

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

December 4th, 2022

Second Sunday of Advent

A Service of the Word and Holy Communion



Advent 2 Candle Drawing

Stushie Art. <https://stushieart.com/>

Church bulletin covers and other art by artist Stushie. Unique crayon and digital worship

A Scottish pastor, ministering in East Tennessee



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

a just world for all

December 4th, 2022
Second Sunday of Advent
A Service of the Word and Holy Communion

"I will prepare and some day my chance will come."
---Abraham Lincoln

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

**Please stand as you are able*

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude – Keith Konet

*Call to Worship

One: A leader soon comes who will lift the poor
with righteousness around his waist.

**All: Rejoice! Rejoice! All God's children.
Let all the people give God praise.**

One: A shoot soon comes from Jesse's stump,
and a branch shall spring from roots.

**All: Rejoice! Rejoice! All God's children.
Let all the people give God praise**

One: A child soon comes from an innocent place
with wisdom and might he'll lead the way.

**All: Rejoice! Rejoice! All God's children.
Let all the people give God praise.**

*Gathering Prayer

God of the waiting wanderers in the wilderness,
We enter this moment of worship
expecting that when we leave this hour of prayer,
we will be full of the courage needed
to stand as a signal.

We come to the mountain
to feel closer to your presence, O God.
May the mountains yield prosperity for your people.
May righteousness flourish and peace abound.
You, alone, are the God who does wondrous things.
May your glory fill this place as we worship you
in spirit and in truth.
Amen.

* Hymn – NCH 451 – Be Now My Vision vv. 1, 2, & 4

Be Now My Vision

Versifier: Eleanor H. Hull, 1912; adapt.

Translator: Mary E. Byrne, 1905

Ancient Irish text, c. 8th century

Word alterations © 1992 The Pilgrim Press

Tune: SLANE 10.10.9.10.

Harmonizer: David Evans, 1927

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**1 Be now my vision, O God of my heart;
nothing surpasses the love You impart.
You my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, Your presence, my light.**

**2 Be now my wisdom, and be my true word,
ever within me, my soul is assured.
Mother and Father, You are both to me,
now and forever Your child I will be.**

**4 Sovereign of Heaven, my victory won,
may I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.**

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

For the second Sunday in Advent, the Hebrew Scriptures readings continue a series in the book of Isaiah. The prophet Isaiah, having witnessed the corruption of rulers that led to the northern kingdom of Israel's demise and the southern kingdom of Judah's own troubles, prophesies a new ruler who will come and lead as David led. While Isaiah was hoping for the new ruler Hezekiah in his time, the prophet's hope is for all future leaders, that they would judge with righteousness and equity those who are poor and those in need. That a future ruler would not look to what benefited them but to the wisdom of God, and to seek God's guidance in how they led. When the leader of the people seeks God, peace comes over the land, for there is no more competition with each other—it is only how they can best live according to God's ways. The wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard live with the goat—these symbols of peace in creation are representative of God's abundant love. There is enough for all

when we look to God's ways. Other nations will look to Judah, to their ruler, and be drawn to them because of what God has done for them.

- 11** 1 Then a shoot will sprout from the stump of Jesse;
from Jesse's roots, a branch will blossom:
2 The Spirit of YHWH will rest on you—
a spirit of wisdom and understanding,
a spirit of counsel and strength,
a spirit of knowledge and reverence for YHWH.
3 You will delight in obeying YHWH,
and you won't judge by appearances,
or make decisions by hearsay.
4 You will treat poor people with fairness
and will uphold the rights of the land's
downtrodden.
With a single word you will strike down tyrants;
with your decrees you will execute evil people.
5 Justice will be the belt around this your waist—
faithfulness will gird you up.
6 Then the wolf will dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard will lie down with the young goat;
the calf and the lion cub will graze together,
and a little child will lead them.
7 The cow will feed with the bear;
their young will lie down together.
The lion will eat hay like the ox.
8 The baby will play next to the den of the cobra,
and the toddler will dance over the viper's nest.
9 There will be no harm, no destruction
anywhere in my holy mountain;
for as water fills the sea,
so the land will be filled with knowledge of YHWH.
10 On that Day, the Root of Jesse will serve as a symbol to the peoples of the world—
nations will flock to you, and your home will be a place of honor.

Psalm Response: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 (Responsively)

Psalm 72 is a blessing upon the coronation of a new ruler. The psalmist prays for God's blessings for the new ruler; that God would grant them wisdom to rule with justice. The psalmist prays that the new ruler would remember those who are poor and those in need, and prays that the ruler would defend the most vulnerable, and that the ruler be blessed with long life and a reign with abundance and peace. The psalmist concludes by blessing God, for it is God alone who can accomplish peace and justice.

