

THE UNITED CHURCH

PRESBYTERIAN – AMERICAN BAPTIST

December 24, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Advent

PRELUDE: “*Chorale Prelude on ‘Es ist ein Ros’ entsprungen’, Op. 122*” by
Johannes Brahms

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETING

OUR PREPARATION

INTROIT: “Emmanuel”

Focus of the day: To live in the same trust in God as Mary did.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: Welcome, dear people, God has blessed our gathering.

People: We come again on this journey, following the light.

Leader: God’s light shines for us today, bringing peace and comfort.

All: May we, like Mary, respond to God’s presence and love, with confident joy.

AMEN.

***HYMN: #174 “Angels from the Realms of Glory” (vs 1,2,5)**

CCLI Song #31669, Public Domain, CCLI Lic. #11593017

***OPENING PRAYER:** In the rush of preparation for holiday celebration, we come to this place to be fed by God. We need the peace, hope, love and joy that this season represents. We need to listen again with wonder at the magnificent words of Mary as she proclaims her faithful participation in God’s most miraculous gift. Open our hearts this day, Lord, to receive the words and the blessings, to be fed and then to be those who will share with others as you have shared with us. We pray this in Jesus’ name, who taught us to pray...Our Father... (using debts and debtors...) Amen.

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

***GLORIA PATRI: #807**

GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH THE WORD

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING: Psalm 89:19-26 (page 587) {A.B. page 661}

ANTHEM: (11:00) “Christmastime” by Smith & Carlson The Adult & Youth Choirs

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING: Romans 16:25-27 (page 1126) {A.B. page 1256}

SPECIAL MUSIC: (11:00) “What Child Is This?”

Susan Gates (flute) acc June Pettit (piano)

Sermon

“Mary’s Faith”

(Luke 1:26-38)

Pastor Wade Allen

OUR RESPONSE IN FAITH

***HYMN: #167 “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”**

CCLI Song #5673056, Public Domain, CCLI Lic. #11593017

PASTORAL PRAYER

OFFERTORY: Offertory on ‘O little town of Bethlehem’ by Gordon Phillips

***DOXOLOGY: #809**

***HYMN: #151 “Go Tell It On the Mountain”** CCLI Song #29080, Public Domain, CCLI Lic. #11593017

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: Hallelujah Chorus from “Messiah” by G. F. Handel, arr. Robert Gower

** indicates an invitation to stand for those who are able and comfortable doing so.*

*If you are not attending tonight’s service and ordered a poinsettia,
you may take it home today, following the service.*



PRAYER REQUESTS:

Health concerns: Barbara Scott, Catherine Kurzdorfer (Adam Thorman's mother), Carolyn Verspoor, Hiram Bailey, Marcus (friend of Sandi DiCicco), Kainoa Coarsey (great-nephew of Kathie Meredith & David Crowe), Garrett Nayer (nephew of Karen Gardner), Jean Pollard (Ali Boseck's mom), Bob McDougal (MacKenzie Brown's uncle), Denise Loy (friend of Kory Massey), David Sanford, David Felten (husband of Mary Maida), Denice Tautges (Hiram Bailey's daughter), Jovannie Ramirez (Karen Roaix's grandson), Steve Sedlock (Nancy Tharp's brother), Clancy Cragle (Michelle's grandfather), the Herin Family (relatives of Kathie Meredith), David Crowe, Jack Schermond

Cancer: Tom & Monica Yurik (friends of Bruce & Deb Gardner), Bill Blance (Ed's brother), Paul Miner (brother of Linda Wells), Deb Dawson (Steve Smythe's niece), Brent Gibbs (father of Kristy Aldrich), Sasha (friend of Megan French), Roderick Simonds (father of Natalie Clark), Rob Stults (cousin of Wade and Christy Allen), Laurie Rudy, Mike Davis (friend of Guy Green), Dawn Miller, Mary J. Havens (Mary Lou's step-daughter), David Pagoda (friend of Eveleigh family), Keith Laursen (Tim's brother), Jim Davis (Scott's father), Jackie Crego (Stan and Evey Wright's daughter), Stephen Carges (brother of Paula Traber), Jon Santmyer (friend of Malecs)

Recovering: Sara Scharr, Sharon Meyer, Marion Sumpter, Sara Henderson, Steve Smythe, Arlene Willett, Patti Cagwin, Kathy Mills, Shirley Kem, Mary Jane Laird

Comfort and Peace: Mary Zimmerman (Wendy Bacon's mother)

MILITARY SERVICE: US Army LT1 Andrew Marlin (Tyler Bosecks husband) deployed to South Korea, LTJG Nick Castiller (USN), MAC Adam Thorman (USN) returned from deployment, E6 Cody Wells (USN) returned from deployment, Technical Sergeant Timothy Peck (USAF) home from deployment

MISSIONARIES: Carlos Bonilla & Mayra Giovanti – the BGs (Central/South America), Tim & Patti Long (Baja Mexico), Shelvis & Nancy Smith-Mather (S Sudan refugees in Uganda), Ryan & Alethia White (Berlin)

THE NEXT FEW WEEKS....

