

THE UNITED CHURCH
PRESBYTERIAN – AMERICAN BAPTIST
December 10, 2023
Second Sunday of Advent

PRELUDE: “*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*” by Keith Chapman

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETING

OUR PREPARATION

INTROIT: “Emmanuel”

Focus of the day: We cannot rescue ourselves, but we have the good news of God’s promise.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: Long ago, a voice cried out in the wilderness

People: Prepare the way for the Lord; make straight the pathways.

Leader: Something new was about to happen.

People: God would visit God's people in a new way!

Leader: Lord, open our hearts to receive this good news!

All: Prepare us to be people of great faith and compassion as we look forward to this wondrous event you have proclaimed to us. AMEN.

***HYMN: #181 “As With Gladness Men of Old”**

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***OPENING PRAYER:** As the voice cried out in the wilderness, God, you enter our lives and call to us to be open to hearing the cries of people who are suffering. We have been given that opportunity to reach out through the ministries and mission of our church bringing hope and peace to all. Get us ready to become pathways of peace and life-transforming love in your name. 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: Mark 1:1-8 (page 990) {A.B. page 1094}

SPECIAL MUSIC: (8:45) “Welcome to Our World” by Chris Rice (words on insert)
Dave Babcock, acc June Pettit

ANTHEM: (11:00) “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” arr. Lloyd Larson
The United Church Choir

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING: Selections from Isaiah chapters 7, 9, and 60
(page 681) {A.B. page 759}

SPECIAL MUSIC: (11:00) “Celebrate the Child” arr. Doug Holck Men’s Ensemble

Sermon
“Good News”
(Isaiah 40:1-11)
Pastor Wade Allen

OUR RESPONSE IN FAITH

***HYMN: #171 “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing”** CCLI Song #27738, Public Domain, CCLI Lic. #11593017

PASTORAL PRAYER

OFFERTORY: Offertory on “O Little Town of Bethlehem” by Dennis Janzer

***DOXOLOGY: #809**

***HYMN: #157 “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”**

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RECOGNITION OF NEW MEMBERS: Pat Barden, Phil and Carol Ann Klingler, Don and Lynn Lucas, Nancy Scher, Dean and Aleta Williamson

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: “Joy to the World” by Franklin Ritter

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

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Health concerns: Sara Scharr, Catherine Kurzdorfer (Adam Thorman's mother), Carlos McGregor (Mexican Missionary), Diane Molenaar (Kathy Mills' sister), 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: 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)

CORPORATE PRAYER

WEEKLY PRAYER – All are invited to join us in prayer!

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM – 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.



Change of address: Shirley has moved to Quail Summit!

Shirley Kem
5102 Parrish Street Ext, Apt 238
Canandaigua, NY 14424

Highlights for This Week!

- For all children and youth that are involved in the Christmas Pageant, we will have **one practice this Saturday, December 16th at 9am**. It will last until approximately 10:30am, but we may be done sooner. If you are a parent willing to **stay and help** with Pageant practice, please **let Deb Marshall know**. Thank you!
- The **Finger Lakes Symphony Orchestra “Music for the Holidays” concert** is **today at 3pm** here at the **United Church** in the sanctuary. Tickets can be purchased at the door.
- Next **Saturday, December 16, at 7pm** is our **Organ Concert** featuring Ivan Bosnar. A freewill offering will be available. Dessert reception following the concert.
- We **need some volunteers** to cover the **nursery** on **Christmas Eve** during our **11am service** and during our **7pm service**. We need 2 adults or 1 adult and 1 teen in the nursery for each service. Please **see Deb Marshall** if you are willing to help!

Children’s Time ~ There is Children's Time today. After the children's sermon, children in Kindergarten through 2nd grade are invited upstairs to Room 26 for an age-appropriate lesson. Parents, please pick up your children promptly after the service. Thank you!

Nursery care is offered during both services (8:45 & 11:00) and during the Sunday school hour (9:45-10:45) for those too young to attend Sunday school so that parents may attend Adult classes or help in the children's program.

8:45 Service Nursery ~ a combined nursery meets in room 10.

9:45 Sunday school Nursery ~ meets in room 11, the preschool nursery. Claire Sheppard and Marcea Stave are our well-loved caretakers during this hour.

11:00 Service Nurseries ~ Both the Infant/Toddler Nursery (Room 10) and the Preschool Nursery (Room 11) are available.

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!**

YOUTH MINISTRY

MONTHLY CONNECT – Middle School and High School Students Invited!

