

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
“Where No One Is A Stranger”  
Third Sunday of Advent  
10:30am-December 15, 2024

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

### \*LIGHTING THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE (read responsively)

God is our salvation! We will trust in God and not be afraid;

**The God of Salvation is our strength and song!**

Look up and rejoice! Draw water out of the wells of salvation.

**The God of Joy is our strength and song!**

Give thanks to God! Call on God’s name!

**The God of Might is our strength and song!**

Declare God’s works among the people that God’s name is exalted!

**The God’s of Wisdom is our strength and song!**

Sing to God, for God has done excellent things! Let this be known in all the earth!

**The God of Righteousness is our strength and song!**

Cry aloud and shout, people of God, for Christ, the King of kings, is coming to save us.

**Come quickly, Lord Jesus.** *(the pink Advent Candle of Love is lit)*

\*Opening Song: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” #154

### \*OPENING PRAYER (prayed together)

God of Life and Joy, on this third Sunday day of Advent we joyfully celebrate your certain promise of the coming of Christ. Help us prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, the light of the world. Illuminate our waiting and watching, our thinking and our acting with the light of the gospel so that we may produce the fruit of patience. Guide the whole world to find the saving power of Christ in a world of dark shadows. Amen.

## BRIEF REFLECTION

## CALL TO CONFESSION

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord God, while we praise you for sending light into this world, we must confess that we live as though the light had never defeated darkness. Too often we ignore the Savior you sent to be among us and live in us. We keep the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season instead of yearning for his coming each moment in our waiting hearts. Forgive us for not opening our eyes to Jesus, and help us prepare for him. Help us rejoice in the light Christ brings so that your grace can illuminate the darkened places of our hearts. Amen.

## SILENCE FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Remember, friends. God has clothed us with garments of salvation and covered our sins in robes of righteousness.

**We rejoice in our God and believe the good news. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 12:2 – 6

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4 – 7

HYMN: “People, Look East” #161

### \* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

**We believe in Jesus Christ, our savior and liberator, the expression of God’s redeeming and restoring love, the model of humanity and our source of courage, power, and love.**

**We believe that God is everywhere: residing in slums, in broken homes and hearts, and in our loneliness, rejection, and powerlessness. Through the death and resurrection of Christ, God gives us life, pride, and dignity; aids us in our struggles; and promises liberation in oppression and hope in despair.**

**We believe in the activity of the Holy Spirit, who revives our decaying souls, resurrects our defeated spirits, renews our hope of wholeness, and reminds us of our responsibility in ushering in God’s new order here and now. Amen.**

\* 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: Zephaniah 3:14-20

MESSAGE: “We Need a Little Christmas” David Burrow

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Respond: **Hear our prayer.**

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**

(with debts/debtors)

**PRESENTING OUR GIFTS – OFFERTORY**

\* **DOXOLOGY:** “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” #34

\* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God who gives all gifts, in this season of giving gifts to one another, help us, we pray, to remember what we know is on your wish list. Use the gifts we bring that others may have enough this Christmas and throughout the year. In our Savior’s name we pray. Amen.

\* **CLOSING HYMN:** “Lord of the Dance” #118

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

**POSTLUDE**

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

- *Advent candle lighting liturgy (adapted) is prepared by the Office of Spiritual Life of United Theological Seminary*
- *Opening prayer from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Louisville*
- *Prayer of confession by Jaime Barnes in The Open Sourcebook*
- *Affirmation of faith by Victoria Emily Jones from artandtheology.org*
- *Prayer of Dedication from Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church*

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Organist: Antoina Rupert  
 Worship Leader: David Burrow  
 Pastor: Rev. Chris Burtnett  
 December Radio Sponsor: Mick and Kris Schlievert

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**Sunday**, December 15: 10:30am – Worship / Sunday School / Coffee  
**Tuesday**, December 17: 9:30am- Pastor at Feed Mill  
**Sunday**, December 22: 10:30am – Worship -Sunday School/ Coffee/ Christmas Fund Offering  
**December**-Hat, Mittens, Socks etc., tree is up through the end of December  
**December 24:** 7pm.-Christmas Eve Service  
**Annual Meeting** will be January 26, if you would like to be on a different committee or officer, please let Helen know. The deadline for reports is January 12.  
**Thank you**, David Burrow for leading worship for us today!



*First Congregational  
 United Church of Christ  
 166 Years  
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