

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
“Where No One Is A Stranger”  
First Sunday of Advent  
December 1, 2024

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

### \*Lighting the First Advent Candle

One: There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and unrest in the nations like those being tossed by the waves of the sea.

**Many: Be watchful at all times for God’s Realm is near.**

One: The powers of the heavens will be shaken at the expectation of the coming of the Lord.

**Many: Be watchful at all times for God’s Realm is near.**

One: You will see Christ coming in the clouds with power and glory. When this happens, lift up your heads, because your redemption is close.

**Many: Be watchful at all times for God’s Realm is near.**

One: This generation will not pass away until all things are accomplished. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will last forever.

**Many: Be watchful at all times for God’s Realm is near.**

One: The Lord is coming to make all things new.

**Many: Come quickly, Lord Jesus.** *(The Advent Candle of Hope is lit)*

**\*Opening Song:** “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” #153

**\*OPENING PRAYER** (prayed together)

God of every season, as we begin our journey through Advent, turn our hearts towards you. Guide us into your realm of peace and joy. Teach us to set aside our worries, as we walk in faithfulness and trust. May the love within us be born anew. Help us remain alert, that we may respond to pain and suffering and notice the signs of abundant life around us. Come, to us Jesus; Come to us now, we pray. Amen.

## TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

## CALL TO CONFESSION

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (prayed together)

The chances we have to be more compassionate; the moments to offer hope to a lonely friend; the good fortune we could give to those who have so little. The signs are all around us, Good and Upright God, of how we fail to live as your people.

Do not meditate on our bungling ways, God of steadfast love, but remember the mercy of Your heart. That mercy which forgives us; that mercy which makes us whole; and especially, that living mercy who came down one night so long ago, Jesus the Advent of our redemption. Amen.

## A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Raise your heads, children of God! In the bleak mid-winter of our lives, our redemption draws near. In the springtime of our doubts, the realm of God approaches.

**Many: Even when we feel most alone, the One who comes to us is the salvation promised so long ago. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.**

**SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING** Jeremiah 33:14-16

**\*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, 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!**

**\*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** Luke 21:25-36 read from *The Message*

**MESSAGE:** “Help Is On The Way” Pastor Chris

**Communion Song:** “As We Gather at Your Table” #695

## GATHERING AT CHRIST’S TABLE

Invitation, Communion Prayer, Sanctus, Words of Institution, Consecration Prayer, Lord’s Prayer (debts/debtors), 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, 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**  
We thank you, God, for the joy we feel this day. With deep gratitude for all you provide to us, we offer our gifts to you. Center our hearts during this season of giving. Amen.

**\*Closing Song:** "Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates" #176

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

**POSTLUDE**

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

Other Lectionary Scripture Readings: Ruth 1:1-18, Hebrews 9:11-14

The Advent Candle lighting Liturgy (adapted) is prepared by the Office of Spiritual Life of United Theological Seminary The Opening Prayer (adapted) and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are by Mary Petrina Boyd from *The Abingdon Worship Annual-2024* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession, and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Affirmation of Faith is by Nathan Nettleton posted on his Laughingbird website. The Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving is by Michelle L. Torigian.

=====

Worship Leader: Pastor Chris Burtnett  
Lector: David Burrow  
Organist: Antonia Rupert  
December Radio Sponsor: Mick and Kris Schlievert

=====

**Birthdays:** December: 3-Favor Thilges; 7 Kim Thilges

**Sunday, December 1:** 10:30am – Worship – Sacrament of Communion  
Sunday School/ Coffee/ Food Pantry

**Tuesday, November 5:** 9:30am. - Pastor at Feed Mill

**Wednesday, December 4:** 7pm-Board Meeting

**Sunday, December 8:** 10:30am – Worship/Sunday School/ Coffee/Christmas Family Offering



*First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
166 Years*

315 Moore Street – Algona, IA 50511  
515-295-2845