

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

December 24th, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Advent

A Service of the Word



Advent 4 Candles

by Stushie Art

Church bulletin cover Stushie art unique crayon and digital worship art

A Scottish pastor, ministering in East Tennessee

<https://stushieart.com/2023/11/27/advent-1-art-for-churches>



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

a just world for all

December 24, 2023
Fourth Sunday of Advent
A Service of the Word

*“Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.
It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs;
it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth.
It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
Love never ends.”*
1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude – *Adam Petrosino*

*Call to Worship for the Fourth Sunday of Advent

One: Blessed be the Lord God of the people,

All: For God has looked favorably on the people and redeemed them.

One: God has raised up a mighty savior for us,

All: As God spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old.

One: By the tender mercy of our God,

All: The dawn from on high will break upon us,

One: To give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

All: To guide our feet into the way of peace.

One: Come, let us worship and be ready,

All: For the Prince of Peace, the Savior of the World, is near.

*Advent Hymn – NCH No. 116 – “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” vs. 1, 2, 6, & 7

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Text: Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, 1710

Based on ancient antiphons from Advent Vespers

Transl: John Mason Neale, 151, and others; alt.

St, 2, 7 transl. Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916; alt.
Tune: VENI EMMANUEL L.M. with refrain
Melody from a 15th-century French "Processional"
Arr. Thomas Helmore, 1854
Permission to stream the music obtained from ONE License #A-736636.

**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]**

**6 O come, O Day-spring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here;
Love stir within the womb of night,
and death's own shadows put to flight. [Refrain]**

**7 O come, Desire of Nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
Make envy, strife, and quarrels cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace. [Refrain]**

Gospel Reading: Luke 1:26-38 – The Birth of Jesus Foretold

1 26 Six months later, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a young woman named Mary; she was engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. 28 Upon arriving, the angel said to Mary, "Rejoice, highly favored one! God is with you! Blessed are you among women!"

29 Mary was deeply troubled by these words and wondered what the angel's greeting meant. 30 The angel went on to say to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God. 31 You'll conceive and bear a son, and give him the name Jesus—'Deliverance.' 32 His dignity will be great, and he will be called the Only Begotten of God. God will give Jesus the judgment seat of David, his ancestor, 33 to rule over the house of Jacob forever, and his reign will never end."

34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have never been with a man?"

35 The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you—hence the offspring to be born will be called the Holy One of God. 36 Know too that Elizabeth, your kinswoman, has conceived a child in her old age; she who

was thought to be infertile is now in her sixth month. 37 Nothing is impossible with God.”

38 Mary said, “I am the servant of God. Let it be done to me as you say.”

With that, the angel left her.

Solo: “Ave Maria”

Sung by: Keith Konet

Accompanist: Adam Petrosino

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Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39-56 – Mary Visits Elizabeth – and Mary’s Song of Praise

39 Within a few days Mary set out and hurried to the hill country to a town of Judah, 40 where she entered Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth.

41 As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 In a loud voice she exclaimed, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 But why am I so favored, that the mother of the Messiah should come to me? 44 The moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leaped for joy. 45 Blessed is she who believed that what our God said to her would be accomplished!”

46 Mary said:

“My soul proclaims your greatness, O God,

47 and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior.

48 For you have looked with favor

upon your lowly servant,

and from this day forward

all generations will call me blessed.

49 For you, the Almighty, have done great things

for me,

and holy is your Name.

50 Your mercy reaches from age to age

for those who fear you.

51 You have shown strength with your arm;

you have scattered those who are proud in their conceit;

52 you have deposed those who are mighty from their thrones

and raised those who are lowly to high places.

53 You have filled those who are hungry with good things,

while you have sent those who are rich away empty.

54 You have come to the aid of Israel your servant,

mindful of your mercy—

55 the promise you made to our ancestors—

to Sarah and Abraham and their descendants forever.”

56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home.

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy: Fourth Sunday in Advent (December 24) - LOVE

One: Hope is assertive, and peace subversive, and joy provocative. But we know that faith, hope, and love abide, these three, and the greatest of these is love. Love is all these words and all the things we cannot say. Love is transformative. Love is the only thing that can change the world because love has changed us. Love has come to us as a God who became one of us, lived and died for us, and lives again. Love has come to us as a God who risked everything to make us understand that nothing is impossible. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. We will never give up because love is real. Love simply is there. God's love in us is a fire that never dies. God loves you so, so much, that God sent the Only Begotten for us, so that we might all know God's love eternally. We light this candle because God is love.

Light the fourth candle

All: God of love, remind us that love is transformative, but it must be shared. We must love one another as you have first loved us, for you loved us so much you sent the Only Begotten to us, so that we might know that love can never die, that your steadfast love remains forever. As your love transformed the world long ago, your love continues to transform us into your children, and we await the promise that love will change the world again. Amen.

Advent Candle Lighting Song: The Holy Fire of Advent

(sung to the tune of NCH 148 - "What Child Is This")

The Holy Fire of Advent

Author: Rev. Elana Keppel Levy, 2022

Tune: GREENSLEEVES 8.7.8.7.6.8.6.7. with refrain

Source: English traditional melody, 16th century

- 1. The fire of hope awakes our hearts when in despair we're sleeping.
It speaks of light while through the night the shadows swiftly creep in.
Come, see the sparks of life that burn against the pow'r of strife;
Come, stand within its glow, the holy fire of Advent.**
- 2. The call to peace rings in our ears when all around is raging.
Within, without temptation shouts – our wrathful whims engaging.
Wait, wait, our Savior's near: our weapons drop to the ground here.
Be joined in family, the holy fire of Advent.**
- 3. The pulse of joy flies through our veins – the grace of God flows in us.
Its steady thrum helps us become disciples foll'wing Jesus.
Hold fast the Spirit's way, though evil holds such a strong sway.
Embrace new life in Christ, the holy fire of Advent.**
- 4. The song of love, first dreamt by God, is everywhere indwelling.
Its tune ascends and has no end – yet we're so often rebelling.
We, too, can lift our voice – as saints throughout the world rejoice.
Transformed by serving all, the holy fire of Advent.**

Worship continues in a few minutes with our
Christmas Service of Carols and Candle Light

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Credits

- 1) The Call to Worship is adapted from *Worship Resources for December 24, 2023—Fourth Sunday of Advent*, written by The Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell, and posted December 14, 2023 to her blog, *Rev-o-lution*.
<http://rev-o-lution.org/>
- 2) The Advent Candle Lighting is adapted from *Advent 2023 Year B: Traditional themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, Love*, by the Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell. Posted October 28, 2023, on her blog, *Rev-o-lution*.
<http://rev-o-lution.org/new-advent-candle-lighting-liturgy-for-2023-and-12-days-of-christmas/>
- 3) Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from ONE License #A-736636. All rights reserved.

Ministers, All of Us

Scott Rosenstein, Pastor

Adam Petrosino, Music Director and Pianist

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 placed in the offering basket or 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

Welcome to Adam D. Petrosino, Our New Music Director/Pianist

We are so pleased to welcome Adam, and his partner, Kiel, to our community of faith here at Zion United Church of Christ of Tremont, Cleveland, Ohio. We're grateful to you sharing your presence, faith, and musical gifts with us.

Adam can be reached by e-mail at A.D.Petrosino@gmail.com and by phone at 234.205.9397.

Administrative Assistant, Beverly Wurm

Beverly is keeping some limited Office Hours at church (2700 W. 14th)/home. The days and hours are:

Winter Schedule:

Tuesday– 9am – 1pm

Wednesday – 10am-2 pm

Thursday – 9am – 1pm

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