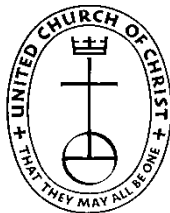


December 3, 2017 – 10:00 am  
ST. JOHN  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## First Sunday of Advent



Our mission is to worship and serve God  
in our church, community, and the world.



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Please respond with words in **bold print**.

\*Please stand if comfortably able

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## WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE:

THE BELLS CALL US INTO SILENT REVERENCE.

THE CANDLES ARE LIT TO LIGHT OUR WAY INTO WORSHIP.

PRELUDE: "O Come, O Come. Emmanuel"      Lani Smith

### \*UNISON CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: Awake, people of God, and stay alert for Christ's coming.  
Grace to you and peace from God who sent Jesus to us.

**Many: Make your ways known to us, O God.**

**Show us once more your awesome presence.**

One: We are all God's people; no one is excluded.  
Come together as God's family for worship and prayer.

**Many: Let the mountains quake before you, mighty God.**

**Let the nations tremble in awe and reverence.**

One: Praise the One who grants us the gift of life.  
Give thanks for God's continuing faithfulness.

**Many: Heaven and earth will pass away,  
But the Word of God is true for all times and places.**

\*OPENING HYMN: "**Shine, Jesus Shine**" (on screen)

\*CALL TO CONFESSION:

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS:

\*GLORIA: **#759**

**Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit,  
Three-in-One; As it was in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

FIRST TESTAMENT READING:      **Isaiah 64:1-9**

Lay Liturgist

(Page 911 in the Pew Bible)

CHOIR ANTHEM: **“Soon and Very Soon”**

TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL:

\*GOSPEL LESSON:

**Mark 13:24-37**

Pastor Rosemary

(Page 1236 in the Pew Bible)

This is the Word of God. It is true and can be trusted.

**Thanks be to good. Amen.**

SERMON: **“It’s Alive”**

\*HYMN OF RESPONSE:

**#122 “Come, O Long Expected Jesus**

PASTORAL PRAYER:

Beginning with a time for silent personal prayer.

THE LORD’S PRAYER:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed it be your name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in  
heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us  
our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into  
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the  
kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

PRAYER RESPONSE: **“Away in a Manger” verse 3**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay**

**close by me forever and love me, I pray.**

**Bless all the dear children in your tender care,**

**and fit us for heaven to live with you there.**

OFFERING OF GIFTS, TITHES AND SELVES

OFFERTORY: **“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”** John M. Rasley

\*DOXOLOGY: **# 780**

**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.**

**\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION:**

**Gracious God, we give our best to you with gratitude and faith. We dedicate these symbols of thankfulness and all the days of our lives to your purposes. Amen.**

**HOLY COMMUNION: (on screen)**

**\* PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:**

**Holy Creator, Bread of Life, Everlasting Salvation, A light shines in the night and the night will not overcome it. In this meal we have been replenished and strengthened, the light of your love rekindled within. We will be bold to carry this light into the world. Thank you for recharging our batteries and reviving your ambient glow within us. You are the power source that never gives out - eternally renewable and sustainable.**

**Thank you God  
Thank you Christ  
Thank you Spirit                      Amen.**

**\*SENDING HYMN: #102 “O How Shall I Receive You”**

**DURING THE HYMN THE LIGHT IS EXTINGUISHED AND CARRIED OUT INTO THE WORLD.**

**\*BENEDICTION:**

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE: #125 (third verse)**

**Come to Bethlehem and see  
Christ whose birth the angels sing.  
Come adore on bended knee,  
God, our world now entering.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**\*POSTLUDE: “Jubilate”**

**Stewart Landon**

## **A Service of Holy Communion for Advent**

### **INVITATION TO THE TABLE**

The prophets foretold it: the desert burst into bloom.  
Angelic messengers delivered news:  
a priest lost his speech; a young woman found her voice.  
In this season of Advent, the scriptures revive old stories  
and bring new understandings.  
In the face of critics and skeptics,  
our faith cries out, resilient,  
like a baby from a manger bed.

From that Bethlehem beginning,  
Jesus, baptized in the Jordan, spent his life serving others  
that all might know the compassionate attention of a  
loving God.

Today, Jesus serves us yet again,  
as we gather at this Table he prepares for us.

### **COMMUNION PRAYER**

Dear Jesus of Advent,  
You remain a sacred mystery to us.  
You have brought Good News for all the people  
and we will not be afraid, for you are here.  
We are hungry for your love  
which surpasses all our understanding;  
we are thirsty for your spirit that never runs dry.  
In this meal nourish our souls,  
feed our minds, quench our deepest longings and  
forgive our transgressions,  
that we may glorify you every day of our lives. Amen.

When His arrest seemed near, Jesus sat at table in an upper room with his closest friends and relatives. As He had done so many times before, He took the bread, and after giving thanks to You, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, this time saying, "Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after the meal He took a cup and after giving thanks, He gave it to them saying, "Truly I will never drink of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in the Realm of God."

By eating this bread and drinking this cup, we proclaim Christ's death, celebrate Christ's resurrection and await Christ's coming again.

**BLESSING OF THE BREAD AND CUP** Let us pray.

Consecrate, therefore, by your Holy Spirit, these gifts of bread and wine. Bless us that, as we receive them at this table, we may offer You our faith and praise, be united with Christ and with one another, and continue faithfully in all things.

In the strength Christ gives us, we offer ourselves to You, eternal God, and give thanks that You have called us to serve You.

Amen

Through the broken bread we participate in the body of Christ. Through the cup of blessing we participate in the new life Christ gives.

**SHARING OF THE MEAL**

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**Holy Creator, Bread of Life, Everlasting Salvation,  
A light shines in the night and the night will not over  
come it.**

**In this meal we have been replenished and  
strengthened,  
the light of your love rekindled within.**

**We will be bold to carry this light into the world.**

**Thank you for recharging our batteries  
and reviving your ambient glow within us.**

**You are the power source that never gives out  
- eternally renewable and sustainable.**

**Thank you God**

**Thank you Christ**

**Thank you Spirit**

**Amen.**

**Our Faith Cries Out, Resilient: Service of Holy Communion for Advent**, was written by the Rev. Penny L. Lowes, an ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ and has served three UCC churches in Michigan. She is a freelance writer and author of M&M and the Rolling Stone and Other Scripture Dramas.

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***Serving in Christ's Name:***  
**Ministers** – All members of St. John UCC

***Participants in Today's Worship:***  
**Pastor** – Rev. Rosemary Captain  
**Minister of Music** – Sharon Banjavcic  
**Liturgist** - Sue Williams