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# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL



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LIVE STREAMING OF THE SANCTUARY SERVICE IS AVAILABLE AT [UCCMEDINA.ORG](http://UCCMEDINA.ORG)

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## **“WELCOMING, LOVING, SERVING, WHERE GOD HAS NO LIMITS”**

*Please take a moment to sign the attendance pads, (located at the end of each pew) so that you know who is worshipping near you and you may greet them by name.*

**RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL**

**GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**PRELUDE** “The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy” – arr. Lloyd Larson Cathy Fafrak, Organist

**\*VISIONING PRAYER** by Sharon Alberson

God, help us to be welcoming. God, help us to be loving.  
God, help us to see that serving you can lead us to  
A place full of grace with no limits where we can be free...  
To open our hands, welcoming. To open our hearts, loving.  
To be more than church on Sunday, to live in the light from above;  
To celebrate in service and love.

**\*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF HOPE** Confirmands

(written by the Rev. Jeff Nelson, on <http://www.coffeehousecontemplative.com/>)

**Leader:** We have called one another to hope, and we have sought peace with one another. Now comes a reminder to rejoice!

**People:** **We look forward to a time when God will bring joy to the world. For so many reasons, we need this joy ourselves.**

**Leader:** The demands and reminders of this season may make joy difficult. This is why we come together to worship.

**People:** **We as a worshipping community are called to point out joy to one another. We set our lights on a lampstand for all to see.**

*(Pause while the third Advent candle, the candle of Joy is lit.)*

**Leader:** Rejoice in the Lord always! Again, I will say rejoice! The Lord, our source of joy, is near!

**People:** **May our lives and spirits be brightened by this worship moment, and by those with whom we praise God’s name!**

**\*RESPONSE**

**"Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn"**

3 In deep - est night Christ's com - ing shall be, when  
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so  
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.  
 One with - out voice breaks forth in song, a lame one leaps in  
 won - der, the weak are raised a - bove the strong, and  
 weap - ons are bro - ken a - sun - der.

Liturgical composer Marty Haugen wrote both words and music for this Advent hymn with the twofold aim of providing an easy congregational chorale and utilizing the images of the Isaiah passages.

Tune: REJOICE, REJOICE 9.8.9.8.7.8.9. Marty Haugen, 1982

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**\*INVOCATION**

Gracious God, we confess that we're not always able to detect reasons for joy that you have placed all around us. We are not always open to the rejoicing to which you have called us. This time of year is often as much of a reminder of endless tasks and lost relationships as it is an invitation to sing and to be merry. Help us to join together with joyful hearts in this time and place. Fill our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy for the wonderful things that you have done and will do for us. Amen.

**\*HYMN**

**"O Come, All Ye Faithful"**

UCC Hymnal #89

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Joys and Concerns, Silent Prayer, Pastoral Prayer**

**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.

**PRAYER RESPONSE**

**"O Little Town of Bethlehem" vs. 1**

UCC Hymnal #99

*“A Talent Filled Christmas”*



**INTRODUCTION - Joel DeSario**

**"Jingle Bells" - Eve Lindon, piano**

**Contortion - Nellie Alber**

**"Away in the Manger" - Laura Medley, violin**

**"The Friendly Beast" - Katherine Johns, solo**

**"O Christmas Tree" - Sam Lindon, Piano**

**"Coventry Carrol" - Youth Bells**

**"Joy to the World" - Maggie Bixler, violin**

**"You're a Mean One Mr. Grinch" - Hayden Pettit, solo**

**"An Irish Reel" - Dublyn Alt, Irish Dancing**

**"Hark the Herald Angels Sing" - Cherub Choir**

**"Winter Lullaby" - Maxine Pettit, Solo**

**"Jingle Bells" - Colin Bixler**

**Water Skiing Demonstration - Camden Cochrane**

**"Peanuts Song: Linus and Lucy" - Elliott Avalon and Aidan Rubino, Guitars**

**"Away in a Manger"** - Grant Bixler, piano

**"What Child is This"** - Leah Medley, violin

**"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"** - Ruby Gabrielsen, Piano

**"I Wonder as I Wander"** - Eve Lindon, solo

**"The First Noel"** - Maggie Bixler, Piano

**"Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas"** - Carleigh Johns

**"In the Bleak Midwinter"** - Youth Choir

**"Joy to the World"**

Combined Choir

Joy to the World, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room, And Heaven and nature sing,  
And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.