72 1 O God, give your anointed one your judgment—
and your justice.

**2 Teach your chosen one to govern your people rightly
and bring justice to those who are oppressed.**

3 The mountains will bring the people peace
and the hills justice!

**4 Your anointed will defend those who are oppressed among
the people, save the children of those who are poor,
and crush the oppressor.**

5 The reign of your anointed will endure
as long as the sun and moon—
throughout all generations.

**6 The rule of the chosen one will be
like rain coming down on the meadow,
like showers watering the earth.**

7 Justice will flower through the days, and profound
peace, until the moon be no more.

**18 Blessed be God, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous deeds!**

19 And blessed forever be God's glorious Name;
may the whole earth be filled with God's glory. Amen, amen!

Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13

The Epistle reading continues with these verses in Romans 15. The apostle Paul writes that the scriptures written before were to give us hope in the here and now, by God's steadfastness and encouragement through the ancestors of our faith. Paul gives instructions to the church in Rome to welcome one another—indeed, throughout the letter Paul has encouraged the Jewish followers to welcome in the new Gentile converts. According to Paul's explanation, Jesus was Jewish to confirm the promises made through the ancestors of the faith, but Paul also quotes the scriptures where it lifts up the Gentiles as people who also praise God. Finally, Paul quotes the prophet Isaiah, linking Jesus as the one who will come from the root of Jesse. It is important for us to remember that while Paul and other early Christians made this connection to Isaiah and Jeremiah, there are other interpretations among Jews about the Messiah, from before and after Jesus's time.

15 4 Everything written before our time was written for our instruction, that we might derive hope from the lessons of patience and the words of encouragement in the scriptures. 5 May God, the source of all strength and encouragement, enable you to live in perfect harmony with one another according to the Spirit of Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one heart and one voice, you may praise the God of our Savior Jesus Christ. 7 Accept one another as Christ accepted us, for the glory of God. 8 Christ became a servant of the chosen people to live out the truth of God's promise to them, 9 and at the same time to give the Gentiles cause to glorify God for showing mercy. As scripture has it,

“Therefore I will praise you among the nations
and I will sing to Your Name.”

10 Again, it says, “Rejoice, all you nations, with God’s people.”

11 And again:

“Praise our God, all you nations,
and let all the peoples praise the Most High.”

12 And Isaiah too says, “The root of Jesse is coming
and will arise to rule over the nations,
and they will place their trust in the Coming One.”

13 May the God of hope fill you with such peace and joy in your faith, that you may be filled with hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

The Gospel turns to John the Baptizer in Matthew 3. The writers of all four Gospel accounts link John the Baptizer to Second Isaiah, where in 40:3 the prophet declares that a voice cries out from the wilderness. Second Isaiah was writing of the time when the people returned from exile in Babylon, around 520 B.C.E. However, the Gospel writers identify this as John centuries later, who came from the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Some scholars believe John may have been part of the Essenes, a group of Jews who gathered near the Dead Sea and prepared for the Day of the Lord to come. They had similar practices of not eating meat, and the Jewish practice of the mikveh, a ritual cleansing in water immersion, was practiced more rigorously by the Essenes. John came from the wilderness and proclaimed this baptism, and people from all along the Jordan came to him. However, when some of the Sadducees and Pharisees, two other different Jewish groups, came to be baptized, John warned them not to rely on their identity or ancestry, but that they must go through the inner transformation, to bear fruit worthy of repentance. John declared that one was coming after him who was more powerful, one whose axe lay at the foot of the tree and whose winnowing fork was on the threshing floor. The one coming after John would work on them and they might not like it, for anything bad would be cut off, anything chaff would be torn from the wheat and would be burned. In other words, the one coming after John was coming to purify and cleanse. The masks any of us wear for the world, the things we hide behind—our religious identity, our lineage, wealth, power—whatever it is, it will not hold up to the truth of God—it will be torn away. We can’t hide who we are from God. Too often we want to hide our faults and shortcomings. But if we allow God to work in us, God can help us bear good fruit.

3 1 At this time John the Baptizer appeared in the desert of Judea, proclaiming,

2 “Change your hearts and minds, for the reign of heaven is about to break in upon you!” 3 It was John that the prophet Isaiah described when he said,

“A herald’s voice cries in the desert:
‘Prepare the way of our God,
make straight the paths of God!’”

