

St. John's United Church of Christ

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

10 A.M. Worship Dec 15, 2024

Joy; Third Sunday of Advent

WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Ringling of the Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

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

Members and Visitors please make note of your attendance by signing in on the pew pads.)

***Sharing the Peace of Christ**

Peace be with you

And also with you

Prelude

"While We Are Waiting, Come"

Cloninger/Cason arr. Pugh

***The Call to Worship**

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say Rejoice!

Our joy is in the Lord who blesses us.

Shout for joy, for the Lord is near!

Our praises ascend to God for the mighty things God has done.

Let your praise dance and swirl in tribute to God!

Surely God blesses and saves us. Hallelujah! Praise be to God. AMEN.

*** Hymn**

"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

#164

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!

Listen now to what we say:

News! News!

Jesus Christ is born today.

Ox and ass before him bow,

and he is in the manger now.

Christ is born today!

Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!

Now you hear of endless bliss;

Joy! Joy!

Jesus Christ was born for this!

He has opened heaven's door,

and we are blest for evermore.

Christ was born for this!

Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!

Now you need not fear the grave:

Peace! Peace!

Jesus Christ was born to save!

Calls you one and calls you all

to gain the everlasting hall.

Christ was born to save!

Christ was born to save!

Advent Candle

No matter what troubles overwhelm us today, Isaiah reminds us that in all of our preparation and passionate pursuit of God's coming kingdom, we must not forget that God's salvation has come and is coming. "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3). With joy you will remember that God's salvation is already present among us.

Faced with the troubles and the suffering of the world, we choose to live in joyful presence to God and one another. We will not turn away from the pain and the hurt in our world, and we will not stop rejoicing in God, whose salvation fills us to overflowing that God's love might flow through us and flood our troubled world with hope, peace, and joy.

We light this candle of joy as a sign of our commitment to be present to ourselves, our friends, our families, and our neighbors that in sharing our vulnerable lives we might share in the glorious joy of God's salvation together.

Hymn	"We Light the Advent Candles"	
We light the Advent candles against the winter night, to welcome our Lord Jesus who is the world's True Light, to welcome our Lord Jesus who is the world's True Light.	Three candles now are gleaming and show us the true way, rejoice, the Baptist cries out, your Lord has come today, rejoice, the Baptist cries out, your Lord has come today!	

Gathering Prayer (*In Unison*)

Lord, we have come to this place from a world of demands and schedules. We have sought hope and peace and have found them here. Now we seek the inner joy that only your presence can bring to our lives. Open our hearts and our spirits to your love. Amen.

Time for the Child

"Child of Blessing, Child of Promise"
**Child of God your loving parent,
 Learn to listen for God's call
 Grow to laugh and sing and worship,
 Trust and love God more than all.**

Rev Katie Jo Bielke

Special Music

"Christ, Be Our Light"

Farrell arr. Raney

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: Luke 3:7-18

⁷ John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What, then, should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people.

One: This is the Word of the Lord.
ALL: Thanks be to God.

Message

*** Hymn***"The Voice of God is Calling"*

#666 vs1-3

The voice of God is calling
to women and to men;
the voice once heard in Zion,
resounds on earth again:
whom shall I send to succor
my people in their need?
Whom shall I send to loosen
the bonds of shame and greed?

I hear my people crying
in slum and mine and mill;
no field or mart is silent,
no city street is still.
I see my people falling
in darkness and despair.
Whom shall I send to shatter
the fetters which they bear?

We heed, O God, your summons,
and answer: Here are we!
Send us upon your errand,
let us your servants be.
Our strength is dust and ashes,
our years a passing hour,
But you can use our weakness
to magnify your power.

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.

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD**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.)

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

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly hosts;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

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

O God, receive the gifts of our hands as an outpouring of thanksgiving for you have begun a good work in us, and we are grateful. We are awed by the thought of partnership with the Almighty. Help us to respond by doing our part. Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

*** Hymn**

"Christians All, Your Lord Is Coming"

#136

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
He will rise up from the dead
Lift the cup of sin forgiven
Bless the host and eat his bread
Mend the ways where peace is broken
Give yourselves to true Shalom
Alleluia Alleluia
Dwell as one in church and home

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

***Benediction**

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Pastor: **Rev. Katie Jo Bielke**

Advent Candle: **The Rizzo Family**

Director of Music Ministry: **Ruth Notch**

Liturgist: **Helen Stortz**

Usher Team: **Phil Difani**

Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**

Fellowship/Lockup: **Philip Difani**

Chancel Choir: **Mary Bowers, Ellen Brandon, Rich Brandon, Jeanne Buchner, Don Duperrett, Mary Jane Duperrett, Carolyn Golfin, Susie Pisoni, Helen Stortz, Evelyn Weber**

Join us for Christmas Eve Candle Light Service Dec 24th offered at both 4 and 7 p.m.

Announcements

We pray for
Karen (Scooter) Beatty, Kevin Beatty, Rev. Dwayne Dollgener,
Elizabeth Hart, Cherie Messina and Gloria Vaclavik.
 Please let us know your prayer concerns.
 If you have private prayer concerns please speak with Rev Katie Jo Bielke..