Sunday, December 24, 2023 –

No early service

Service at 11:00am – 4th Sunday of Advent service

Service at 7:00pm – Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight service

Sunday, December 31, 2023 –

No early service

Service at 11:00am **ONLY** – Prayer service

Sunday, January 7, 2024 –

Service at 8:45am

Sunday School for all ages at 9:45am

Service at 11:00am

The Cause, 5-7:30pm



Highlights for This Week!

- **Upcoming services:**
 - **December 24, Christmas Eve** - one 4th Sunday of Advent service at 11am
 - **December 24, Christmas Eve** - Traditional Candlelight service at 7pm
 - **December 31, New Year's Eve** - one prayer service at 11am
- **The church office will be closed from Dec 25-Jan 1.** Staff will check voicemails and email, so reach out if you need to get in touch.
- **Sunday school:** There is no Sunday school for the next few weeks. Sunday school will resume for all ages on **January 7**.

Children's Time ~ There is no Children's Time today. Worship Bags are available for children at the two front entrances. These bags contain various items to engage children throughout the worship service. Parents, please see the green sheet for instructions. Please return the bag and reusable contents when you're done. The children can take their papers home with them. We hope you enjoy worshiping together as a family!

Nursery care is offered for infants through preschoolers during the 11am service in room 10.

There will **not** be nursery care provided during the 7pm service; however, families can use either nursery room if they desire/need to use it.

ARE YOU VISITING US TODAY? If so, WELCOME to the United Church, we are so glad that you have chosen to worship with us. We invite you to check out our Welcome Table found in our Welcome Center, and to pick up a blue bag for yourself/your family to take home and to learn a little bit more about us. Please fill out a visitor card and drop it in the collection plate or mail in. **We are so happy that you joined us today and look forward to seeing you again soon!**





If you are following along with the progress of our **Stewardship campaign** (and watching the scarecrow outside the office fill in!), here are the numbers as of Friday, December 22nd:

We have received pledges from **119** families, for a total of **\$356,143.10** to the Operating budget and **\$103,855.40** to the Missions budget.

Our goal is to have 150 families pledging!

Gary-So-Scary is getting very colorful! Let's see if we can fill him in all the way up to his floppy green hat for the new year!



To fill out a pledge form online, go to <https://tinyurl.com/yjtsy4b4> or scan this code

The Stewards Assistance Fund: This Fund assists those in our congregation who are facing temporary financial challenges. If you are struggling, please call the Office at (585) 394-0503 to speak with Virginia Holroyd, or email her at virginia.holroyd@uccdga.org



We welcome your help to serve as **Greeters for the Sunday Services**. Greeters welcome people as they enter the church building and they hand out Bulletins at the Sanctuary entrances. Greeters also pass the Offering Plates during the Offertory. Reminders are emailed with instructions and location assignments. The Greeter ministry is a wonderful way to show that we are a hospitable church and that we welcome all who want to worship the Lord with our congregation. **The January sign up sheet is on the Office door.** If you have any questions, please ask any Steward or call the Office. Thanks so much for serving in this way on any Sunday that you're available.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING



It's not too late to give to our annual **Special Christmas offering** which gives us the opportunity to help others as we celebrate God's perfect gift to us. As always, the United Church splits offerings received between the Baptist and Presbyterian denominations. The Baptist half will be split

between The American Baptist Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering and the American Baptist America for Christ Offering. The other half will be given to the Presbyterian Joy Offering. Thank you for your generous support of these three very important special offerings which we have combined into our Special Christmas Offering. If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot! Envelopes were inserted in the Lamplighter and are in the pews. You can also write 'Christmas Offering' on the memo line of your check or choose the online Christmas fund.

Save the date: Join together with Presbyterian and Baptist friends for a "Day of Service" on **Monday, January 15th at 10:00am in the United Church dining room.** In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. the Presbytery of Geneva is offering a "Day of Service" to assemble Church World Service (CWS) hygiene and school kits. A fellowship meal, provided by the Mission Committee, will follow the activity. The Presbytery invites you to consider funding one of these "gifts of the heart" kits as an alternative Christmas gift for friends or family. The cost of a kit is \$17. Donations marked "Gifts of the Heart" may be mailed to **Presbytery of Geneva, PO Box 24393, Rochester, NY 14624.** Please find donation cards on a bulletin board display along with a sign up sheet for attending on January 15th.



Day of Service

Corporate Prayer - Starting January 7 - The corporate prayer time slot will change from a 9:00 AM start time to a **9:45 AM start time** (to align with the Sunday School hour). All are invited to come! Located in the **Youth Office**.

Wednesday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast invites you!

Men of all ages are invited to join us at 7:00 am Wednesday morning in the Fellowship Room for a hot breakfast, prayer and Bible study.



Joyful, Joyful, Thank you to all my Church family, for your cards, greetings and hugs in the past months, and now Christmas. "Blessings all mine and ten thousand beside."

Our Choir singing on Sunday at Quail Summit, sharing your wonderful voices, was a special gift. I felt proud to be singing along with you!! Peace and Joy be yours this Christmas. **Shirley Kem**



Though the church office will be **closed from Dec 25 through Jan 1**, we will be checking phone and email messages, so please let us know if you have any prayer requests or need to contact a staff member. There will be folks about, but the flexibility for the staff to work from home as we're able during the holiday week is a special treat.