4 John was clothed in a garment of camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist.
Grasshoppers and wild honey were his food.

5 At that time, Jerusalem, all Judea and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him.
6 John baptized them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.

7 When he saw that many of the Pharisees and Sadducees were coming to be baptized, John said to them, “You pack of snakes! Who told you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Give some evidence that you mean to reform! 9 And don’t pride yourselves on the claim, ‘Sarah and Abraham are our parents.’ I tell you, God can raise children for Sarah and Abraham from these very stones!

10 “Even now the ax is laid to the root of the tree. Every tree that is not fruitful will be cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 I will baptize you in water if you have a change of heart, but the One who will follow me is more powerful than I. I’m not fit even to untie the sandals of the Coming One! That One will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire, 12 whose winnowing-fan will clear the threshing floor. The grain will be gathered into the barn, but the chaff will be burned in unquenchable fire.”

***Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy – Second Sunday of Advent, Year A: December 4th, 2022,
Stand As A Signal** (*Isaiah 11:1-10, Romans 15:4-13, Matthew 3:1-12*)

Reader One: “They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious” (*Isaiah 11:9-10*).

Reader Two: We are the followers of that root of Jesse Isaiah spoke of. We are the ones who are now called to stand as a signal to the world, to all of creation, that peace is the will of the one who created us. Peace is the knowledge of the Lord that we proclaim from sea to shining sea.

Reader One: “In those days John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness of Judea proclaiming. “Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” And “bear fruit worthy of repentance” (*Matthew 3:1,2, 8*).

Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of joyful hope and the candle of proclaimed peace, in part to remind ourselves that we are a people rising toward God’s promise. But we also light them as a sign to the world, an announcement there are some who hold on to hope and there are some who work the ways of peace. We stand as a sign that Emmanuel is still our fervent prayer.

Light two blue candles on the Advent wreath.

***Advent Hymn – 116 NCH - O Come, O Come, Emmanuel vv. 1 & 2 with refrain**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Original Language: Latin

Translator: John Mason Neale

Translator (st. 2): Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916; alt.

Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710;

based on ancient antiphons from Advent Vespers; Other translators also, alt.

Tune: VENI EMMANUEL L.M. with refrain

Arranger: Thomas Helmore, 1854

15th century French “Proclamation”

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Child of God appear.**

**Refrain:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!**

**2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,
and order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show,
and help us in that way to go. [Refrain]**

Reflection – Where Are You Located This Advent? - The Rev. Scott Rosenstein

WE RESPOND

***Prayer of Response**

O Come, Thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh. To us the path of knowledge show, and cause us in her ways to go.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, God with Us, and lead us away from the ways of the world we have made, and into your wisdom. May we listen to the prophets and sages of old, and hear the cries for justice in the here and now.

O Come, Desire of Nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind. Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease. Fill the whole world with heaven's peace. May we rejoice in your arrival in our hearts and world in a new way. Amen.

*** Hymn of Response – NCH 122 – Come, O Long-Expected Jesus vv. 1, 2, & 3**

Come, O Long-Expected Jesus

Author: Charles Wesley, 1744; alt.

Word adaptations © 1981 Ruth C. Duck

Tune: STUTTGART 8.7.8.7.

Composer (attributed to): Christian F. Witt, 1600-1716

Psalmodia Sacra, Gotha, 1715

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**1 Come, O long-expected Jesus,
born to set all people free!
from our fears and sins release us;
grant us your true liberty.**

**2 Israel's strength and consolation,
hope to all the earth impart;
dear desire of every nation,**

enter every longing heart.

**3 Born all people to deliver,
born a child, you came to reign!
Born to rule on earth forever,
Come, be known to us again.**

Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings

We believe in the God of justice and righteousness, and God believes in us to carry forth the mission of loving and caring for community. Let us now share our gifts and resources so that we may continue to walk humbly with God and with neighbors.

The Offertory – *Keith Konet*

***Presentation of Offerings Doxology**

**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.**

***Blessing of the Gifts**

We dedicate these gifts that have been shared for the fortification of the beloved community. Let these gifts do justice in the world. Let them be a signal to the people that there is a God who saves, heals, and sets free. Amen.

***Call to Reconciliation**

All too often, we believe God's vision of justice and peace is only for us, not those around us. We are sure others need to be cleansed and forgiven, but not us. Let us seek to live as if, indeed, the kingdom is coming near, as we offer our prayers to the One who calls us to Advent living, as we pray together, saying,

***Prayer for Forgiveness**

Goodness Incarnate, we must confess that we have not lived as your children. We muddy the clear waters of baptism with the debris of walking over those we claim we love. We sit in our lonely lives feasting on bitterness, when we could be feasting with those we are told not to trust. We wait for all our desires to be taken care of by you, while you hope we would fill the lives of others with your grace and hope.

