.

Forgive us! Come to us in the light of your Christ. Shine on those places we have hidden from you. Show us new ways to live. Sweep clean the rooms of our hearts, that Jesus may find a home among us. Be known among us now and forever! Amen.

A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION AND REPENTANCE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (read responsively)

One: This is the good news in Jesus Christ. We can stand before God, not through our own goodness, but through God's great kindness to us.

Many: We will rejoice and be glad, for God comes to us with steadfast love and grace. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven!

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Luke 3:1-6

***AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** UCC Statement of Faith (read together)
(inside back cover of hymnal)

***GLORIA PATRI** #734

FOCUS SCRIPTURE Malachi 3:1-4 read from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE: "Presenting a Righteous Offering" Pastor Chris

GATHERING AT CHRIST'S TABLE Invitation, Communion Prayer, Sanctus, Words of Institution, Consecration Prayer, Lord's Prayer, Sharing the Bread and Cup

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Creative, connecting God, you have sent your Spirit and made us the body of Christ; From child-like faith, to youthful energy, from middle-aged mindfulness, to elder's wisdom. We thank you for this feast, this time, this remembrance. Amen.

BRINGING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God of creation and Giver of life, may the gifts we bring this morning become as warm breaths of life in an often-cold world. May they make visible your will and your Word. In the name of the child whose Advent we celebrate, we pray. Amen.

***Closing Song** “Blessed Be the God of Israel” #158

***Going Forth with the Peace of Christ**

The Advent Candle liturgy (adapted) is written by Cyril C. Colonus from *Touch Holiness-Resources for Worship* edited by Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi. The Call to Worship (adapted) and Opening Prayer are by Deborah Sokolove from *The Abingdon Worship Annual, 2021* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted), and Words of Assurance (adapted) are by Ruth C. Duck from *Touch Holiness-Resources for Worship* edited by Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi. The Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) is from *Words of Worship-Resources for Church and Home* by Glem E. Rainsley. The Affirmation of Faith is a version of our United Church of Christ Statement of Faith. The Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving is from The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

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Organist: Liz Reynolds

Lector: David Burrow

Worship Leader: Pastor Chris Burtnett

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December Radio Sponsor: Mick and Kris Schlievert

Birthdays: December 8-Connie Schwab

Today, December 5: 10:00 am. – Worship with Communion
Sunday School
Food Pantry
Coffee
pledge cards return today

Tuesday, December 7: 9:30-11:30 am. Feed Mill
2 pm. – Pastor at Windsor Manor with the Cotton Candy Machine,
Happy National Cotton Candy Day
Deadline to give to the Christmas Family fund

Sunday, December 12: 10:00 am. – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee
After worship service, cookie exchange, bring some goodies to share.



Second Sunday of Advent

We will be celebrating the sacrament of communion this morning. Everyone is welcome at the table. The inner ring is wine and outer ring is grape juice.

Today is Food Pantry Sunday. Donations of canned food, paper products and monetary donations are welcome. If you include your monetary donation with your offering be sure to mark the amount in the memo of your check.

Poinsettias have been ordered. If you would still like one in the Sanctuary, please pick one up yourself and let the church office know who you want it to honor.

Today, Sunday, December 5 from 2-4pm. there will be a retirement open house for Pastor Mark Homer at the Algona Public Library.

Sunday, December 12: 2-4 pm. - Retirement reception for Jean Menning 2-4 pm. at Algona First United Methodist Church. She will be retiring on December 31, 2021 from 42 years of service to Exceptional Opportunities.

The "Our Daily Bread" for December, January, February is here. It may be picked up in the Fellowship entry.

The Mitten Tree is up. Donations of hats, waterproof mittens or gloves and scarves are welcome. We will be collecting through the end of December.

December Sr. Center calendar and Meals on Wheels menu is posted on the Mission bulletin board.

The Christmas Fund Offering will be received on Sunday, December 19.