

St. John's United Church of Christ

10 A.M. Worship November 27, 2022

First Sunday of Advent - Hope

WE GET READY FOR THE WORD

Prayer in Preparation

Direct our attention, O God, above the turmoil of our times, beyond the distress of human greed. We look for signs that your realm is near, that your Word rules the world. Free us from the weight of heavy cares so that we hear your joyous truth. Amen.

Welcome and Announcements

*(Please note the * indicates when you should stand.)*

Passing the Peace

May God fill you all with Hope

The Opening

"Prepare the Way of the Lord"
**Prepare the way of the Lord.
Prepare the way of the Lord,
and all people will see
the salvation of our God.**

#121

Prelude

"Listen for His Coming"

arr. Hayes

*The Call to Worship

ONE: In Advent we watch and wait, and prepare to welcome the Christ Child into the world.

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, come!

ONE: In Advent we prepare for a life of discipleship,
and watch faithfully for signs of God's light breaking into the world.

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, come!

ONE: As we wait, dear One, we watch for signs of your action in the world, actions of
compassion and grace breaking in.

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, come!

ONE: Holy God, we recognize that we do not know the day or the hour, but we know that the
day is near.

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus, come! Be born anew in our world and in our lives.

*Hymn

"Come O Long-expected Jesus"

#125

**Come, O long-expected Jesus,
born to set your people free.
From our fears and sins release us;
Christ, in whom our rest shall be.
You, our strength and consolation,
come salvation to impart;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of many a longing heart.**

**Born your people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever,
born your gracious realm to bring.
By your own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by your all-sufficient merit
raise us to your glorious throne.**

*Opening Prayer (*In Unison*)

**In this season as the days grow shorter and the shadows lengthen, we gather in eager
expectation for the Light of the World to dawn. Help us, God, to lay aside all the works of night**

and even our cynicism as we enter this sacred season. During this hour of worship, send your Spirit to empower us to live in the light with hope. Amen.

LIGHT OF LIGHT

Choir sings:

Light of Light we humbly pray: shine in our hearts today.
Dispel the gloom and dark of light; fill all the world with love and light.

Everyone sings:

**Voices cry out from a world in grief:
Prayer of those who seek relief.
End their darkness, hear their call
For peace on earth, good will for all.**

Responsive Litany

One: Advent is a time of reflection and renewal.

All: God of light, shine in our hearts and renew our hope.

One: Advent is a time of self-examination.

All: God of light, shine in our hearts and strengthen our resolve.

One: Advent is a time of joyful expectation.

All: God of light, shine in our hearts and renew our faith.

One: Advent is a time of service and searching.

All: God of light, shine in our hearts and ignite our compassion.

Candle lighting

Today we light the first candle – the candle of hope – reminding us that in sending Christ, God sent hope to the earth. Hope for a world free from war and pain, hope for a sense of purpose and belonging and hope for peace and prosperity for our children and our children's children. When Christ came, he brought us the Light of Lights. Light that fills us with hope, illuminates our lives and shines in our hearts.

Everyone sings:

**Voices cry out from a world in grief; prayers of those who seek relief.
End their darkness, hear their call for peace on earth, goodwill for all. Peace on earth,
goodwill for all.**

Prayer: *(In Unison)*

God of light, we pray today that you will fill us with hopeful expectation, and that you will cause us to become your children of light. Help us to spread your light into the world around us. Help us to recognize our opportunities to brighten the lives of others. Help us to live each day as beacons of love filled with joy peace, and hope. Amen.

Time for the child in us - All

Pastor Lisa

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Scripture: Isaiah 2:1-5

One: This is the Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Litany of the Church (based on Psalm 122)

One: When I hear the words, 'let's go to church' my heart swells like the Grinch's heart that 'grew **three sizes** that day. And then – the true meaning of Christmas came through, and the Grinch found the strength of ten Grinches, plus two!

Many: Delight is contagious!

One: And it swells because of the understanding that I am the church. My memory drifts back to the sing song days where I was taught that the church is not a building, the church is not a steeple, the church is not a resting place...

Many: The church is the people!

One: When I hear the words, 'let's go to church' I am reminded that **I**, as the church, am Jerusalem. I am a well-built city. I am invited to remember that no matter what the world tells me, no matter how I am asked to conform and conscribe, no matter how I might think my hair should be, my clothes should look, my body should function, I am worthy.

Many: Self-love is contagious!

One: And we gather to be with the saints, to remember the building represents real and intentional communal building, communal beautifying, communal repairing. The stones that we have entered into, they are lively stones. The church's foundation is Christ, the support beams are the stable believers, the windows are the ordinances, and the pillars are the ministers of the word...

Many: the church is the people!

One: When I hear the words, 'let's go to church' I immediately open myself in anticipation for where the Good News of 'peace' might land in my soul. I have learned that church is when we are able to find spiritual pleasure and enjoy abundant peace and comfort while simultaneously being challenged to expand ourselves and our ideas of peace and comfort.

Many: Peace is contagious!

One: And as church, in church, with others that embody church... it becomes our task to stir up others to advocate for spiritual strength that is insistent on us attaining justice in the name of Christ, not just for the church, because...

Many: the church is the people!

One: When I hear the words, 'let's go to church' I am humbled by the truth that the joy and the love and the peace that I receive is also and always being received by the CHURCH, by the city that is built in all God's glory and honor, by the people and it lands in a place of hope that the one who built us will also hold us as we praise all the earth as being the house of the Holy One.

Many: Hope is contagious! Let us go to church!