Forgive us, God of this holy season, and help us to be as willing to draw near to others, so we might heal their brokenness, touch their loneliness, embrace their grief, and love them as you did when you came to us so long ago, as well as in these moments, in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

-Silent Prayer

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

One: Here is the good news:

 speak with the whispers of hope until it silences despair;
 sing the carols of compassion until all join in the chorus;
 shower others with wonder and delight and join in God's dance of grace.

**Many: Thanks be to God. We are forgiven! So, let us welcome others with open arms,
 just as we have been embraced in God's love and laughter. Amen.**

A BANQUET OF HOPEFUL EXPECTATION – ADVENT COMMUNION

(We pause to invite those at home who have not already prepared elements to do so. Even an English muffin can become a sacrament, even a cup of water or tea can become a remembrance of God's redeeming love)

Invitation

One: God's Banquet is coming. The time we await when all will gather from North, East, West and South.

Many: A banquet where those who are rich and those who are powerful will sit with those who are weak and those who are poverty-stricken. A table where those who are young and those who are old will learn from each other. A time when all will sit together in peace, "and the wolf will lie down with the lamb".

One: Here at this table we get a foretaste of God's banquet. This is indeed God's table, not the church's, and so all who seek to follow The Way are welcome to eat and drink from it.

Many: Come and taste the grace eternal, come and see that God is good.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: God is with us.

Many: We are not alone.

One: Christ is present here.

Many: The Spirit moves within us.

One: Let us give thanks to God

Many: In memory and in hope.

One: Blessings be to you, Creator God,
 Who in the beginning brought light and life to the world and who continues
 to bring it love and light everlasting.

Many: Your song of wisdom echoes through the ages, your ancient promise still brings us hope.

One: Over the ages you have called people to embrace your hope and share your love.
 But even when they have closed their ears to the song you did not stop singing.

You sent prophets and messengers to your people, reminding them of the promised time of peace and justice that would surround the world.

Many: They came in the midst of our despair and filled us with hope.

One: And then you came to a young woman named Mary and laid out the promise in a new way

Many: Promising her a son, who would be called Jesus

Promising her that in her son the world would be changed.

One: And now as we prepare for that child to be born, we echo the ancient cry:

Many: O come, O come Emmanuel.

One: And also we lift our voices, proclaiming together the praises of ages:

Many:

O holy holy, holy God,

O God of time and space.

All earth and sea and sky above

bear witness to your Grace.

Hosanna in the highest heav'n,

creation sings your praise.

And blessed is the One who comes

and bears Your name always.

The Story Remembered

One: Yet even now, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, we remember the life that this baby will live.

Many: We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition to show all what the Banquet of Hope could be as he ate openly with those despised and those outcast of his world.

One: And we remember one special meal, foretaste of the banquet that is to come, that he ate with his closest friends.

Many: Gathering them together in an upper room to share the story of liberation, he prepared them for liberation.

One: And at the end of the meal he took bread, blessed and broke it, then passed it to them saying:

Many: Take and eat. This bread is the body of Life, broken by the world. Eat it in remembrance and in hope.

One: After that he took the cup, blessed it, and passed it to them saying:

Many: This cup is the sign of the New Covenant. Whenever you drink it remember me, for I shall not eat or drink again until the time of the heavenly banquet.

One: Remembering the birth of the child in the stable, we remember also his life, his death and his resurrection.

Many: We remember how he poured his love out all he met and look forward to his return and the coming reign of peace, love, and justice.

One: And in our remembering we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Many:

**Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!
Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!**

Table Prayer – The Spirit Transforms

One: God, you poured your Spirit on Mary and she sang words of defiance and hope.

Pour out your Spirit upon us gathered here. As we eat and drink may we know your presence.

As we eat and drink may we be opened to the possibilities of your hope and power.

And may we be strengthened in our time of waiting for peace and justice so that we will have the courage to make the Christmas promise a reality.

One: And the people all proclaim:

Many:

**Amen, amen, O Holy One!
Hosanna and amen!
Amen, amen, O Holy One!
Hosanna and amen!**

One: And now, as beloved children of a loving Parent, we pray:

The Lord's Prayer – using "debts" and "debtors"

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,

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen

The Pouring and Breaking and Serving

One: The Bread we break is the Bread of Life.

