

# THE UNITED CHURCH

PRESBYTERIAN – AMERICAN BAPTIST

December 15, 2024

Third Sunday of Advent

PRELUDE: “Noël Vosgien” by Jean Bouvard

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETING

## OUR PREPARATION

Focus of the day: Our Joy is in our eternal relationship with God.

INTROIT: (11:00) “Angels from the Realms of Glory” (hymn #174 chorus)

## CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: In this season of waiting, we gather with joy in our hearts.

People: Though darkness surrounds us, we see the light of hope.

Leader: Rejoice! For the Lord is near, bringing peace beyond understanding.

People: We lift our voices in praise, for God's promises are sure.

All: Let us worship with gladness, for our joy is rooted in God's eternal love.

\*HYMN: #157 “Good Christian Friends Rejoice” CCLI Song #85158, Public Domain, #11593017

\*OPENING PRAYER: Holy God, as we gather in this Advent season, we come with hearts full of anticipation and joy. Grant us the grace to quiet our busy minds and open ourselves to your presence among us. As we worship today, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing in your sight, as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us...Our Father, who art in heaven ... (using debts and debtors...) Amen.

\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

\*GLORIA PATRI: #807

## GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH THE WORD

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 12:2-6 (page 687) {A.B. page 765}

SPECIAL MUSIC: (8:45) “Run, Shepherds!” Johnson (words on insert)

Small Ensemble

ANTHEM: (11:00) “An Advent Gospel” by Lloyd Larson (words on insert)

United Church Choir

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE: Paul Johnson

SPECIAL MUSIC: (11:00) “Rise Up, Shepherd and Follow” arr. Gilpin

(words on insert) sung by Ladies Ensemble

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 3:7-18 (page 1016) {A.B. page 1126}

## Sermon

“Joy in Every Season”

(Philippians 4:4-7)

Pastor Wade Allen

## OUR RESPONSE IN FAITH

\*HYMN: #167 “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” CCLI Song #5673056, Public Domain, #11593017

PASTORAL PRAYER

OFFERTORY: Chorale on “In Dulci Jubilo” (16th century)

\*DOXOLOGY: #809

\*HYMN: #152 “Angels We Have Heard on High”

CCLI Song #27721, Public Domain, #11593017

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: “Toccata” (Creator of the Starry Heights) by Pietro Yon

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

*Our prayers and sympathy are with the Boseck family for the loss of Charles Boseck on December 9th. Charles was the father/father-in-law of Jim and Becky Boseck and Philip and Alison Boseck. Please keep his grandchildren (Benjamin, Matthew, Tyler and Andrew) and great-grands (Charlotte and Emerson) in your prayers as well during this difficult time.*

## PRAYER REQUESTS:

**Health concerns:** The Cheney family (RSV), Stephen Cole (stroke), Karen Mount, James Sheppard, Linda Gilbert, Jessica Canham (Sharyn's daughter), Mary Jane Laird, Denise Bailey Tautges, Tom Babcock (friend of Jenny Caron), Maverick, Carly, and Jenson Ferrante (family of Ardelle Bigos), Maryanne Fox (friend of Ardelle Bigos), Edwin Gregory (friend of Royal Purdy), Erik Keating (son of Al & Dawn Rossi), Louise Huck, Catherine Kurzdorfer (Adam Thorman's mother), Carolyn Verspoor, Marcus (friend of Sandi DiCicco), Denise Loy (friend of Kory Massey), David Sanford, Jovannie Ramirez (Karen Roaix's grandson), Steve Sedlock (Nancy Tharp's brother), Clancy Cragle (Michelle's grandfather), the Herin Family (relatives of Kathie Meredith), Jack Schermond

**Cancer:** Alex Clark (son of Rob and Natalie), Jon VanBlargan, Laura Fiorito (daughter of Charles and Patti Cagwin), David Gerstner (Nancy's husband), Ruth Krop (friend of MacKenzie Brown), Tane Robinson (friend of Ryan Marshall), Regina Allen, Christina Tharp (daughter of John and Nancy), Douglas Cook (Jen Eveleigh's brother), Rod Gifford (cousin of Joyce Laursen), Martha Ashley, Beth Smythe, Keith Laursen (Joyce's brother-in-law), Sasha (friend of Megan French), Mark Schreier (Virginia Holroyd's friend), John Tornow (friend of Elaine Allen), Susan Hennessy (Jen Eveleigh's sister), Rich Crowley (Steve & Beth Smythe's friend), Tom & Monica Yurik (Bruce & Deb Gardner's friends), Deb Dawson (Steve Smythe's niece), Roderick Simonds (father of Natalie Clark), Rob Stults (cousin of Wade & Christy Allen), Dawn Miller, David Pagoda (Eveleigh family friend), Jim Davis (Scott's father), Stephen Carges (Paula Traber's brother)

