



From Generation to Generation

December 10, 2023

Second Sunday of Advent

**First Congregational
United Church of Christ**

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Second Sunday of Advent

Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-10 Luke 1:26-38

✝ Invites worshipers to rise in spirit or body as they are able.

NCH indicates the New Century Hymnal.

You may notice there are several elements included in our time of worship. We want you to know this is intentional, as each of us may come for differing reasons; each of us may connect to Spirit in different ways. At First Congregational UCC, we are exploring how LOVE inspires us to create space for one another.

Join Us Online!

You can view our worship streamed on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/RCFirstUCC>. Copies of the video are available on our church web site's video tab **www.rcfirstucc.com**.

Centering as God's People

Greetings

One: "Fear can be a good thing. It can help us be attentive while driving down the highway. It can alert us to possible accidents. It can motivate us to do our best. However, fear can also be harmful. For so many of us, fear of the other, fear of failure, or fear of the unknown has led us to make unhealthy choices in our lives—choices such as building walls or tearing others down." ~Rev. Sarah Speed

Many: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

Prelude

Comin' Is a Glorious Light!

V. Courtney

Alan Glover, tenor

Call to Worship

One: In the midst of suffering and despair,

Many: God's prophet cries, "Comfort!"

One: Amid all that causes us pain, that brings us to tears,

Many: God's care falls over us like a gentle rain.

One: In this season of short days and long nights

Many: We are called to tend to each other.

One: On this second Sunday of Advent, we give thanks for God's compassion for us.

Prayer of Invocation

One: Holy God,
whether it's through angels or music,
friendships or sermons,

study or nature—
when you speak,
we long to hear it.
In a world as chaotic and broken as ours,
we could use your words of hope and healing.
With gratitude we pray,
Amen.

✝The Peace

Hearing God's Word

First Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-10

Pew Bible, OT page 609

A Message for the Young at Heart

Mary Haan

Bell Choir

Ding, Dong, Merrily on High

arr. by F. Gramann

Second Lesson: Luke 1:26-38

Pew Bible, NT, page 53

Sermon

God Meets Us in Our Fear

Pastor Erin Erickson

Bell Choir

Deck the Halls

setting, K. McChesney

Prayers of Community

Invitation to Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

Affirmation of Faith (in unison)

We believe in a God who knows our fears.

We believe in a God who says, "Be not afraid."

**We believe in a God who kicks off her shoes
and wades into the muck of our lives with us.**

**We believe in a God who stitches herself to our heels,
and invites us to dance.**

**We believe in a God who hemmed stars into the night sky
so that we can find our way home,
and who sends us friends with open doors,
so we can find our way to love.**

**We believe in a God who finds us in our fear
and does not leave us alone.**

Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

Offerings

Invitation

Barb Knight, Department of Stewardship and Budget

Church News

Birthdays

December 10: **Mitch Behringer**
Becky Ledford
December 13: **Vivian Dittmer**
December 14: **Barb Knight**
Chuck Rounds
December 16: **Gerry Boehrs**
Nora Wosepka

Pledge Drive

Today is **Pledge Sunday**, when we remember to support our church through our tithes! A large majority of the church's income comes through the pledges of our members and friends. Pledge cards will be dedicated during worship today.



Appetizers and Artwork for Advent and Birthday Celebration

The Departments of Hospitality and Education will be hosting **Appetizers and Artwork for Advent TODAY**. Come join us for tasty treats. Artwork tables will be set up for all who would like to join in! Also, have a piece of cake and wish **Mitch Behringer** a happy birthday!

Prayer Pals for All Ages!

Please fill out a Prayer Pal form in the Fellowship Hall and leave your form in the box there. Beginning this month, you'll be able to choose a Prayer Pal (or three) on a list in the Fellowship Hall!

Bells of the Hills Concert

Bells of the Hills, a community handbell choir, will perform its winter concert at **First Congregational Church** on **December 10 at 2:00pm**.

The music will feature familiar Christmas carols and holiday songs, including *Away in a Manger*, *The Boar's Head Carol*, and *Greensleeves (What Child Is This?)*. A freewill offering will be taken.

Stained Glass Group

Come learn how to create beautiful stained glass works of art. The group will meet on **Fridays from 1:00pm to 4:00pm** in the kitchen. Their next meeting will be on **Friday, December 15 at 1:00pm**. For more information, contact **Dave Ledford**.

Tanzania Presentation

Willis and Pat Sutliff will give a presentation about the St. Jude's School in Tanzania **next Sunday, December 17** in the Fellowship Hall following worship.

Church News

Church Chat Updates

Church Chat will be held on **Tuesday, December 19** from **11:30am to 12:30pm**.

The next meetings will be in **January** on the **second** and **fourth Tuesdays, January 9** and **23** at **11:30am**. Watch for information on when the group will meet after January.

Contact **Becky Fisher** or **Kathleen Batchelder** to find out information about the book the group will be reading and discussing.