The Cup we Share is the Cup of Promise.

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Many: Thanks be to God.

One: Come and eat, the banquet awaits.

***Sharing of the Elements**

One:: Let us in our places receive the gift of God, the Bread of Heaven.

Many: We are one in Christ in the bread we share.

One: Let us in our places receive the gift of the cup of Blessing.

Many: We are one in Christ in the cup we share.

***Prayer of Thanksgiving Following Communion**

God of pregnant expectations,
God of Christmas promise,
God of child-like hope,
we have eaten and drunk from your table.
May the eating and the drinking
fill us with hope in a world of despair.
May we be beacons of hope
as we wait for the day
when the world will be changed.
Grant that this taste of your banquet
which is to come
would give us the hunger for peace and justice
in our community and around the world.
Amen.

GOING FORTH

*** PARTING CAROL – NCH 145 – Once in Royal David's City vss. 1, 2 & 3**

Once in Royal David's City

Author: Cecil F. Alexander, 1848; alt.

Tune: IRBY 8.7.8.7.7.7.

Composer: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849

Harmonizer: A. H. Mann, 1919

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**1 Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for a bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.**

**2 Jesus came to earth from heaven,
who is God and Head of all,**

Sheltered in a rustic stable,
cradles in a common stall:
With the poor and meek and lowly
lived on earth our Savior holy.

**3 And through all this wondrous childhood
Jesus honors and obeyed,
Loved and watched the tender mother
whose strong arms a cradle made.
So, like Jesus, we should be
serving God obediently.**

***Commissioning and Benediction**

One: As God has welcomed us in these moments,
Many: let us go to embrace each person we meet.

One: As Jesus has been our servant of hope and grace,
Many: let us go to serve those who are most vulnerable around us.

One: As the Spirit of hope has filled us,
Many: let us go to empty ourselves of joy and peace for all. Amen.

***Postlude - Keith Konet**

* * * * *

- (1) The Gathering Prayer, Call to Worship, Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings, and the Blessing of the Gifts are adapted from Advent 2A – December 4, 200, written by Rev. Mia M. McClain is the Senior Pastor of Riverside Baptist Church in Washington D.C. She is an ordained UCC minister. All publishing rights reserved. Permission for congregations to use in worship or educational settings, including streaming.
- (2) *Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy 2022 Second Sunday of Advent, December 4th, 2022 – Stand As A Signal*, by Derek Weber. Posted on the website of *Discipleship Ministries, The United Methodist Church*. <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/advent-candle-lighting-liturgy-2022#>
- (3) The Prayer of Response is adapted from *Worship Resources for December 4, 2022-Second Sunday of Advent*, written by the Rev. Mindi Welton-Thomas, and posted on November 25th, 2022, on her blog, *Rev-o-lution*. <http://rev-o-lution.org/>.
- (4) The Call to Reconciliation, Prayer of Confession, Assurance of Grace, and the Commissioning and Benediction, are adapted from *Alternate Text Liturgy wCommunion for December 4th, 2022, Advent 2-A*, written by the Rev. Thom M. Shuman, and posted November 27th, 2022, to his blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. <http://lectionarylitrugies.blogspot.com/>
- (5) The Invitation for Communion, Great Prayer of Thanksgiving, The Story Remembered, Table Prayer - The Spirit Transforms, and the Prayer of Thanksgiving Following Communion are adapted from *The Banquet of Hopeful Expectation -- Advent Communion*, written by the Rev. God Waldie and posted January 20, 2008 on the blog, *Worship Offerings*. <http://worshipofferings.blogspot.com/2008/01/banquet-of-hopeful-expectation-advent.html>
- (6) A portion of the Communion Liturgy - the Sharing of the Elements - is adapted from *Online Communion for Palm Sunday*, written by The Rev. Maren C. Tirabassi. ©2020 Maren Tirabassi, all publishing rights reserved. Permission for congregations to use in worship or educational settings, including streaming.
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Ministers, *All of Us*
Scott Rosenstein, *Pastor*
Betty Funk, *Pianist and Music Director*
Keith Konet, *Council President*
Beverly Wurm, *Administrative Assistant*



NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

God is Still Speaking...

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you will find a spiritual home in this United Church of Christ congregation. WELCOME!