**Recovering:** Wendy Stoddard, Sara Scharr, Arlene Willett

**Comfort and Peace:** Harriet Morgan (Megan French's grandma), Mary Zimmerman (Wendy Bacon's mother)

**MILITARY SERVICE:** JJ Callard (USN) just graduated bootcamp, US Army LT1 Andrew Marlin (Tyler Bosecks husband) home from deployment, LTJG Nick Castiller (USN), MAC Adam Thorman (USN), E6 Cody Wells (USN) home from deployment, TSgt Timothy Peck (USAF)

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

---

**Some more upcoming dates you might want to put on your calendar (watch the Monthly Memo or future Lamplighters for details!):**

Jan 12 – Info meeting for Boyce Memorial

Jan 26 – Annual Congregational Meeting

## ***Highlights for This Week!***

- **We need more nursery volunteers.** If you are interested in serving in the nursery, please see Louise VanIseghem or Deb Marshall. All volunteers will need to complete a background check.
- Help brighten the holidays for our **Senior Companions** (formerly known as Special Members) by writing them a **Christmas card!** Cards, along with names and addresses, are available in the Welcome Center.
- We will have **ONE service at 11am on Sunday, December 22** and on **Sunday, December 29.** There will be no early service and no Sunday school on these Sundays.
- We will have one **Christmas Eve service at 7 pm**, with carols, readings, special music, communion and candle lighting.
- **Greeter/Offering Coordinator for December is Bill Fortunato.**

---

**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 11.

**9:45 Sunday school Nursery** ~ meets in room 10, the infant nursery.

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

---

**Children's Time** ~ Children's Time (children's church) is held during the 11am service immediately following the Children's Sermon. Kids in **kindergarten through 2nd grade** are welcome to attend Children's Time or stay with their parents in worship. Parents, please pick up your children in Room 26 promptly after the service. Thank you!

---

**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!**

---



## Faith and Action Christmas Joy Offering

*Our opportunity to say thank you to all those who have given of themselves in their work for Christ.*

**On the first Christmas God gave us the perfect gift in Jesus Christ.**

Each year, in December, our United Church receives an offering which is used to honor and thank church leaders who have devoted their lives to faithfully guiding us as we strive to follow Jesus. Our church combines the Presbyterian Joy offering, the American Baptist Retired Ministers and Missionaries offering and the America for Christ offering into our one Christmas offering.



As we remember the wondrous works of Christ let us show our love and our thanks by giving generously to our Christmas Joy offering.

You may use the pew/boxed envelopes, indicate Christmas offering on your check, or choose the Christmas Joy fund for online giving.

---

### Hurricane Relief Mission Trip

We all know of the devastation left by Hurricane Helene, especially in western North Carolina. The rebuild of that area will take years! We all wonder what we can do to help in addition to providing funds. **The mission team is coordinating an inter-generational work trip to Fairview, NC** which is just 11 miles from Asheville the week of April 14. Seabees Outreach Ministry, a ministry of Navy veterans, is establishing a work camp there to help locals devastated by the hurricane. They have assured us that they will find appropriate work for any skill level. **Please join us for an informational meeting on Jan. 19** after the second service. If you cannot attend the meeting feel free to reach out to Sonya Brooks (sonya.brooks99@yahoo.com).

---

**We're excited to announce a fresh name for our cherished special members:** They will now be known as **Senior Companions!** This new name beautifully reflects who they are to us—valued friends and companions to our Stewards and our entire church family. **Senior Companions** highlights the special role they play in our congregation and the meaningful connections we share with them. Let's celebrate this change as we continue to nurture these important relationships!

### Stewardship

Our stewardship season is underway, and so far we've received **103** pledge forms back with **\$308,217** pledged to Operating and **\$100,114** to Missions. Our goal is to have 130 families pledging. To meet the needs of the proposed 2025 budget, we are hoping to have **\$398,160** pledged to the Operating side. The Missions team forms their budget *after* the Missions pledges come in. Last year they worked with a budget of about \$107,000.

Follow the progress on the FROG poster outside the main office. A mailing went out recently containing the forms, but there are extras in the Welcome Center near the office. You may return forms in the offering plate, in the Welcome Center box, or by mailing them in. You can also make your pledge and/or request envelopes online by following this QR code:



---

### Youth Club - our after school ministry for 2nd-8th graders

Wednesdays, after school - 6:30pm

Our night includes: Recreation, Worship, Bible study, and Family Time (dinner)

**No Youth Club on the following dates:**

December 18, 25 and January 1

**Youth Club will resume on January 8**

Any questions? Please see Deb Marshall

---

### Prayer Prompts

The Boyce Discernment Team has been working throughout the year to carefully discern God's guidance in our stewardship of a significant gift given to the church in the fall of 2023. Currently, the team is in the "listening stage", which has included meetings with ministry teams and others. As part of the listening strategy, the discernment team invites the rest of the church to join in on listening through prayer. Feel free to use the following prayer as a prompt when you pray:

**This week's prayer:** *Father, grant us discernment through Your Spirit, Your Word, and the grace we experience daily. Reveal our hearts and draw us closer to Your wisdom. Amen.*

## Chrismons

The Christmas tree is not only beautifully decorated but each ornament has significance and points to Christ. The tree is decorated in Gold and White. The white is symbolic of Christ's purity and perfection, and the gold, his majesty, glory and triumph.

