

Welcome to
St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

November 27th, 2022



FIRST SUNDAY OF
ADVENT

GOD IS STILL SPEAKING



*NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S
JOURNEY YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!*

Worship Leadership

Preacher: The Rev. John J. Ward-Diorio

Pastor Allyssa A. Boyer

Advent Candle Lighters: Pastor Allyssa Boyer, Paula and Mark Boyer

Lector: Rebecca Drazba

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Eric R. Dundore

Choristers' Director: Jonneke A. Dundore

Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore

Organist: Sarah A. Myers

Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller

Ministry of Audio and Video

Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service

Worship Welcome Team Leader: Craig Martek

Worship Welcome Team: Steven Roush, Sherry Spencer

Nursery: Susan Ward-Diorio

Flower Delivery: Martha Keith

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Herrold

Ministers

The Entire Congregation

Please visit the church website at <http://www.saintpaulsucc-mech.org/> to sign up for Acolyte, Welcome Team, Lector, Volunteer in the Nursery, Deliver the Altar Flowers, and/or Sponsor the Altar Flowers. You will find the individual signup sheets under the "Sign Up" menu heading. Thank you.



ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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St. Paul's Online Giving

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

November 27, 2022

*Please note: the livestream broadcast begins with the Announcements.
If you do not wish to appear in the livestream,
it is best to sit in one of the back three pews of the Sanctuary.
Please write up any Prayer Requests ahead of time,
leave them in the Red Bowl or give them to the Welcome Team Leader.
They will bring them forward.*

****Those who are comfortable doing so are invited to stand.***

THE RINGING OF THE CHIMES

THE WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE PRELUDE “O Come, O Come Emmanuel/ Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne”
Christyn Seay, soloist

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN No.122 “Come, O Long-Expected Jesus”

HOPE

One: In Advent we speak of Christ as the true light coming into the world. In commemoration of that coming, we light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas and reflect on the coming of Christ.

One: It is significant that the church has always used that language—the *coming* of Christ—because it speaks to a deep truth. Christ is coming. Christ is always coming, always entering a troubled world, a wounded heart.

One: And so we light the first candle, the candle of hope, and dare to express our longing for peace, for healing, and the well-being of all creation.

**All: Loving God, as we enter this Advent season,
We open all the dark places in our lives and memories to the healing light of Christ.
Show us the creative power of hope.
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,
That we may walk in the light of Christ.**

SUNG RESPONSE “The Candle of Hope”

(sung to no. 305, “You Servants of God”)

*The candle of hope we light in this hour
Proclaims that the Lord is coming in power.
We wait for a future, now hidden from view,
When Christ in his glory will make all things new.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

We are very busy. We get tired. Our spiritual preparations for Christmas, during the Advent Season, get much less attention and focus than our other preparations. We risk not being awake to how Jesus is coming into the world, into our lives this year. Let us join in the time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us, and Jesus keeps coming into our lives, with the hope that we will be awake to receive how Jesus is coming this year.

ALL: Let us pledge to stay awake, to focus during Advent, using this time as the gift it is intended to be, a time to sharpen our attention and ready ourselves for Jesus’ coming. Amen.

*Please note: we will not be shaking hands or hugging.
If you are able, please rise and greet one another with other signs of Peace.*

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

*THE GLORIA PATRI (#759 is the tune, but not all the same words)

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

*Children are invited to the front at this time.
Remember, everyone who comes forward will be on camera.*

SING THE CHILDREN TO THE FRONT

Jesus Loves the Little Children

*Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world
Shy and Joyful, Bold and Bright
They are precious in his sight
Jesus loves the little children of the world.*

THE WORD FOR THE YOUNG

SING THE CHILDREN TO THEIR SEATS

Jesus Loves Me

*Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so
Little ones to him belong. They are weak but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me
Yes, Jesus loves me. The Bible tells me so*

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 2:1-5

THE PSALM READING

Psalm 122

*THE HYMN No. 116 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 1, 2 & 6)

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE:

Matthew 24:36-44

"Keep Awake (Yes, Scripture Says That)"

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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, forever. Amen.

THE CHORAL RESPONSE (unison)

Advent Blessing



Bless us, Fa - ther, as we pray. Help us seek You day by day. Bind us all in



Heart and mind. Bid all our quar - rels cease. Fill the world with Hea - ven's peace. Bid all war and



hun - ger cease. Oh, come, Ho - ly Sav - ior, come.

Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate. Thank you.

THE OFFERTORY "Hope Is Dawning on the World"
Chancel Choir
Christyn Seay, soloist

Shackley

*DOXOLOGY

*From all who dwell beneath the skies,
Let the Creator's praise arise!
Let the Redeemer's name be sung.
Through every land, by every tongue!*

*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)

Eternal God, whose gift of love we can never repay, we offer these symbols of our gratitude. May they equip our church to minister more alertly and lovingly in this community and beyond. Amen.