Tithes and Offerings - Checks and Money Orders can be made payable to: "Zion United Church of Christ" and mailed to:

**Zion United Church of Christ
c/o Keith Konet
1039 Bridlewood Drive
Copley, OH 44321**

Questions: Contact Keith Konet at 330.604.6939

Zion's Administrative Assistant, Beverly Wurm

Beverly began a part-time position with us. She will be keeping some limited Office Hours at church/home. The days and hours are

Monday – 9am – 1pm
Wednesday – 10am-2pm
Thursday – 9am – 1pm

Beverly can be reached at: zionchurchtremont@gmail.com or by phone at: 216-273-7561 (church) or 216-310-6810 (mobile).

Our new website address is: zionchurchtremont.org.

Check out our website and Facebook page for updates and news!

"When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it—always."

— Mahatma Gandhi



The Season of Advent and Advent Wreath Candle Lighting

Advent is the season of preparation for Christmas, but it is an active watching and waiting for the arrival of Christ in our world and in our lives in a new way. We read these passages pointing to the day of judgment and Christ's return to remind us that we are still actively waiting, alert and awake. Because of the Nativity story, that Christ came to us in a completely unexpected way as a newborn child, so in these days we must be ready for Christ to enter our world, our lives, and our hearts in an unexpected way.

How do we live faithfully in times when our faith might be tested?

When the world isn't as we hoped it would be? Where can we find signs of God's faithfulness in our lives, in the world around us?

Advent means "coming." It is a time of longing, watching, and praying for God's healing, transformative presence to be ever more vibrantly present in the world. In this sense, Advent is a season in which we focus on that key phrase in the Lord's Prayer, "thy kingdom come." As Christians, the good news we strive to live by and declare is that love is stronger than hate, peace more enduring than war, hope more powerful than despair — and the light of God's love will dispel forever the shadows of shame cast by violence, suffering, sorrow, and contempt.

To help proclaim that God's new world is at hand, we are sharing four candle lighting litanies for personal, family-based, or congregational use during the holy season of Advent. The Candle-lighting liturgy for the Advent wreath ties into the worship theme, **"Stand as a Signal."**

Isaiah is our anchor text for this Advent worship series. But Psalms gives us the mood, theme, or even soul. "How I rejoiced when they said to me, 'Let us go to "stand as a signal."'

Feel free to use these litanies in whatever ways you see fit this Advent — proclaiming all the while **Stand as A Signal**

Advent Sundays with Zion Church – An Advent Song of Ascents

Sunday, November 27, 11:00am – First Sunday of Advent – Up to Restoration

Sunday, December 4th, 11:00am – Second Sunday of Advent – Stand as a Signal

Sunday, December 11th, 11:00 am – Third Sunday of Advent – God's Highway

Sunday, December 18th, 11:00am – Fourth Sunday of Advent – Give You a Sign

Saturday, December 24th, 6:30pm - Christmas Eve worship – Our Christmas Affirmation



OUR ADVENT DEVOTIONAL – E.E. CUMMINGS AND THE JOYFUL POETRY OF ADVENT

The word “Advent” means “arrival” or “coming.” It’s a four-week season of waiting and preparing for Jesus to be born, watching and listening for God coming into the world even now. For God is love, and love, as E.E. Cummings put it, “is the voice under all silences.”

Poetry can help tune our ears and eyes so we can listen, and watch, and wait. Poems can push us to think new thoughts and feel new feelings, to hear new songs we might otherwise miss. In this Advent devotional, we let scripture and Cumming’s poetry be our guides, together pointing us toward weekly practices that can deepen and enrich our senses of the season – a perfect way to prepare for the re-joining of Christmas day.

Copies of the Advent Devotional along with a Supplementary Booklet of the Poems and Artwork of E.E. Cummings – and a set of four Advent candles – are available through Zion Church – a gift for you from Pastor Scott and Bob Bucklew.



Holiday Food Drive for Our Neighbors in Need in Tremont/ Duck Island/Irishtown Bend

We’re invited to participate in a Holiday Food Drive for neighbors in need in the Tremont, Duck Island, and Irishtown Bend neighborhoods. The food drive is an annual campaign sponsored by Tremont West Development Corp involving residents, businesses, and churches in these neighborhoods. Nine local block clubs are also participating this year: Auburn-Lincoln Park, Central Tremont, Duck Island, Holmden-Buhrer-Rowley/Mentor-Castle-Clark, Irishtown Bend, Metro North, South of Jefferson and North of Literary – as well as Tremont West staff.

