

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Second Sunday of Advent
December 4, 2022

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

Lighting the Second Advent Candle

One: In this season, we can be overwhelmed with so many things-busyness, impatience, despair, and even violence

All: as we wait for the Prince of Peace.

One: Today, we gather to listen to the voice of one crying in the wilderness, comforting us and challenging us at the same time.

All: We need to be surprised by the Spirit this season.

One: Today is a first step of turning toward God with expectation.

All: We come with open ears, open minds, open hearts.

One: God’s Spirit calls us to worship and work for justice.

All: We have come in to be overwhelmed with peace.

(The first and second Advent Candles are lit.)

One: This morning we light two candles, the candle of Hope from last week and today’s candle, the candle of Peace, trusting that God is present with us. May God overwhelm us with divine peace, quieting our hearts and liberating the world.

***Opening Song:** “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” #153

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

One: In this season of bumper to bumper stress, with life more crowded than the stores,
Many: God welcomes us to a feast of faithfulness, where we may sit in peace and gentleness.

One: In these times of rancorous rants and snide remarks, with people too busy to offer words of compassion,

Many: Jesus whispers of hope for broken hearts, sings carols of justice for all the outsiders.

One: In these days of more and more time spent with devices, and fewer moments with those who could touch us with joy,

Many: the Spirit embraces us with peace that comforts, loves us with a passion beyond 140 characters.

***OPENING PRAYER** (prayed together)

God of the waiting wanderers in the wilderness, we enter this moment of worship expecting that when we leave this hour of prayer, we will be full of the courage needed to stand as a signal. We come to the mountain, God, to feel closer to your presence. May the mountains yield prosperity for your people. May righteousness flourish and peace abound. You, alone, are the God who does wondrous things. May your glory fill this place as we worship you in spirit and in truth. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (prayed together)

Goodness Incarnate, we must confess that we have not lived as your children. We muddy the clear waters of baptism with the rubble of walking over those we claim we love. We sit in our lonely lives feasting on bitterness, when we could be feasting with those we are told not to trust. We wait for all our desires to be taken care of by you, while you hope we would fill the lives of others with your grace and hope. Forgive us, God of this holy season, and help us to be as willing to draw near to others, so we might heal their brokenness, touch their loneliness, embrace their grief, and love them as you did when you came to us so long ago, as well as in these moments, in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION AND REPENTANCE

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (read responsively)

One: Here is the good news: speak with the whispers of hope until it silences despair; sing the carols of compassion until all join in the chorus; shower others with wonder and delight and join in God’s dance of grace.

Many: Thanks be to God. We are forgiven! So, let us welcome others with open arms, just as we have been embraced in God’s love and laughter. Amen.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 3:1-12

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

***GLORIA PATRI** #734

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world with-out end. A-men, A-men.

FOCUS SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 11:1-10

shared from the *Common English Bible*

MESSAGE:

“Ingredients for Peace”

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

For the nourishment of spirit, mind, and body through this bread and cup, for hope that we begin to see, and for comfort from the Prince of Peace, we share our gratitude, Gracious God. Encourage us in these shortened days. Through the long nights of this season, may your hope carry us until dawn arrives again. Amen.

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

#34

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, you heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

For the wondrous ways this offering will bless this community, God, we dedicate these gifts. For the ways it will help us live out your mission, we dedicate these gifts. Bless and use them and us to strengthen our call to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly. Amen.

***Closing Song**

“Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates”

#176

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

***Indicates all who are able please stand**

The Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy is from the *2022 Christmas Fund Worship Resources*. The Call to Worship, Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession, and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Opening Prayer (adapted) and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are from *Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ*. The Affirmation of Faith is a version of our United Church of Christ Statement of Faith. The Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving (adapted) is by Michelle L. Torigian.



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

PEACE

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Organist: Vicki Merchlewitz
Lector: David Burrow
Worship Leader: Pastor Chris Burtnett
December Radio Sponsor: Mick & Kris Schlievert
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Birthdays: December: 8 - Connie Schwab

Today, December 4: 10 am.- Worship -Sacrament of Communion
Sunday School
Coffee
Food Pantry
Mission & Memorial Meeting after worship

Tuesday, December 6: 9:30-11am. - Pastor Chris at Feed Mill
6:30pm. – Pastor Chris at Food Pantry Board Meeting

Thursday, December 8: 8:30am. - Ministerial Meeting at Lighthouse Church
6:00pm. – Pilgrim Heights Zoom Board Meeting

Sunday, December 11: 10 am. - Worship
Sunday School
Coffee
Christmas Family Offering
Cookie Exchange after worship

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

Algona Community Blood Drive will be Monday, December 5 from 12:30pm-5:30pm and Tuesday, December 6 from 9am-2pm. at First United Methodist Church.

Poinsettias this year will be \$10.70. If you would like to order one, please let the church office know in whose honor or memory it will be.

The December, January, February issue of “Our Daily Bread” is here and may be picked up in the Fellowship entry.

The Senior Center Meal on Wheels menu and calendar is on the bulletin board.