

St. John's United Church of Christ

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

10 A.M. Worship Dec 1, 2024

Hope, First 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

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

Treisback

***The Call to Worship**

The Lord will fulfill all the promises given to God's people.

Praise be to God.

The days are coming when all shall be revealed.

Thanks be to God.

The signs of God's Good News are all around us.

The darkness has overshadowed them.

God will bring to us a new light for all generations.

Open our eyes, Lord, to see your promises fulfilled.

*** 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 many a 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.**

***Advent Candle**

From deep in the past, Jeremiah calls to us, "The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah" (Jeremiah 33:14). Beloved, the days are surely coming when the yearning of the land; the longing of the sun, moon, and stars; the desperate need of the people of earth for flourishing and peace will receive their fulfillment.

While fear, anxiety, misinformation, and suspicion surround us on every side, we choose to watch and wait in hope, preparing our hearts to notice and cooperate with God's grace already at work in our midst.

We light this candle of hope as a sign of our commitment to pay attention and prepare for the days that are surely coming and are already here—the days when God's kin-dom of love, justice, and mercy will reign.

*** 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.**

**The first one will remind us
that Christ will soon return.
We light it in the darkness
and watch it gleam and burn.
We light it in the darkness
and watch it gleam and burn**

***Gathering Prayer** (*In Unison*)

O God, make your ways known to us. Teach us your paths. We await your instruction and inspiration. Penetrate the clouds that dim our sight and loosen the shackles that paralyze our actions. We are ready to hear and respond. Amen.

Time for the Child

"Child of Blessing, Child of Promise"

Rev Katie Jo Bielke

**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.**

Special Music

"Savior of the Nations, Come"

arr. Behnke

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Scriptures: Luke 21:25-36

The Coming of the Son of Man

²⁵ "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

²⁹ Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Exhortation to Watch

³⁴ "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place and to stand before the Son of Man."

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Message

Hymn*"O Day of God, Draw Nigh"*

#700

O day of God, draw nigh
in beauty and in power;
come with thy timeless judgment now
to match our present hour.

Bring to our troubled minds,
uncertain and afraid,
the quiet of a steadfast faith,
calm of a call obeyed.

Bring justice to our land,
that all may dwell secure,
and finely build for days to come
foundations that endure.

Bring to our world of strife
thy sovereign word of peace,
that war may haunt the earth no more,
and desolation cease.

O day of God, draw nigh
as at creation's birth;
let there be light again,
and set thy judgments on the earth.

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**Testimoni**

Karen and Dan Rocchio

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*"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"*

arr. Behnke

***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)*

Thank you, God of hope, for the promise of this season. We are grateful for the generosity aroused in us by Christ's coming into the world. May these gifts represent the spirit of joyous sharing among us, for the sake of all your children everywhere. Amen.

COMMUNION**Invitation****Remembering the Story****Blessing the Elements****Sharing the Meal** (the gluten free wafers are on a separate tray)

Prayer of Thanksgiving *(In Unison)*

We thank you, God, for breaking into our world and pouring into our lives and our experiences. We thank you, God, for this meal of thanksgiving and the stories of love, grace, and hope that it tells. Amen.

Committing our Intentions

God has blessed us and the world in which we live with abundance.

We are free to give our gifts because God is faithful. We have already received from the Lord’s hand the gift of seven days of provision for six days of labor, mercy for our souls and daily bread for our bodies.

We are called to be God’s visible presence in the world, caring for the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick, and those unjustly imprisoned. God’s abundance is not to be enjoyed by only a few, but shared with all, so that every need in creation may be fulfilled and satisfied.

May the commitments we make this day become direct agents of God’s love and may our generosity truly reflect the generosity we have received. Amen.

Offering of Pledge Cards

Prayer of Commitment

O God, may the offering of these commitments reflect our desire to see your Realm unfold before us. We pray that they might represent the best we have to offer, the pledge to keep you and the Gospel as our first priorities, and the reflection of our trust in you for all things. We give not to receive from you, but honor what you have already given to us. Bless these intentions that they might become ministry and mission in our midst. Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

*** Hymn**

“Here, O My Lord, I See Thee”

#416

**Here, O my Lord, I see thee face to face,
here would I touch and handle things unseen;
here grasp with firmer hand eternal grace,
and all my weariness upon thee lean.**

**Too soon we rise; the symbols disappear;
the feast, tho' not the love, is past and gone;
the bread and wine remove, but thou art here
nearer than ever--still my shield and sun.**

**Here would I feed upon the bread of God,
here drink with thee the royal wine of heav'n;
here would I lay aside each earthly load;
here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiv'n.**

**Feast after feast thus comes and passes by;
yet, passing, points to that glad feast above.
giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,
the Lamb’s great bridal feast of bliss and love.**

Benediction

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Pastor: Rev. Katie Jo Bielke

Advent Candle: Stacey and Tyson Goldenberg

Liturgist: Danny Mueller

Usher Team: Larry Sontag

Technology: Steve Hawkinson

Fellowship/Lockup: Philip Difani

Handbells: Norma Armstrong, Erin Armstrong, Pastor Katie Jo Bielke, Jan Boehm, Lee Difani, Barb Nichols, Scott Nichols, Ruth Notch, Jim Pisoni

Announcements

Thank you to each and every one who donated gift items for Every Child’s Hope. There were so many nice gifts! They were very appreciative of your generosity.

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 **x** this week

**Peace; Second Sunday of Advent
 12/08/24 Service**
 Liturgist: **Kathy Scherr**
 Usher Team: **John Bartelt**
 Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**
 Fellowship/Lockup: **Philip Difani**

**Joy; Third Sunday of Advent
 12/15/24 Service**
 Liturgist: **Helen Stortz**
 Usher Team: **Phil Difani**
 Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**
 Fellowship/Lockup: **Philip Difani**
 Special Music: **Chancel Choir**

**Love; Fourth Sunday of Advent
 12/22/24 Service**
 Liturgist: **Mary Polt**
 Usher Team: **Ken Ruff**
 Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**
 Fellowship/Lockup: **Philip Difani**
 Special Music: **Fluatist**

... Looking Ahead December

Sun 12/1	10:00 AM	Hope; First Sunday of Advent with Communion
	11:00 AM	Hanging of the Greens with luncheon to follow. (volunteer)
Mon 12/2	11:00 AM	Advent Bible Study (sign up)
Tue 12/3		Giving Tuesday (please consider St John's)
Wed 12/4	11:00 AM	Senior Ministry Meeting
Thu 12/5	5:00 PM	Newsletter Articles Due
Fri 12/06	2:00 PM	Dollgener Funeral
Sat 12/7	9:00 AM	Cookies with Santa at the carousel
Sun 12/8	10:00 AM	Peace; Second Sunday of Advent & GM Pray for Honduras
	10:00 AM	The Christmas Program
	2:00 PM	Sr Ministries Metro Singers Christmas Concert (rsvp)
Mon 12/9	11:00 AM	Advent Bible Study
	1:00 PM	Exec Council
Fri 12/13	8:00 AM	Biweekly Newsletter
Sat 12/14		Habitat Build Date (volunteer)
Sun 12/15	10:00 AM	Joy; Third Sunday of Advent & GM Pray for Hong Kong
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>



Habitat Build Volunteer



Advent Bible Study



Metro Singers Concert



online giving



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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