The Christmas Fund 2023

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross is an annual UCC offering that expresses our thanks to retired and active UCC pastors and lay church workers and their families facing financial need, providing direct assistance to supplement pensions, help with the cost of medical insurance, a thank you gift at Christmas, and funds to meet emergency needs. This year's Christmas Fund theme is "Grace upon grace," from John 1:16:

"From Christ's fullness we have all received, grace upon grace."

Join with others in the United Church of Christ to help return "Grace upon grace" to those who have given so much to each of us by giving generously to the Christmas Fund this year.

First Congregational Church will collect this special offering on Sunday, December 24.

Mission Meal

The next Cornerstone Rescue Mission meal is **Friday, Dec. 29th**. We would love cookie donations and help to prepare the meal. Please have cookie donations to the church by **4:00pm on December 29th**. If you can help cook, the chefs will be at the church at **3:30pm on Dec. 29th**.

Fellowship Hour Help

Coffee hosts **and** dishwashers are needed for the coffee hour following worship. Easy instructions are posted for each volunteer opportunity. Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall on the sheets located next to the cookies if you can help. If you need assistance, indicate it on the sheet and someone will help you.

Toys for the Nursery

The church nursery is hoping to upgrade/replace some of its toys. They are asking for gently used or new toy donations appropriate for ages 0-5.

Toy ideas include:

Magna-Tiles (the more squares the better), baby rattles/smaller baby toys, board books, board games for preschoolers, wood toys (i.e. Melissa and Doug brand),

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planes/cars (Matchbox car size), coloring books, stacking or shape sorting toys.

Note: Please, no large, bulky toys or stuffed animals. Toys that can fit in a shoe box are the ideal size. Please drop off donations in the nursery. Thank you!

Construction on Clark Street

Due to construction on Clark Street, traffic to the church has been re-routed to a very narrow section of Fulton Street. We all need to reduce our speed, watch for children and be considerate of our church neighbors as we drive on this section of Fulton Street. Thank you.

Prayer Concerns

Please hold the following members and friends in your prayers:

Lee Boyles has ongoing health concerns.

Kay Daugherty's health is improving. Kay's brother-in-law, **Doug Reeves**, has heart issues.

Andy and **Barb Knight's** son, **John Knight**, faces serious health concerns as the result of a fall, but is doing better.

Ron Laughlin, husband of **Becky Fisher's** cousin, Linda, is receiving treatment for cancer.

Wes Humke had two cataract surgeries in November. Cards are

welcome and may be mailed to his address in the church directory.

Sheila Long's mother-in-law, **Ann Long**, is fighting cancer.

Jodie Thuringer's father is facing a recurrence of health issues.

Deb Tompkins fell and has a broken knee and a stress fracture on the knee.

Deb Tompkins has a young friend, 12-year-old **Max Green**, who lives in northern Kansas. Max was born with cerebral palsy and many other challenges. He was hospitalized with bacterial pneumonia but now is back home. This has been a difficult time for the whole family.

Pastor Dorotea Yucra's daughter, **Sarvia**, is receiving no treatment for terminal cancer at this time. She is being cared for at home by her mother and sister.

Nadine Zeller had surgery on November 27 for kidney stones.

We also pray for those members of our church family who are in care centers or isolated in their homes, including:

Evelyn Bradshaw, Vivian Dittmer, Wes Humke, Eunice Johnson, Merrie Miller, Marrelyce Seaman, Dorothy Slingsby, Helen Snyder and Elena Van Pelt

Leaders

Erin Erickson, pastor

Becky Fleming, licensed minister

Mary Haan, Christian education coordinator

Alan Glover, choir director, organist

Michael Bossen, bell choir director

Audrey Fenner, organist

John Fenner, French horn

The Adult Choir

Alicia Sutliff-Benusis, Michael Bossen, Gene Hovland,

Peggy Lovrien and Kurt Stone, guest musicians

Bells of the Hills Choir

Patti Arneson and Laura Switzer, administrative colleagues

Chuck Rounds, moderator

Denise Webster, treasurer

Carol Boyles, Becky Fisher and Jenny Kozel, congregational representatives

The Tipton Family, greeters

Ben, Brady and Ellie Tipton, acolytes

Michael O'Connor, reader

Departments of Hospitality and Education, coffee hosts

Departments of Hospitality and Education, dishwashers

Rev. Kathleen Batchelder, pastor emerita

Lynnell Parrott, organist emerita

Credits:

Comin' Is a Glorious Light! - V. Courtney

He Shall Feed His Flock - arr. Broughton

Variations on Hyfrydol - arr. Price

Ding, Dong, Merrily on High - arr. F. Gramann

Deck the Halls - setting K. McChesney

Give Thanks - H. Smith

Glory Sound

Lorenz Publishing

Lorenz Publishing

Choristers Guild, c2007

Agape (A Division of Hope Publishing), c1998

Integrity Hosanna Music, 1978

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