CONGREGATION JOIN IN vs. 2 & 3

**Joy to the World, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders, of His love.**

**"We Wish You a Merry Christmas"**

Combined Choir

Thank you

Thank you to all the parents for your help and support with this program.

Thank you to Tracy Gabrielsen for directing our Cherub and Youth Choirs.

Thank you to Jim Kiser and Whitney Bixler for directing the Youth Bells.

Thank you to Matt Yates for all your technical help.

Thank you to Cathy Fafrak for giving your time and talent  
to accompany the music for the program.

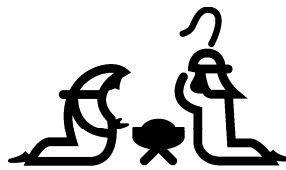
And finally, a BIG thank you to all the youth who shared their many talents with us.

You are all so talented!

What a blessing to us all.

*God Bless You and Merry Christmas*

*Stacie Yates*



MERRY CHRISTMAS

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**OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS**

**Offertory Invitation**

We take joy at the gifts shared with us! As a response, we now share the gifts we have brought.

**Offertory Music**      "O Jesus So Sweet" – arr. David Paxton      Cathy Fafrak, Organist

**\*Doxology** Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**\*Prayer of Dedication (unison)**

Emmanuel, you are with us. Be with these gifts as well and touch lives with them. Make visible our invisible love and hope for your world. Amen.

**\*SENDING HYMN**      "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"      UCC Hymnal #94

**\*BENEDICTION**

Leader: Be people of joy.

**People: Let joy live in your heart and share the joy of Christ with all you meet.**

Leader: Share joy by seeing the good in each other.

**People: Share joy by remembering good times and hoping for good times to come.**

Leader: Share joy by praying for our world.

**People: In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share joy.**

Leader: As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share joy, peace, and hope with those you meet. Amen.

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**      "God Be with You"

God be with you 'til we meet again; By His counsels guide uphold you;  
With His sheep securely fold you; God be with you 'til we meet again.

**\*POSTLUDE**      "O Come, Divine Messiah" – trad. French Carol      Cathy Fafrak, Organist

**"MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY"**

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\* Those who are able are asked to please stand

*Ushers: Dick Christy, Darlene Fazekas, Julie Gilliland, Pete Benson*

*\*\*\*Please join us for Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall following the service\*\*\**

*Today's coffee hour is hosted by **Beth Hari***

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***PASTORAL STAFF***

Rev. Luke Lindon, Senior Minister - email: [luke@uccmedina.org](mailto:luke@uccmedina.org)

***OFFICE STAFF***

Cindy Korecky, Office Manager - email: [office@uccmedina.org](mailto:office@uccmedina.org)

Kelly Charnley, Financial Manager - email: [financial@uccmedina.org](mailto:financial@uccmedina.org)