Message

*** Hymn:**

"Christians All, Your Lord is Coming"

#136 verses 1, 2, 4

**Christians all your Lord is coming
Drawing near in holy birth
Ring the bells and sound the trumpets
Let your music fill the earth
Dance and move to show God's glory
Kneel and pause to hear God's word
Alleluia Alleluia
Rise and let your songs be heard**

**Christians all your Lord is coming
Calling you to serve in deed
See the ones who hurt and suffer
Hear their cry and act with speed
Set all selfish ways behind you
Purge your hearts of sinful greed
Alleluia Alleluia
Christ in you will meet their need**

**Christians all your Lord is coming
Hope for peace is now at hand
Let there be no hesitation
Walk in faith where life demands
Bear the word that God has given
Share the birth that stirs your soul
Alleluia Alleluia
Christ will come and make you whole**

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (*In Unison*)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy 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.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Invitation to Give Generously

(Thank you for being so generous in your care of St. John's UCC and its mission, through your participation and giving. Your stewardship makes a difference. You may make your offering several ways including in church, online, by text at 833-502-0657, or mail. We are grateful for your support.)

***Doxology (*In Unison*)**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.**

*** Prayer of Dedication (*In Unison*)**

**God of hopeful waiting, we give thanks for all of the ways in which you reveal yourself to us.
Help us to clear away the many distractions of this season and offer our whole lives as gifts to you.
May our offerings nurture all of the ways in which your promise is breaking into the world in acts of compassion and justice. May these gifts nurture your rule of peace. Amen.**

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

* Hymn: "Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates" #129 verses 1, 2,4
Lift up your heads, O mighty gates:
behold the glorious Ruler waits!
The Sovereign One is drawing near;
the Savior of the world is here
Fling wide the portals of your heart:
make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy

So come, our Sovereign; enter in!
Let new and nobler life begin;
your Holy Spirit guide us on,
until the glorious crown be won,

Benediction

Postlude "Awake, Awake and greet the New Morn" **Haugen, arr Chapin**

Preaching: **Pastor Lisa Hart**
Dir of Music Ministry: **Ruth Notch**
Advent Candle Lighting: **The Nichols Family**
Liturgist: **Merilee Dauster**
Song Leaders: **Kathy & Mike Scherr**
Usher Team: **Larry Sontag**
Technology Team: **Steve Hawkinson**
Fellowship: **Barb Ackermann and Barb Nichols**
Lockup: **Janis Boehm**
Chancel Choir: **Mary Bowers, Ellen Brandon, Rich Brandon, Jeanne Buchner, Heide Connolly, Don Duperrett, Mary Jane Duperrett, Carolyn Golfin, Susie Pisoni, Helen Stortz, Evelyn Weber**

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Announcements

Ushers and are **needed** for the 4 and 7 pm services on **Christmas Eve**.
Ushers **contact David Thomason** at 314-878-1340.

We pray for **Shirley Carmack, Betty Gschwind, A.J. Switzer** and **Paul VanDriest**
Please let us know your prayer concerns.

Global Ministries requests that we pray with the **Lebanon** this week

12/04/22 Service
Liturgist: **Lynn Potts**
Usher Team: **Jim Pisoni**
Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**
Fellowship & Lockup: **please volunteer**

12/11/22 Service
Liturgist: **David Leech**
Usher Team: **Larry Sontag**
Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**
Fellowship & Lockup: **please volunteer**

A Look Ahead

11/27/22		First Sunday of Advent
11/27/22	9 AM	Loaves & Fishes
11/29/22	10:00 AM	Advent Bible Study
11/29/22		Bunko Women's Fellowship
December		Mitten Tree Collection
12/4/22		Second Sunday of Advent
12/4/22		Hanging of the Greens
12/6/22	10 AM	Advent Bible Study

12/11/22		Third Sunday of Advent
12/11/22		Children's Program
12/13/22	10 AM	Advent Bible Study
12/15&16	10 AM	ECC Christmas Performances
12/18/22	9:15 AM	Loaves & Fishes
12/18/22	10 AM	Fourth Sunday of Advent
12/18/22	10:30 AM	Christmas Fund offering
12/20/22	10 AM	Advent Bible Study
12/24/22	4 PM	Christmas Eve Service
12/24/22	7 PM	Christmas Eve Service
12/25/22	10 AM	Christmas Day (virtual service).
12/27/22		Bunko Women's Fellowship
12/31/22		New Year's Eve
01/01/23	10 AM	New Years' Service with communion

Please check your **News Notes/Website** for specific information around **upcoming activities**

Council Meeting Bullet Points

- Karen Gatti announced her retirement from STJECC. She will help during the transition to a new Superintendent.
- The St. Louis Association will be presenting a "Trivia Night" on April 28. St. John's will be the host facility.
- Budget and Constitution and By-Law changes will be discussed after church on January 22.

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on February 5, 2022

St. John's United Church of Christ

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Worship Services

9:00 a.m. Fellowship in Fellowship Hall

10:00 a.m. Worship and Sunday School

In-Person, Facebook Live, or Virtual

St. John's United Church of Christ – Chesterfield

Nominating Committee Nomination Form 2022

The Nominating Committee is seeking the names of individuals who are willing to participate fully as members of the St. John's U.C.C. Church Council. Nominees will be part of an energized council leadership team serving a church with a newfound spirit to our Christian beliefs and community.

In the space below, please nominate one or more potential leaders, including a brief statement of what you perceive their leadership qualities and qualifications for the Church Council. Please provide your recommendation to a member of the Nominating Committee by Sunday, December 4, 2022.

The Members of the Nominating Committee are:

Dean Goldenstein
Phylis Freiburger
Danny Mueller
Helen Stortz

Name of Nominee: _____

Perceived Leadership Qualities: _____

Name of Nominee: _____

Perceived Leadership Qualities: _____

Your Name & Contact Info (optional): _____