This year’s food drive will support the fine work of these Hunger Ministries/Food Pantries:

- St. Augustine Hunger Center hot meals program (*operated by Catholic Charities*)
- St. Augustine Parish food pantry ministry (*operated by Parish Church*)
- Pilgrim Congregational UCC food pantry
- Immanuel Lutheran food pantry
- Westside Catholic Center
- St. Malachi Parish Back Door Ministry
- Iglesia Nueva Vida food pantry
- Mega Church Resource Center food pantry
- Scranton Road Bible Church food pantry
- Hunger Action Network of NE Ohio
- Greater Cleveland Food Bank.



Here's How to Donate and the Guidelines for this Season's Holiday Food Drive:

- **Items Needed:** Canned goods, nonperishable boxed food items, paper products (toilet paper, paper towels, napkins)
- **Cash/Checks:** You may also donate by cash/check if you prefer. Checks must be made out to the food pantry or pantries of your choice – for verification purposes, checks must first be mailed to the Tremont West offices (Re: Food Drive, 2406 Professor, Cleveland, OH 44113) – who will deliver them to the respective food pantries.

- **Donate online:** givebutter.com/HolidayFoodDrive - How to give: Click donate, select an amount to give, choose your block club (Holmden-Buhrer-Rowley/Mentor-Castle-Clark), choose which food pantry you want your donation to be sent to, and watch the food drive unfold! Donations may be made by Credit/Debit Card, PayPal, or Venmo.
- **Drop-off point for canned goods:** Tremont West Development Corp offices' side porches (2406 Professor) or Zion Church/San Sofia Apartments.
- **Deadlines:** For delivery before the holidays, items must be turned in by Friday, December 16th. A second delivery will be made in mid-January, 2023 for items donated after the 16th. (NOTE: The Tremont West offices are closed December 23rd - January 2nd and will reopen on Tuesday, January 3rd, 2023). Deliveries during that time can only be made to Zion Church and not to the Tremont West office.
- **Most important of all is the goal: lending a helping hand to neighbors – families and children - in need in Tremont/Duck Island/Irishtown Bend - and providing help to support the outstanding work of eleven local food pantries-ministries who get nutritious food to children and families all year long!**

You can include some of the most requested food donations such as:

- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruit
- Canned soup
- Instant potatoes
- Spaghetti sauce and pasta
- Pancake mix
- Canned meats (tuna, chicken, beef stew, etc.)
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Macaroni & cheese
- Cereal
- Instant Oatmeal
- Granola bars
- Biscuit or baking mixes, particularly those that require only water
- Boxed meals that require only water

You can also give practical donations such as:

- Deodorant
- Body wash
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste
- Bars of soap
- Razors
- Shampoo & conditioner
- Diapers
- Baby wipes
- Toilet paper
- Laundry detergent
- New underwear, undershirts and socks, gloves and mittens are always needed!

Please Remember in Prayer

- The Universal Church, its members and mission,
- The nation and all in authority, the leaders of our nation - federal, state, and local.
- For democracy and our democratic institutions and norms in the United States.
- The welfare of the world and the concerns of the local community,
- The interrelationship of Gospel values and civic engagement
- Our 155th Anniversary as a community of faith of Zion Church on May 15th, 2022.
- Ministries of the United Church of Christ and of Zion Church.
- The leaders of our church: local, regional, and national, including our Living Water Association UCC, Association General Minister, The Rev. Nayiri Karjian, and Association Faith in Action Minister, The Rev. Michael Howard.
- The ministers and missionaries of the world.
- Those who are refugees and immigrants.
- For children separated from their parents at detention camps along our southern border.
- For racial and religious justice and reconciliation in the United States and around the world.
- Mother Earth and the global reflection on climate disruption