***PROGRAM STAFF***

Stacie Yates, Director of Christian Education

Nicole Rubino, Co-Director of Youth

Jim Kiser, Director of Music; Cathy Fafrak, Organist

Rebecca Rosen, Nursery Supervisor

Xanthe Phillips, Director of Hobby Horse Preschool

Jack Sharpe, Maintenance



# THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

## DECEMBER 15, 2019

**“WELCOMING, LOVING, SERVING, WHERE GOD HAS NO LIMITS.  
MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY!”**

December 15 thru December 22, 2019

### WEEK AT A GLANCE

<b>Sun</b>	<b>3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> <b>No F.I.S.H. Sunday School Today</b> 8:15 am Chapel Worship 9:00 am Gathering Worship 9:15 am Choir Practice <b>10:30 am Traditional Worship &amp; Children’s Talent Program</b> <b>11:45 am Mission Team</b> 2:00 pm JMM @ Medina Meadows 3:00 pm JMM @ Brookdale N. Hymn Sing 4:00 pm Youth Christmas Dinner & Parties
<b>Mon</b>	<b>10:00 am GIFT CARD ORDERS DUE</b> 1:00 pm Breadmakers 1:30 pm Flower committee Meeting 7:00 pm Gathering Meeting
<b>Tues</b>	2:00 pm Tuesdays @ 2:00 pm Bible Study  7:00 pm Stewardship Meeting
<b>Wed</b>	10:30 am Quilters
<b>Thu</b>	Garfield Deliveries
<b>Fri</b>	1:30 pm JMM @ Evergreen
<b>Sat</b>	
<b>Sun</b>	<b>4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b> 8:15 am Chapel Worship 9:00 am Gathering Worship 9:15 am Choir Practice <b>10:30 am Traditional Worship</b> 2:00 pm JMM @ Medina Meadows Sing-a-long 7:00 pm JMM @ WRMC

### Worship Highlights

8:15 am & 9:00 am – Romans 16

Sermon: Joy

10:30 am – Children’s Talent Filled Christmas

**Altar Flowers:** The altar flowers are donated by Barb Rosen in memory of Keith Rosen.

### THE CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross is a special mission offering administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Board. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy as well as lay employees are eligible. Your support of this mission offering will be received Sunday, December 22, 2019. Thank you for your generosity.

### SHARE THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT!

Spread some Christmas cheer to our older members and friends of Medina UCC by making a visit and delivering a Christmas Craft made at the Advent Family Fun Night. Each craft has the name, phone number and address on it. Please call the person and arrange your visit before Christmas. Crafts are displayed in the East Room ready for pick-up.

### *WOW... THANK YOU!*

What an incredible Historical Music Program! Thank you to Harry Buch who spent countless hours putting this program together and to all who participated with technical support, set up and performing with their many musical talents. What a beautiful musical gift it was!

## **SEND A CHRISTMAS CARD**

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Reach out to older members and friends of the church – send a Christmas card. When you are making your Christmas card list, could you include those on our Circle of Caring visitation list? Lists with addresses are on a poster in the hall by the office. Thank You!

## **CHRIST TREE**

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The Christ Tree is now up in the Crossroads Hallway. Please consider taking an ornament from the tree and purchasing the item found on the back of it. Bring your unwrapped item back to the church and place it under the tree. These items will then be given to the Juvenile Detention Center. **All donations are needed by TODAY, December 15<sup>th</sup>.** Thank you for your help and support!

## **SERVICE OF REMEMBERING**

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**DECEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup> at 10:00 am**

On the last Sunday of the year we will remember those persons who have passed away this past year. By having the time of remembrance during a worship service, we encourage family members and others to come and share this time together. During the worship service, the names of the members of Medina UCC who have passed away during 2019 will be read. For each *member* a candle will be lighted and a chime will ring. We would also like to read the names of family members and loved ones who have passed away during this past year. If you have a loved one you would like remembered, please call the Church Office with the full name of the loved one, their relationship to you, and the day of their passing.

## **EXTRA GIFT CARDS ON HAND FOR PURCHASE**

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Extra Gift Cards available for Christmas Gifts: \$10 – Chipotle, \$10 – Panera, \$10 – Starbucks Please contact Kelly weekdays in the office or via email [financial@uccmedina.org](mailto:financial@uccmedina.org) if you would like to purchase any of these cards. You may pay with cash or by check payable to “UCC”. These cards make great gifts. Supplies are limited.

## **QUILT RAFFLE RESULTS**

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The winners of the quilt raffle were Connie Winther and Chloe Faught. Congratulations to both! The proceeds of the raffle were \$230, which went to the Endowment Committee. Since the beginning of the Quilt Group in 2001, \$7,483 has been donated by them to the Endowment Committee. These are the proceeds from the many quilts that they have hand quilted for various persons who requested their quilting. We are in need of more quilters and welcome all who are interested. We are very willing to teach anyone who would like to quilt with us on Wednesday mornings, 10:30 am – 12:00. Please come join us.

## **STEWARDSHIP UPDATE**

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**Thank You** to those of you who have returned your pledge cards for 2020! **In order to best forecast 2020 budgets the church is still in need of your 2020 Faith Offering Card.** Blank cards are available in the pew racks.

