

Trinity United Church of Christ Worship Bulletin

Letting God's light shine since 1901

We worship God and seek to share His Word with everyone through faith in Jesus Christ

December 8, 2024

Second Sunday of Advent

www.trinityuccwestville.org

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at Trinity!

Gathering and Preparing to Worship

Sounding of the Bells

Throughout the centuries, bells have rung to call people to worship or bring them news. We use the chiming of the bell to joyously call us to worship, and prepare ourselves.

Welcoming

One: Welcome to worship today at Trinity United Church of Christ in Westville Illinois. If you are worshipping with us on line, you can download a bulletin from our church's website www.trinityuccwestville.org.

They are located in the events section under today's date,

Let us now pause for prayer to calm ourselves down and prepare our hearts to worship our living and loving God.

Opening with Prayer

One: Let us pray...

Many: **Patient and loving God, we so easily launch ourselves in preparation for the secular festival of giving and parties and the swirl of social events; but we forget that the true preparation is the readiness of our hearts to receive you. Help us look again at our lives and turn them around so that they may be in tune with your will. We ask this in Jesus' Name, Amen.**

Lighting the Second Advent Candle

Liturgy by Rev. Dr. Derek Weber

One: The prophet Isaiah writes "They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious"

We are the followers of that root of Jesse Isaiah spoke of. We are the ones who are now called to stand as a signal to the world, to all of creation, that peace is the will of the one who created us. Peace is the knowledge of the Lord that we proclaim from sea to shining sea.

We light these candles, the candle of joyful hope and the candle of proclaimed peace, in part to remind ourselves that we are a people rising toward God's promise. But we also light them as a sign to the world, an announcement there are some who hold on to hope and there are some who work the ways of peace.

The candles of hope and peace are lit

Let us pray:

One: Prepare the way! The promise is come! The lion shall dwell with the lamb.

Many: **Prepare the way! The old with the young!**

One: A child shall teach us to stand.

Many: Prepare the way! Make the paths straight!

One: Earth shall fill her deep valleys!

Many: Prepare the way! Break down walls of hate!

The Way is approaching! Servants keep watch. Soon we shall see the salvation of our God!

Announcements

Call to Worship

By Nancy Townley

One: This day is a day of preparation.

Many: Open our hearts, O Lord, and make us ready to receive you.

One: Repentance, changing our attitudes, our lives, is the beginning of our preparation.

Many: Lord, give us courage and confidence.

One: God will fill us with joy and peace as we become witnesses to God's love.

Many: Lord, help us to be faithful servants all of our days.

Hymn of Gathering

Angels from the Realms of Glory

1 Angels from the realms of glory

Wing your flight over all the earth

As you sang Creation's story

Now proclaim Messiah's birth

Come and worship, come and worship

Worship Christ the newborn King

3 Sages leave your contemplations

Brighter visions beam afar

Seek the great Desire of Nations

Ye have seen His natal star

Come and worship, come and worship

Worship Christ the newborn King

2 Shepherds in the fields abiding

Watching over your flocks by night

God with us is now residing

Yonder shines the Infant light

Come and worship, come and worship

Worship Christ the newborn King

4 Saints before the altar bending

Watching long in hope and fear

Suddenly the Lord, descending,

In His temple shall appear

Come and worship, come and worship

Worship Christ the newborn King

Call to Confession

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: All too often, we believe God's vision of justice and peace is only for us, not those around us. We are sure others need to be cleansed and forgiven, but not us. Let us seek to live as if, indeed, the kingdom is coming near, as we offer our prayers to the One who calls us to Advent living, as we pray together our prayer of confession,

Prayer of Confession and Letting Go

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: Let us pray...

All: God Incarnate, we must confess that we have not lived as your children. We muddy the clear waters of baptism with the debris of walking over those we claim we love. We sit in our lonely lives feasting on bitterness, when we could be feasting with those we are told not to trust. We wait for all our desires to be taken care of by you, while you hope we would fill the lives of others with your grace and hope.

Please take a few moments of silence for personal reflection,
and to release back to God those things you need to be forgiven for in your life

One: Let us continue...