Global Ministries requests that we pray with **Hong Kong** this week

12/29/24 Service Liturgist: Mike Kelly Usher Team: Jim Pisoni Technology: Steve Hawkinson Fellowship/Lockup: Philip Difani Special Music: Fluatist	01/05/25 Service Liturgist: Laura Ayers Usher Team: Larry Sontag Technology: Steve Hawkinson Fellowship/Lockup: Helen Stortz Special Music: Vocalist, Meher Arora Communion Service: Donna Switzer & Helen Stortz	01/12/25 Service Liturgist: Helen Stortz Usher Team: John Bartelt Technology: Steve Hawkinson Fellowship/Lockup: Helen Stortz Special Music: Flautist
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... Looking Ahead December

Mon	12/16	11:00 AM	Advent Bible Study
		6:00 PM	Council Meeting
Tue	12/17	10:00 AM	Book Group Reading "Comfort and Joy" by Kristin Hannah
Wed	12/18		ECC Christmas Break Begins
Thu	12/19	5:00 PM	Newsletter Articles Due
Thu	12/19	5:30 PM	Table Fellowship at TBD
Sat	12/21	3:00 PM	Longest Night Service
Sun	12/22	9:20 AM	Loaves & Fishes
		10:00 AM	Love; Fourth Sunday of Advent & GM Pray for Afghanistan
		11:00 AM	Mission Meeting
		10:00 AM	Christmas Fund Offering (for the veterans of the cross)
Sun	12/22	3:00 PM	Hart/Spahr Open House
Mon	12/23	11:00 AM	Advent Bible Study
Tue	12/24	4:00 PM	Christmas Eve Candle Light Service
Tue	12/24	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Candle Light Service
Tue	12/24 & 25 Christmas (office closed)		
Wed	12/25		Merry Christmas

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

<https://www.stjohnsuccchesterfield.org/fellowship>



online giving



Advent Bible Study



St. John's News & Events

Join us on Sundays
 9:00 a.m. - **Fellowship** in Fellowship Hall
 10:00 a.m. – **Sunday School**
 10:00 a.m. – **Worship**
 In-Person, Facebook Live, or Virtual

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stjohnsuccconolive@gmail.com
www.stjohnsuccchesterfield.org

Poinsettias Given to the Glory of God ...

In Celebration of the season given by Mel & Ruth Kohl.

In Celebration of Andrea & Chris Vinyard Family given by Carolyn & Byron Golfin.

In Celebration of blessings given by Laura & Brock Ayers.

In Celebration of Christmas given by Donna & Paul Switzer.

In Celebration of Diana & Jason Flower Family given by Carolyn & Byron Golfin.

In Celebration of holidays with family and friends given by Todd Armstrong.

In Celebration of members of St. John's congregation given by the Warren Stemme Family.

In Celebration of my family, the Baumans given by Barbara Golland.

In Celebration of our family and friends given by Charles, Nora & Anthony Amato.

In Celebration of Poppa & BGE given by Laura & Brock Ayers.

In Celebration of the gift of life, wonderful family & friends
given by Rev Carleton & Marilyn Norton.

In Celebration of the Gronefeld family given by the Warren Stemme Family.

In Celebration of the Stemme family given by the Warren Stemme Family.

In Honor of Angelina Amato & Leitha Macalady given by Charles, Nora & Anthony Amato.

In Honor of Betty Wagner given by Lynn Potts.

In Honor of children, grandchildren & great grandchildren
given by Rev Carleton & Marilyn Norton.

In Honor of Mike & Kathy Scherr "for all you do!" given by Lynn Potts.

In Honor of my family given by Janis Boehm.

In Honor of my wonderful family given by Phyllis Freiberger.

In Honor of our family given by Ken & Jackie Ruff.

In Memory of Barry W Maddox given by Mark Strothmann & Shari Maddox.

In Memory of Brenda & Joe Hart given by Monica & Brian Spahr.

In Memory of Daniel Switzer given by Donna & Paul Switzer.

In Memory of Dottie & Bernie Spahr given by Monica & Brian Spahr.

In Memory of Gene Clauson given by Jeanne Clauson.

In Memory of George & Lynn Hudson given by Larry, Angie & Corryne Sontag.

In Memory of George Tindira given by Carol, John & Matt.

In Memory of Harold Freiberger, my wonderful husband given by Phyllis Freiberger.

In Memory of Jim Amato & Francis Macalady Sr. given by Charles, Nora & Anthony Amato.

In Memory of Jim Pisoni Sr given by The Pisoni Family.

In Memory of Leonard & LaVerne Haas given by Charles & Marjorie Neubert.

In Memory of my husband David Golland given by Barbara Golland.

In Memory of My Parents, Charles ('Lindy') & June Ackerman given by Barb Ackerman.

In Memory of parents, sister, brother-in-law, cousin & friends
given by Rev Carleton & Marilyn Norton.

In Memory of Philip B Difani Sr given by Lee & Phil Difani.

In Memory of Raymond & Ruth Sontag given by Larry, Angie & Corryne Sontag.

In Memory of Roy & Irene Aldrich given by Lee & Phil Difani.

In Memory of Wesley, Arland and Jay Stemme given by the Warren Stemme Family.