Canandaigua – December 13 @ 6:45 AM. (North Rd. Tim Horton's)

Marcus-Whitman - December 18 @ 2:30 PM. (Gorham Free Library)

Victor – December 20 @ 6:45 AM. (Dunkin Donut's)



THE CAUSE – High School students invited!

Sundays, 5:00 PM – 7:30 PM, at the church

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

WEEKLY CONNECT – For college students through 20-somethings!

Sundays, 12:00 PM to 12:50 PM, young adults are invited to lunch, friends, and faith!

- Interested in hosting our young adults for lunch after church? Contact Mark Slomski.

ADULT EDUCATION MINISTRY

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS – Young adults and adults invited! 9:45 AM to 10:45 AM – Downstairs Dining Hall

Adult Sunday School Classes

Adult Ed Sunday School Class (Downstairs Dining Hall) - Bible Project Advent Series

Parenting Coffee Hour (Fellowship Room) - Topics:

December 10 – Keeping our sanity during the holidays



Young Adult Class (Bell Tower Room) - "Can I Ask That?" Hard Questions Curriculum

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



YOUTH CLUB

Our Wednesday afterschool ministry

For children in grades 2 – 8

After school – 6:30 October through April

Bible Study~Worship~Recreation~Family Time

Dec 13– Kitchen Clean up: Buono, Grube, Harris, Tew

Dec 13– Snack: Grube

Baking for Youth Club! Calling all bakers! We serve dessert to our Youth Club kids and volunteers each week. Sometimes we like to enjoy homemade desserts. If you see something you'd be able to bake, please let Deb Marshall know. Desserts need to be delivered to church by Wednesday at 4:00pm. Often more than one baker helps to make the quantity needed.

For December 13th – 2 dozen Christmas cut out cookies

We hope our children and youth will join us for our annual Christmas pageant! Mark your calendars for our one practice and for the pageant. Our whole church family is invited to attend the pageant on December 17th at 10am.



Children's Christmas Pageant
Sunday, December 17th at 10am
In the sanctuary

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;
He is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11

One Practice
Saturday, December 16th at 9am
In the Sanctuary

Christmas Angel Tree

Thank you for giving so generously to the needs on our Christmas Angel Tree. We were able to provide over 100 gifts this year for a variety of people in our community. We received the Christmas Angel Tree tags through St. Mary's Santa's Helper program and through Family Promise. Many thanks for your support of this important, local outreach.





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 December and January sign up sheets are 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.



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 8th:
We have received pledges from **100** families, for a total of **\$310,401.30** to the Operating budget and **\$86,593.60** 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



Christmas Eve ~ Help Needed in the Nursery!

Please let Deb Marshall know if you can help in the nursery on **Christmas Eve** during the **4th Sunday of Advent service at 11am** or during the **Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 7pm**. We need 2 adults or 1 adult and 1 teen at each time.



If you are not currently on the nursery schedule but desire to help, that's great! All volunteers working with children need to complete a simple background check. Please see Deb Marshall or Carolyn Russell for help with your background check. Thank you for serving our church in this way!



Finger Lakes Symphony Orchestra Music for the Holidays

TODAY, Sunday, December 10, at 3 pm

Selections from "The Nutcracker" and other Holiday Classics
Tickets available at the door (\$15 adults, \$10 students, Children 12 & under free)

Christmas Organ Concert

**with organist, Ivan Bosnar, and special guest, Douglas Avery, Tenor
Saturday, December 16, at 7 pm**

An evening full of Christmas classics, Carol singing, and engaging improvisations. A freewill offering will be accepted.
Dessert reception following.



Finger Lakes Community Band Concert at the Fort Hill Performing Art Center Sunday, December 17, at 3 pm

"Gifts of Music" is an afternoon of nostalgia that will bring back all your magical Christmas Season memories. Tickets are \$15 and available at <https://fhpac.thundertix.com/events/209539> or at the box office. Several of our church members and friends participate in this band!



MISSION NEWS

HOPE PEACE JOY LOVE

Christmas 2023 will be the first Christmas Ariella and Laila will experience in the US! The family is on "home leave" this year and the girls are attending school in Richmond, Virginia.

Iranian Christians in Germany: Persecution of Christians in Iran have caused my church members to seek asylum in Germany. Iranian congregations have been formed and Ryan has been a pastor. The Ryan now partners remotely with the emerging leadership. The Whites continue connections with the Synod of Evangelical Church of Iran in Diaspora (SECID).

Ryan and Alethia White and their daughters Ariella and Laila are one of four missionary families we support with extra prayer and finances. From their Berlin (Germany) base they are now the PCUSA regional liaisons for Northern and Central Europe.

