



December 1, 2024

St. John's United Church of Christ

As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.

**Called by God
Sharing with the World**

December 1, 2024
1st Sunday of Advent

Meditation

“Christmas is not as much about opening our presents as opening our hearts.”
Janice Maeditere

Chimes

Prelude *How Beautiful the Feet* - G F Handel

Welcome and Announcements

✝ Opening Hymn *Adore*

You stepped down from heaven
Humbly You came
God of all creation
Here with us
In a starlit manger Emmanuel
Light of the world here to save

Adore
Come let us adore
O come let us adore Him
The Lord
Worship Christ the Lord
Let all that is within us adore

Wise men bring their treasures
Shepherds bow low
Angel voices sing
Of peace on earth
What have I to offer to heaven's King
I will bring my life my love my all

Adore
Come let us adore
O come let us adore Him
The Lord
Worship Christ the Lord
Let all that is within us adore

Angels sing praises ring
To the newborn King
Peace on earth here with us
Joy awakening
At Your feet we fall. (Repeat)

Adore
Come let us adore
O come let us adore Him
The Lord
Worship Christ the Lord
Let all that is within us adore
CCLI Song # 7050417

Lifting up our Joys

December Birthday Blessings

Passing of the Peace

✠ Call to Worship (Congregation reads **bold** print)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The light shines even in the places where shadows touch our lives.

Rejoice, then, you people, for Christ's presence lives among us.

And brings light to our world.

✠ Opening Prayer

Pastor Jeff

✠Prayer of Confession

To you, Lord, we lift up our souls. In you alone, we trust. Lead us and teach us, God of salvation. Do not forget your mercy and steadfast love. Instead, we pray, forget our sins. Forgive us our transgressions, and instruct us in your Way.

Silent pause for reflection

Amen.

✠Assurance of Forgiveness

When we turn to God with faithful hearts, God hears and responds. Our failings and shortcomings are forgiven. God gives what is good and spreads the path of righteousness before us. Walk in confidence forgiven and forgiving in Christ's name. **Amen.**

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Let us pray together the Advent Prayer.

God of all hope, at the beginning of creation you made the light that scatters all darkness. May Christ, the true light, shine on us and free us from the power of sin and death. Fill us with hope as we welcome Jesus Christ; for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Children's Message

Pastor Jeff

Bible Readings

Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 3:1-6

Eileen Rump

Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness.

⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; ⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

Choir Anthem *Shine the Light of Your Love* - Mark Patterson

Anthem given in loving memory of Gertrude Miller by Bill and Elaine Miller

Pastor's Message

"A Voice Calls in the Wilderness"

Pastor Jeff

✠An Advent Creed

We believe in one God, who is Creator, maker of all we see and all we don't see. Who is Ruler of the universe: Source of all creation!

We believe in one God, who is Jesus Christ, God from God, Light from Light, true God and true human. He is one with the Creator; the Word made flesh, our Messiah: Savior of all creation!

We believe in one God, who is Holy Spirit, breath of God moving among us; who is one with the Creator; one with the Christ; our Comforter and our Guide: Mentor of all creation!

(Copyright Lisa Frenz. All Rights Reserved. Used with permission)

Giving our Gifts to God

Offertory

Lo How A Rose E're Blooming

†Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sacrament of Holy Communion

†Communion Hymn #166 *Wait for the Lord*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

† Invitation to the Table

†Communion Prayer

May the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. You sent him into this world to satisfy the longings of your people for a Savior, to bring freedom to the captives of sin, and to establish justice for the oppressed. He came among us as one of us, taking the lot of the poor, sharing human suffering.

We rejoice that in his death and rising again, you set before us the sure promise of new life, the certain hope of a heavenly home where we will sit at the table with Christ, our host. We worship you, O God, with all saints and angels from every time and place, gathering our hearts and voices to sing to the glory of your name.

✠Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of thy glory, Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

(The congregation may be seated)

Words of Institution

Hear the words of the institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ...Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

The Blessing of the Elements

Pastor Jeff

Prayers of the People

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 gifts of God for the people of God. Prepare your hearts for all things are ready.

Partaking of the Elements

Take and eat; in remembrance of the body of Christ, broken for you. **Amen!**

Take and drink; this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you. **Amen!**

✠Prayer of Thanksgiving (*unison*)

Send us out to wait and to work for the Kingdom. Make us people of hope, fanning the flames of redemption and resurrection in the world. Amen!

✠Closing Hymn #191 *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
“Peace on the earth, goodwill to all, from heaven’s all gracious King”
the World in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
And ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
When, with the ever circling years, shall come the time foretold,
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
And all the world gives back the song which now the angels sing.

✠Sending Forth and Final Blessing

✠Chimes/Meditation

Postlude

He is Born the Divine Christ Child

