

First Congregational United Church of Christ
“Where No One Is A Stranger”
Second Sunday of Advent
December 8, 2024

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(read responsively)

One: Blessed be the God of Israel,

Many: for God has shown favor and redeemed God’s people.

One: God has raised up a Savior in the house of God’s servant David,

Many: as spoken on the lips of his holy prophets of old.

One: God has shown mercy to us and remembered God’s holy covenant.

Many: We will serve God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives.

One: The tender mercy of God will dawn on high and visit us with salvation.

Many: It will shine on those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

One: Jesus is coming to guide our feet in the way of peace.

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

*Opening Song:

“Blessed Be the God of Israel”

#158

*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Holy Fountain of Compassion, deep in the heart of this journey, we search for peace-filled moments of contemplation. We crave the joy that is found in the stillness of prayer. As we share this time with you, may we experience your beloved joy, knowing that our petitions bring us closer to you and our neighbors. Amen.

TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

You witness the sorts of lives we lead, Approaching God. Asked to share the gospel of hope, we place it on our to-do list instead. Given the chance to cry out for justice for others, we fall strangely silent. Invited to pray with joy in every moment, we prefer to grumble about every insignificant thing in our lives.

Have mercy on us, God of grace, and prepare our hearts for Your forgiveness to have its way in them. Fill us with Your hope so we might lighten the shadows of others. Help us to join the choirs of children in singing of Your joy. Transform us with that tender mercy who is our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

L: God is our witness. We have spoken of our lives and been forgiven of every mistake we have made, every hurt we have caused.

Many: We are held in God’s heart, not only on this day, but all the days of our lives. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING:

Luke 1:68-79

*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

(read together)

We are an Advent people, a people of hope. For us, Advent is a time of waiting, and so we wait. We wait for the coming of the One who is the fulfillment of God’s promise, the fulfillment of hope, the declaration that we have been redeemed. Even so, we are not a naïve people. We know that the world in which we live will continue to be filled with pain and sorrow. We know that hatred and violence will continue to exist. We know that death and separation will continue to be a part of our lives. But because we are an Advent people, we know that none of these things will win in the end. The Holy One is coming, to make holy once again all that was, is, and ever will be. And in our waiting and our hoping, we work and worship, pray and play, in all things hoping that peace, love and joy will reign in our lives and in our world, now and forever.

* GLORIA PATRI:

“Glory Be to the Father”

#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:

Philippians 1:3-11

read from *The Message*

MESSAGE:

“Use Your Head”

Pastor Chris

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD’S PRAYER (with debts/debtors)

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

*** DOXOLOGY:** "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" #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 give thanks each time we remember your gifts in our lives, Generous God. Our gratitude extends to the ways we can use our gifts of time, talent, and treasures. May your boundless wisdom compel us to use our energies in ways that will share the most love in our world. Amen.

*** CLOSING SONG:** "All Earth Is Hopeful" #163

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

POSTLUDE

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

The Advent Candle lighting Liturgy (adapted) is prepared by the Office of Spiritual Life of United Theological Seminary. The Opening Prayer and Offering Prayer of Dedication (adapted) are by the Rev. Michelle L. Torigian, senior pastor of St. Paul United Church of Christ, Belleville, Illinois. The Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession (adapted), and Words of Assurance are from *Lectionary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Affirmation of Faith is by Rev. Rebecca F. Harrison.

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Organist: Antonia Rupert
Worship Leader: David Burrow
Pastor: Rev. Chris Burnett
December Radio Sponsor: Mick and Kris Schlievert
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Sunday, December 8: 10:30am. – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee
Christmas Family Offering

Sunday, December 15:10:30am – Worship
Sunday School
Coffee
Cookie plates will be made for some of our members and friends

Pastor Chris will be on vacation December 9-16. If you need pastoral assistance, please call Dave Skilling at 319-290-2302.

If you have not turned in your pledge card please drop it off in the office or the offering plate. **The December/January/February 2024-2025** issue of "Our Daily Bread" may be picked up in the Fellowship Hall entry.

Sunday, December 8: 1pm.-Hospice of the Heartland's Lights of Life Ceremony Lighting
Monday, December 9: 12:30-5:30pm.-Algona Blood Drive 1st United Methodist Church
Friday, December 13: 9am-2pm.- Algona Blood Drive at 1st Lutheran Church



*First Congregational
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166 Years
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