Berlin has been their home for the past ten years. **Alethia and Ryan are needing to explain to Ariella and Laila the US secular holiday traditions for Thanksgiving (and Halloween) traditions.** Pray with and pray for the White family living the Gospel and connecting the Church (body of believers) in many languages and locations.

Thank you

HOPE AND PEACE are extended in our broken world by the gifts each of us share. Faithful 2023 contributions to missions are forwarded to our denomination partners and many local organizations. **Our Christmas Joy offering** is a special offering we collect each December. Your gift does make a difference.

Stewardship Note: Prayers and volunteering are key for effective programs. Financial contributions are also needed to support our programs.

Designate **separate** contributions for Operating and for Mission as you prayerfully complete your pledge. The Mission budget supports our local programs and our denomination programs. Some logos of organizations our mission funds support can be seen on a poster in the Welcome Center. Thanks to each of you who have completed your pledge form.



On December 17 we will be receiving our annual **Special Christmas offering** (or you can give any time in December) 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. Each week a different Offering will be highlighted in the bulletin.



How are America For Christ (AFC) Funds used? Each year American Baptist Home Mission Societies awards grants from the donations that they receive from AFC. Here are some of the areas that are funded by AFC:

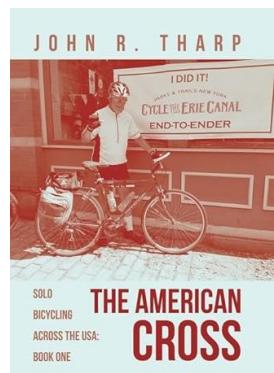
- Grants to churches to fund ministry initiatives such as camps, daycare and youth and young adult initiatives.
- Grants to American Baptist seminaries and colleges
- Grants to American Baptist Partners training opportunities, funding of learning opportunities that involve travel and housing, repairs, and upgrade to preserve our critical American Baptist spaces
- American Baptist Regional Offices

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.

Called to Care, Canandaigua is looking for furnishings for our next 3 rentals. Especially needed are **dressers and full sized beds** (not mattresses). Items must come from smoke-free, pet-free homes. Donate with dignity! In this and next month we are resettling a couple and a family of 4 from Ukraine and we hope a family of 6 from Haiti. Many thanks for your prayers and donations on behalf of those having to leave their homelands due to violence and war. Please contact Cathy Bush or Sonya Brooks for more information.

Did you know that Rev. John Tharp has written a book?

Look for a display copy and synopsis near the office and if you'd be interested in buying one, put your name on the list (they're also available on Amazon or Walmart).



Welcome To Our World (8:45 Special Music)

1.Tears are falling, hearts are breaking;

How we need to hear from God.

You've been promised, we've been waiting

Welcome, holy Child, welcome, holy Child.

2.Hope that You don't mind our manger,

How I wish we would have known.

But long-a-waited holy stranger,

Make yourself at home, please make yourself at home.

3.Bring your peace into our violence,

Bid our hungry souls be filled.

Word now breaking heaven's silence,

Welcome to our world, welcome to our world.

4.Fragile finger sent to heal us,

Tender brow prepared for thorn,

Tiny heart whose blood will save us,

Unto us is born, unto us is born.

5.So wrap our injured flesh around You,

Breathe our air and walk our sod.

Rob our sin and make us holy,

Perfect Son of God, perfect Son of God;

Welcome to our world.

Isaiah 40:1-11 (ESV)

Comfort for God's People

40

"Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

2 "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,

and cry to her

that ^bher warfare^t is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,

that she has received from the LORD's hand

double for all her sins.

3 ^cA voice cries:²

^dIn the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;

^emake straight in the desert a highway for our God.

4 ^fEvery valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,

and the rough places a plain.

5 ^gAnd the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together,

^hfor the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

The Word of God Stands Forever

6 A voice says, "Cry!"

And I said,³ "What shall I cry?"

ⁱAll flesh is grass,

and all its beauty⁴ is like the flower of the field.

7 The grass withers, the flower fades

when the breath of the LORD blows on it;

surely the people are grass.

8 The grass withers, the flower fades,

but the word of our God will stand forever.

The Greatness of God

9 Go on up to a high mountain,

O Zion, ^kherald of good news;⁵

lift up your voice with strength,

O Jerusalem, herald of good news;⁶

lift it up, fear not;

say to the cities of Judah,

"Behold your God!"

10 Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,

and his arm rules for him;

^mbehold, his reward is with him,

and his recompense before him.

11 He will tend his flock like a shepherd;

he will gather the lambs in his arms;

he will carry them in his bosom,

and gently lead those that are with young.