- For peace, justice, and freedom throughout the world and particularly for the peoples of Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and the United States.
- The people of Afghanistan, Venezuela, Syria, Yemen, Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Kurdish people and the Christians of northern Syria - for peace, nutrition, and justice.
- **The people of Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, western Cuba, eastern Canada-along with the people of Florida and the Carolinas profoundly impacted by the recent hurricanes. Be with all who grieve and mourn the loss of loved ones, homes, businesses, and infrastructure. Please help the survivors to process and move through the trauma, and to rebuild their lives and communities.**
- According to data from the Gun Violence Archive, a total of 617 mass shooting incidents have occurred in the US as of November 30th, 2022. In 2021 a total of 693 mass shooting incidents occurred across the US, in 2020 a total of 611, in 2019 a total of 417, with 337 incidents in 2018. While we pray for the families and friends of those whose lives have been taken in violent acts – and we pray for those injured in body, mind, soul, and spirit – and for their neighborhoods and communities across the United States - We know that our words and prayers are not enough. We must repent for our collective inaction and commit to tirelessly working toward meaningful gun violence prevention.
- For those affected by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and the omicron variant surge: for all those who are infected and/or sick, and those who are grieving, for all who are affected, all around the world, for essential workers and frontline workers...we pray for comfort, for safety, for health, and for wholeness.
- The residents and management of the San Sofia Apartments who share a campus with us.
- Those anticipating surgery, recovering from surgery, or undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments
- Those living in assisted living or in a nursing home
- Those who are homebound and those who are caregivers
- Those who suffer or are in any trouble, and the departed.
- **Those on our church prayer list:**
 - Patti Augustine and family
 - Robert O. Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) in Alliance, Ohio
 - Betty Funk (*our Minister of Music*)
 - Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob; friend of Elaine – health concerns*)
 - Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, Barbara, Reed, Nancy Moore's sister.
 - Jocelyn Paulette and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui Konet
 - Keith Konet and his brother who suffered a broken humerus from an injury caused by a fallen branch.
 - Marcia Leslie (*friend of Zion*) – *health concerns; move to new senior housing community.*
 - Elaine Lukacs (has been moved to: **Altenheim Skilled Nursing Facility: 18627 Shurmer Road, Room 408 Strongsville, Oh 44136) 440-238-3361 ext. 5071—**
 - Linda and James Mortach (*Elaine Lukacs' sister & brother-in-law*) & Linda's daughter
 - Patricia Matheny (prayers also for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray)

- Patricia Kellogg's friend Steve Roberts (56) passing on Nov 23 from long COVID (he had in 2020) affecting heart and lungs. Prayer for his family and friends.
- Barbara Rossington (*move to a new senior housing community*)
- Henry Senyak (*resident community leader – cancer*)
- Debbie Webb (*Debbie has recently fallen and suffered a broken femur. She is at home recovering*).
- Beverly Wurm-- great grandson, Orion (4 yrs.) had received medication that is working to improve condition.

Help for Ukraine

Gifts made to UCC **Ukraine Emergency Appeal** will provide shelter, food, and other care to war refugees and internally displaced people.

Donate online with the link below:

<https://support.ucc.org/global-h-o-p-e/ukraine-emergency-appeal>



Or designate a check for Ukraine Relief and mail to:

United Church of Christ,
P.O. Box 71957
Cleveland, OH 44194.

Gifts made to **Sharing America's Resources Abroad (S.A.R.A)** provide food, clothing, and sanitary items for refugees fleeing to Hungary.

Donate online with the link:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=QC5P9F6Z9LT32

Or designate a check for **S.A.R.A. - Donations for Ukraine Emergency Fund** and mail to:

SARA
c/o Heartland Conference UCC
P.O. Box 1230
Worthington, OH 43085.

Please know that your gifts of any size make a difference in this critical time.

Hurricanes 2022 Emergency Appeal

The United Church of Christ is issuing an appeal to support immediate needs for families and communities affected by Hurricanes Fiona and Ian. To read more, visit visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/5n6kpt24>

While this year's hurricane season started slow, later developments have made it clear just how dangerous and destructive these storms can be. With wind speeds topping out at 130 miles per hour and 155 miles per hour, respectively, Hurricanes Fiona and Ian have left devastation in their wake.

Fiona's winds left all of Puerto Rico in the dark, some people remain without power. Communities remain in crisis mode as the delivery of food, drinking water, and medical needs is challenged in hard-to-reach places cut off by downed trees, mudslides, and washed away bridges. Millions have lost power and access to clean drinking water. The need for emergency food support, medical care, and temporary shelter is high.

Hurricane Ian raged, with widespread damage in Cuba, flooding and wind damage, storm surge and in-land flooding across Florida, and flooding threatening Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia.

Emergency response personnel are active. Relief agencies are meeting immediate needs where they can gain access to communities hard hit by the storm. United Church of Christ partners through National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster who focus on relief are implementing their plans.

Global Ministries Area Executive for Latin America Angel Luis Rivera is in touch with bilateral partners. Conference leaders and Conference Disaster Coordinators are making contact, assessing needs, and communicating with the Global H.O.P.E. team so that help can be channeled, now and for the long-term.

Your generous financial support will be used by our partners in the areas of greatest need, for relief and long-term recovery. Donate online: <https://tinyurl.com/5n7bd3e2>

**If you prefer, you may mail a check payable to:
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 71957
Cleveland, OH. 44194**

Please be sure to note "Hurricanes 2022 Fund" in the memo section.