All: Forgive us, God of this holy season, and help us to be as willing to draw near to others. Help us to heal their brokenness, touch their loneliness, embrace their grief, and love them as you did when you came to us so long ago. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness and Assurance

One: Here is the good news: speak with the whispers of hope until it silences despair; sing the carols of compassion until all join in the chorus; shower others with wonder and delight and join in God's gift of grace.

Many: Thanks be to God. We are forgiven! So, let us welcome others with open arms, just as we have been embraced in God's love and laughter. Amen.

***Gloria Patri** *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.*

Sharing of Christ's Peace

One: Welcome each other. Welcome the stranger. Welcome all who come. As Christ welcomed everyone, no matter what their background, no matter what their social status; as Christ welcomed enemies and friends, outcasts and leaders, foreigners and neighbors, let us open our hearts and homes and lives. Let us be Christ to everyone we meet. May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Please type in, post and share the peace of Christ with those gathered.
Please make sure your comments are appropriate. You can use words such as
"The peace of Christ be with you,"

Listening for God's Still Speaking Voice

Prayer for Illumination

By Rev. Dr. Joanne Carlson Brown

One: Let us pray...

Many: For these words of challenge and of hope, we give you thanks and praise Lord. May they enable us to lead lives that embody both challenge and hope, bound together by your love. Amen.

Scripture Readings for Today

Mark 1:1-8

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah,^[a] the Son of God,^[b] **2** as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"^[c]—

3 "a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"^[d]

4 And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **5** The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. **6** John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. **7** And this was his message:

"After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. **8** I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Footnotes

- a. [Mark 1:1](#) Or *Jesus Christ, Messiah* (Hebrew) and *Christ* (Greek) both mean *Anointed One*.
- b. [Mark 1:1](#) Some manuscripts do not have *the Son of God*.
- c. [Mark 1:2](#) Mal. 3:1
- d. [Mark 1:3](#) Isaiah 40:3

A Reflection on the Word

*** Hymn of Response Down By the Jordan by Rev. Carolyn Winfrey Gillette**

Sung to the tune "Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty"

Down by the Jordan, a prophet named John was baptizing,
Preaching a message the people found bold and surprising:
"God will forgive! Show that you'll change how you live!
Surely God's new day is rising!"

There by the river, the crowd came with great expectation:
"Are you God's Chosen One, sent here to rescue our nation?"
"No!" John replied. "He who is mightier than I
Judges and offers salvation."

Jesus, you went to be baptized along with the others,
Taking your place among sinners, God's lost sons and daughters.
Then with great love, God's Spirit came as a dove!
Your work began in those waters.

Here in the Church, we are baptized and filled with God's Spirit.
Freed and forgiven, we're welcomed with joy! Can you hear it?
This is God's sign! This is how God says, "You're mine!"
Let's take the good news and share it!

Offering of Our Gifts and Our Lives

One: As God has so richly blessed us, in our gratitude let us return a portion of these blessings back to God,
If you are able, please consider giving to the work and ministry
You may drop your offering for today in the offering plates as they are brought forward.
Your gifts are used in service to others through the ministries and mission of Trinity United Church of
Christ. We graciously thank all who are able to support Trinity UCC during this time.
To mail your offering or pledge, please send it to

Trinity UCC 311 E. Moses Ave., Westville, IL. 61883

Our morning offering will now be received

***Doxology**

"Emmanuel"
Em-man-u-el, Em-man-u-el,
His name is called Em-man-u-el;
God with us, re-vealed in us;
His name is called Em-man-u-el;

*** Blessing What We Can Give Back to God**

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: Let us pray...

Many: May your Spirit of generosity rest upon us, Caring God, so that our giving does not end here, but
only begins to flow forth in a baptism of hope, of grace, of healing, and of peace to all around us, as
well as those we may never meet. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Welcoming

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: Gathering Once again we gather, from different homes and circumstances, with different dreams and ideas, different values and tastes, different in age and color, different in gender and language, Yet, we are one family – Children of God every one;

Many: We join our hearts in worship, we join our voices in praise and we join our lives as the Body of Christ. Amen.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: May the Advent God give you hope.

Many: May God grant you peace.

One: Let us lift our hearts to God who offers righteousness to all.

Many: We open our hearts to the One who loves justice.