*THE HYMN "There Is a Mighty Question" (to the tune of no 245, "The Day of Resurrection")

*There is a mighty question we ask when nations rage:
Just when will be Christ's coming, the ending of the age?
Take care, said Jesus clearly, for many will appear;
They'll claim to be Messiah, yet people should not fear.*

*So keep awake and watchful; salvation is at hand!
Our hope is in Christ Jesus, and by God's grace we stand.
The night is almost over, we wait for God's new day,
And through the Holy Spirit, we follow Jesus' way.*

*Be ready in your living, for when you feed the poor,
Or give to thirsty children the water they long for,
And when you welcome strangers and help the ones in need,
Christ says: "Receive my kingdom, for you are serving me."*

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*THE BIDDING TO MISSION AND BLESSING (Responsive)

One: Take time, in the busyness of this season, for quiet reflection—
Let your minds, hearts and spirits be awakened to God's Presence,
For the light of God's love is discernible everywhere.

**ALL: We will let ourselves be surprised by wonder,
Contemplate hard truths,
And set aside time to offer quiet thanks.**

One: The good news of Advent is this:
Christ is coming. Christ is always coming.

**ALL: Through being awake,
We will welcome Christ into our hearts.
We will let ourselves be guided by his ministry.
We will go forth from this place in hope.**

***THE WORLD PEACE PRAYER**

One: Lead us, O God.

**All: Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth.
Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe. Amen.**

***THE BENEDICTION**

*** THE THREE-FOLD AMEN**

Please note: the livestream continues until the end of the Postlude.

Please know you are free to leave following the Three-fold Amen and exit to the Narthex to speak with one another. You may be visible and audible on the livestream as you exit early. If you choose to remain, please stay seated and listen quietly to the Postlude.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE “Freedom March and Fanfare”

Paul Davis

References:

Our Advent Candle Lightening Liturgy and Bidding to Mission and Blessing Responsive Reading are from “Process & Faith: Advent Candle Liturgy, May 27, 2015” by Jeanyne Slettom, with some slight edits and additions.

The Prayer of Dedication is from “Fresh Winds of the Spirit” by Lavon Bayler, 1986, United Church Press.

The World Peace Prayer is a paraphrase of a verse from the Upanishads, the most ancient scriptures of Hinduism, also prayed daily by Roman Catholic Benedictine nuns.

The white rose on the altar today is in memory of Franklin A. “Benny” Rushong, who’s Memorial Service was held at St. Paul’s on Tuesday. Please continue to keep Benny’s whole family in your prayers.

ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by

Paula and Mark Boyer, “In honor of Allyssa Boyer’s ordination.”

Patrice and Gregory Miller, “In honor of our children and grandchildren: Devon, Ryan, Hayden, and Leo.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS ST. PAUL’S EVENTS:

Mon. Nov. 28, Dec. 5, 12, 19th. Advent Book Study Meetings (1PM & 6:30PM)

Sun. Dec. 4th. Second Sunday in Advent, Worship (8:30AM & 10:30AM)

- Sun. Dec. 11th. Holiday Cookie Walk (9AM-12PM)
 Third Sunday in Advent, Worship (10:30AM)
 Congregational Meeting (11:30AM)
 PRISM: People Rallying in Singles Ministry (5PM)
- Thu. Dec. 15th. Blue Christmas Service (7PM)
- Sun. Dec. 18th. Fourth Sunday in Advent, Cantata (10:30AM)
 Youth Fellowship Christmas Caroling (3PM)
- Sat. Dec. 24th. Christmas Eve Worship (4PM & 11:00PM)
- Sun. Dec. 25th. Christmas Day (no services)

PASTOR ALLYSSA'S ORDINATION

SERVICE: Today, November 27th at 3PM.

NEW HOPE BLESSINGS EXPRESS:

Please drop off your gift donations by this Wednesday, November 30th. Thank you to all who have given generously.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST HOMES:

This Thurs. December 1st is the deadline to make monetary or gift card donations to the Christmas Gift Appeal from UCC Homes. Please make checks out directly to 'UCC Homes' and specify which home the gifts are for; Sarah Todd or Thornwald. Thank you.

NEW HOPE MINISTRIES, THANK YOU!

Tremendous thanks to all who donated food items for New Hope's Thanksgiving baskets. St. Paul's members donated 230 lbs. of food, two Giant turkey gift certificates and \$50.00 cash. Thanks also to anyone who dropped off turkeys at New Hope. Needy families in our area will have a blessed Thanksgiving thanks to your generosity!!

ADVENT CALENDARS AND

DEVOTIONALS: Available for purchase in the Common.

It's that time of year...

**HOLIDAY
COOKIE WALK**



Sun., December 11!
Sale Hours 9:00 AM - 12Noon
in Fellowship Hall

**PLEASE PACKAGE YOUR COOKIE OR
CONFECTION DONATIONS IN BAGS TO SELL
FOR \$1.00 OR MARK OTHERWISE.**

Drop off your cookies Saturday, December 10th
 8am to 4pm (Cart will be outside kitchen door)
 OR Sunday, December 11th by 8:30 AM
 See Jonneke Dundore or Mary Runkle
 with any questions.

The proceeds will be split between
 St. Paul's General Fund and
 Making Strides Against Breast Cancer