

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
315 S Moore St., Algona, Iowa  
515-295-2845  
Fourth Sunday Of Advent  
December 18, 2022

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

### Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle

One: We have come in out of the cold to be warmed by the Spirit.

**All: We have come in to dream God's dream.**

One: We have come to listen to God's call.

**All: We have come to be overwhelmed with love.**

*(four candles are lit)*

One: This morning we light four candles; the candles of hope, peace, joy, and today's candle, love. This candle reminds us that God loved the world so much that God sent the Christ child, so that we might be overwhelmed by nothing but the gifts of God. Today we celebrate God's gift of love, and we commit to sharing that love with the world.

**\*OPENING SONG** "Once in Royal David's City" #183

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

One: Welcome, saints of God, to this time of celebration!

**Many: We have come to this holy place seeking a blessing.**

One: Together, let's prepare to greet the child of Mary, the one called Emmanuel, God with us.

**Many: We remember the story of God's greatest gift.**

One: Be still, that the Holy Spirit may be known to us; be open to the grace and peace of salvation.

**Many: We affirm that God loves us and all people; we seek to live that love among all we meet.**

**\*OPENING PRAYER** (read together)

God of love – Ferocious love, fierce love, unending love, everlasting love – We gather in this place with gratitude for the ways your love has Called us out of bleakest and into your marvelous. We know of your renown, and we stand in awe of your work. In our

own time revive it; in our own time make it known. Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel. Stir up your might in this place. Give us life, and we will call on your name as we worship you in spirit and in truth. Amen.

## TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

## CALL TO CONFESSION

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (read together)

Come now, Reconciler of the nations, for our world, our lives, need your peace more than ever before. Come, Caller to discipleship, for we long to let go of our self-interest and narcissism. Come, Word Gifter, for we hunger to hear your voice once again, ever always. Come, Servant of the poor, so we notice you in all those we push past in this hectic season. Come, Silence of our nights and Holiness of our hearts, and forgive us for turning your compassion into commercials, your joy into jingles, your hope into hollow words, your love into lust for the short-lasting offerings of the world. May we find our way to the One born simply, born gracefully, for us – Jesus, the Child of wonder and life. Amen.

## SILENCE FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE** (read responsively)

One: We may not notice them there, at the back of the pile of presents, but it is God's hope, God's life, God's mercy, which are the true gifts we receive each and every moment.

**All: We give thanks to our gracious God, who has forgiven us and blessed us. Amen!**

**SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING** Isaiah 7: 10-16

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

We believe in God, who is love, whose love is manifest in all Creation, in our lives, and in all people. We follow Jesus, who embodied God's love. In his birth, life and ministry, his death and resurrection, and his granting to us of his Spirit, he filled us with that love as well. We live by the Spirit, the presence of God's love in us. In that love we participate in the Church, Body of Christ, in loving God by loving our neighbors through our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service. Love is our faith, and it is a gift from God. We thank God, and ask God's blessings, that we may love in the name of Christ and the power of the Spirit, to God's glory. Amen.

**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**                 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19                 shared from the *Good News Bible*

**MESSAGE:**   “The Gall Of It All”   Pastor Chris

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and LORD’S PRAYER** (using debts/debtors)

**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**   (prayed together)  
Holy God, bless now the offerings of our hearts and lives, that we might shine as you  
shine, and share your blessings with others. Amen.

**\*CLOSING SONG**   “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”   #185

**\*GOING FORTH WITH THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

**POSTLUDE**

\*Indicates all who are able please stand

The Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy is from the *2022 Christmas Fund Worship Resources*. The Call to Worship (adapted), is from *Fresh Winds of the Spirit, Book 2-Liturgical Resources for Year A* by Lavon Bayler. The Call to Confession, and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Opening Prayer is from *Worship Ways-Worship Resources for the United Church of Christ*. The Offering Prayer of Dedication is by Kirsten Linford from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2022* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Affirmation of Faith (adapted) is by Steve Garnaas-Holmes.

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|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Worship Leader:         | Pastor Burnett         |
| Lector:                 | David Burrow           |
| Organist:               | Vicki Merchlewitz      |
| December Radio Sponsor: | Mick & Kris Schlievert |
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Birthdays: December 24 - John Norman



*FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT*

*Love*

Today, December 18: 10:00 am.- Worship  
Sunday School  
Coffee

Monday, December 19: 6pm. – Pastor Pilgrim Heights Zoom Meeting

Tuesday, December 20: 9:30-11Am. - Pastor Chris at Feed mill

Saturday, December 24: 6pm.- Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service

Sunday, December 25: 9-11am. - Church will be open for personal Meditation Worship

Please have your Annual Reports turned into the office by the first week in January.

The December, January, February issue of “Our Daily Bread” and the Jesus Light of the World: 10 Reflections on the Life and Light of Christ are here. They may be picked up in the Fellowship entry.

The monthly radio sponsor sign-up sheet for 2023 is posted on the bulletin board in the parlor. You may also call the office or e-mail the church office for a month you would like. The sponsorship is \$30 a Sunday.

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.