One: Children of God, rejoice in the One who call us to live in harmony with everyone.

Many: Amen and Amen! We give our thanks to God!

One: In those days when chaos reigned, creation appeared, Coming God, as you spoke the Word which caused snow to cap mountains;
as you breathed the Spirit which give life to sheep and shepherds;
as your steadfast love shaped all that is good and beautiful and good.
All this was intended for those clothed in your image of grace and hope,
but we insisted on putting on sin's coat,
cinching death's belt around our ways.
Through the prophets of every age, we heard your words of encouragement,
but chose to keep looking for life the seductions offered to us by sin.

One: So, in that moment we least expected, Jesus came, to baptize us with the Holy Spirit's peace and hope.
With those who have trouble playing nice,
with those who seek to bear good fruit,
together with one voice, we glorify you:

**Many: Holy, holy, holy are you, God who gives hope to all.
All creation gathers your harvest of peace.**

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who stands side-by-side with the most vulnerable.

Hosanna in the highest!

One: As we inch closer to Bethlehem,
as we wait for the kingdom to draw near,
we sing of that mystery which comes as faith:

**Many: This is the One who died, blessing those who feared him;
this is the One who was raised, the Spirit of resurrection resting on him;
this is the One who will come, to give justice to everyone.**

One: Welcoming God, pour out your Spirit upon these your gifts of loaf and cup, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who follow in his name, that we may be one in ministry in every time and place. As this bread is Christ's body for us, help us to be the body of Christ in the world. Let us, as the body of Christ, pause to lift up those in need of our prayers this morning...

Prayers of intercession for people in need may be offered here.

One: Help us, O God, to love as Christ loved. Knowing our own weaknesses, may we stand with all who stumble. Sharing in his suffering, may we remember all who suffer. Held in his love, may we embrace all whom the world denies. Rejoicing in his forgiveness, may we forgive all who sin against us. And when the past is finally behind us and we are gathered in the new Jerusalem with our sisters and brothers of every time and place, we will join our hands around your feast, and sing your praises from the depths of our hearts, We ask these things, both spoken and unspoken, in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray

The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

**Our Creator, 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**

Words of Institution

One: On the night on which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat. This bread is my body, given for you. Do this remembering me."
And in the same manner, he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood, given for the forgiveness of sin. Drink from it, all of you. Do this remembering me."

Sharing the Elements

One: Christ, our host, offers us the bread of life and the cup of salvation. Come, all has been prepared.

(Please take what you are using for the bread of life and hold it up)

The body of Christ, broken for you, take and eat.

(Please take what you are using for the cup of salvation and hold it up)

The cup of Salvation, poured out for you, take and drink.

Prayer After Communion

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: Let us pray...

Many: Gracious God, we thank you for this meal and for all of the ways you nourish us. Help us to grow so that we may nourish others. Sustain us as we press toward the goal of your call to serve all of your children in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

*** Our Hymn of Departure**

Guide My Feet

**1. Guide my feet while I run this race.
Guide my feet while I run this race.
Guide my feet while I run this race,
for I don't want to run this race in vain!**

**2. Hold my hand while I run this race.
Hold my hand while I run this race.
Hold my hand while I run this race,
for I don't want to run this race in vain!**

**3. I'm your child while I run this race.
I'm your child while I run this race.
I'm your child while I run this race,
for I don't want to run this race in vain!**

**4. Stand by me while I run this race.
Stand by me while I run this race.
Stand by me while I run this race,
for I don't want to run this race in vain!**

*** Charge and Benediction**

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: As God has welcomed us in these moments,
Many: let us go to embrace each person we meet.

One: As Jesus has been our servant of hope and grace,
Many: let us go to serve the most vulnerable around us.

One: As the Spirit of hope has filled us,
Many: let us go to empty ourselves of joy and peace for all.

One: So go out peacefully into the world. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, and all your strength; and love your neighbor as yourself.
Many: **We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.**

One: Go forth, knowing that the God who created you, the Christ who redeems you and the Spirit who empowers you is with you today and for ever more. Knowing this, may laughter and joy go with you every step of your journey.
Many: **Amen.**

Sing "Amen"

Thank you for worshipping with us today! You are always welcome here at Trinity!