The white ornaments were made with love and care in 1996 by Esther and Claude Pullis and Vera and Bob Fraser in Esther's basement. Esther said that the men drew the shapes on Styrofoam and used a jigsaw to cut them out. She and Vera decorated them with sequins. When you look closely, you will see the intricate and delicate workmanship within each. They are called Chrismons and each points to scripture or an aspect of Jesus Christ. Chrismon is formed from the words "Christ" and "monogram" and means a representation or symbol of Christ. We are blessed that these ornaments have been so carefully preserved over the years.



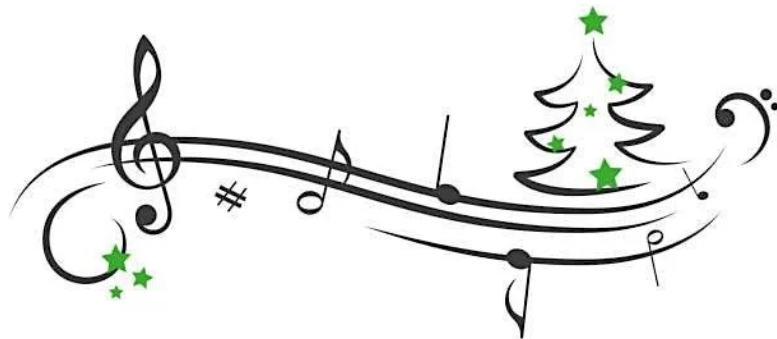
## Notes & Doodles

A booklet describing each Chrismon, also researched and compiled by Esther, is reprinted and available for you to pick up by the sanctuary doors.



Are you the person in charge of writing the **annual report** for your committee or group? If so, please send your report to the office by Dec 20th. (If you need end of year numbers, then ASAP after Jan 1st.) If having last years' report would be helpful to you, let Carolyn know.

Join us here **this afternoon at 3 pm**, the **Finger Lakes Symphony Orchestra** will be playing an assortment of holiday favorites! Tickets will be available at the door.



**Run, Shepherds!** by Johnson (8:45 Small Ensemble)

Run, shepherds, run and see the Baby!  
Run, shepherds, to Bethlehem!  
Run, shepherds, run and see the Baby,  
See the Baby born the Great I Am! (**repeat**)

There's a star in the east on Christmas morn.  
It will lead to the place where the Saviro's born.  
If you take good heed to the angel's words,  
You'll forget your flocks, you'll forget your herds.

Run, shepherds, run and see the Baby!  
Run, shepherds, to Bethlehem!  
Run, shepherds, run and see the Baby,  
See the Baby born the Great I Am!

~~~~~  
**An Advent Gospel** by Lloyd Larson (11:00 anthem)

There's a great alleluia comin' to the world  
The angels gonna shout and sing,  
Glory, glory  
There's a great alleluia comin' to the world  
The music of the King of kings

It's the music of hope  
The carol of peace  
The anthem of joy  
And the song of love

It's the hope of the nations  
The horn of salvation  
The music of the king of love  
It's a joyous creation  
A grand celebration  
The song of the angels above

There's a sound in the distance  
A beautiful song  
It rings through the valley  
With melody strong  
Prepare every voice and tune every heart

Make straight every life  
Let celebrations start

Go! Sing it on the mountain  
Over the hills and everywhere  
Go! Sing it on the mountain  
The music of the King of kings

~~~~~  
**Rise Up, Shepherd and Follow** arr. Gilpin (11:00 Ladies Ensemble)

Rise up, Rise up shepherd and follow  
Rise up, Rise up shepherd and follow

There's a star in the East on Christmas morn,  
Rise up, Shepherds and follow.  
It will lead to the place where the Savior's born.  
Rise up, shepherd and follow.

You can leave your sheep and leave your lambs  
Rise up, shepherd and follow.  
You can leave your ewes and leave your rams,  
Rise up and follow.

Follow, follow! Rise up, shepherds and follow.  
Follow the Star of Bethlehem.  
Rise up, shepherd and follow.

Rise up, Rise up shepherd and follow  
Rise up, Rise up shepherd and follow

If you take good heed to the angels' words,  
Rise up, shepherd and follow.  
You'll forget your flocks, forget your herds,  
Rise up and follow.

Follow, follow! Rise up, shepherds and follow.  
Follow the Star of Bethlehem.  
Rise up, shepherd and follow.

Rise up, Rise up shepherd and follow  
Rise up, Rise up shepherd and follow

There's a star in the East on Christmas morn,  
Rise up, and follow.