## **BICENTENNIAL “TIME CAPSULE”**

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The yearlong observance of our 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary will culminate on Founders Day with the ceremonial dedication/deposition of the Time Capsule. Memory Cards will be distributed via bulletins, ushers, and will be available near the drop off collection box (not the actual time capsule box).

Members are asked to fill out this form with pertinent family information, as well as favorite memories, stories, or experiences that connect you to this church. These forms are now available. They are printed on non-acetone paper so that the ink will not fade after the first 25 years. Please do not simply discard this form. Fill it out and drop into the box or return it to the table or to the usher to be distributed for someone else to write a memory. Cards will be collected through the last week of January.

## **SENIOR SPOT**

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One in three older adults will fall this year. An older Ohioan is injured in a fall every five minutes on average. Two older Ohioans are hospitalized each hour. Three older Ohioans die each day because of a fall-related injury.

## **Gratitude for Candle Light Walk and Music Festival participants**

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The Candle Light Walk Open House on November 23 and the music festival on December 8 would not have been possible—much less engaging and inspirational--without the talents, commitments and collegial spirits of many, many members. Their names appeared on the church's bulletin boards or were listed in the worship bulletin, but those lists convey nary a hint of the significant amount of time and energy that these kind folks devoted to the project. Creating these sorts of worship experience involves so much more than what is apparent during the actual event, and any awareness of this "behind the scenes" investment can be easily swept away in the thrill of the performance. So I write this missive to remind all of us that wonderful experiences such as what unfolded this holiday season do not spontaneously "fall out of the sky" and into our laps. Therefore, let each of us to take every opportunity to abundantly express our appreciation when we run into one of the participants. Here is mine:

*"To each and every one of you who took part in making things happen—tour guides, greeters, costume coordinators, singers, narrators, musicians, technical specialists, refreshment servers, office staff and 'gophers'. From the heart of my heart I say: Thank you most kindly for your invaluable contributions to these memorable efforts."*

--Harry Buch (Mr. Bicentennial Guy)

## **Upcoming Youth Events:**

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- \*December 15 – NO F.I.S.H. Children's Christmas Talent Program
- \*December 15 – Youth Group Christmas Dinner & Parties – 4:00–6:00
- \*December 29 – NO F.I.S.H.
- \*January 5 – Youth Group – 4:00-6:00
- \*January 12 – Confirmation 3:00-4:30
- \*January 19 – Youth Group 4:00-6:00
- \*January 24 – Confirmation Trip to Temple Israel 6:00 pm in church parking lot
- \*January 26 – Confirmation 3:00-4:30

## **THE SEASON OF DESCENT** by Vicki Miller

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Just as we are preparing for the "Coming" in this season of Advent, I thought I would create a new Season for the preparation of "Going Downwards". The Season of Descent – Going downwards to Costa Rica that is. In 8 weeks, members and friends of the Church will be heading back to Nosara to continue our mission with Mercy Home Ministries. In the weeks leading up our trip we want to prepare the Congregation to participate with us. We want to share the history, the preparation, the "suffering" and the great joy that comes with this amazing mission.

Mercy Home Ministries was started by Maximo Cisneros. Maximo had been working closely with Habitat for Humanity in Costa Rica. HFH is an amazing organization, but their selection criterion is based on 3 things: the applicant's level of need, their willingness to put "sweat equity" into the home and their ability to repay a mortgage through an affordable payment plan. Maximo saw that the people most in need of housing would never, under any circumstances, be able to repay a mortgage on a home. This is when Mercy Home Ministries was created. He matched a need for proper housing with a desire to serve. His criterion for housing is based only on need and good character; families receive the home as a gift. MHM built their 163<sup>rd</sup> home in mid-November.

Please join us in this "Season of Descent" as we share more details about our journey!

## WINTER WEATHER POLICY

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Level 1: Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads are also icy. Drive very cautiously.

\*\*Scheduled Boards, Committees, Groups: Check with your chairperson, leader or facilitator of group.

\*\*Worship Services: Will be held

Level 2: Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Only those who feel it is necessary to drive should be out on the roadways.

\*\*NO Church meeting or gatherings

\*\*Church closed

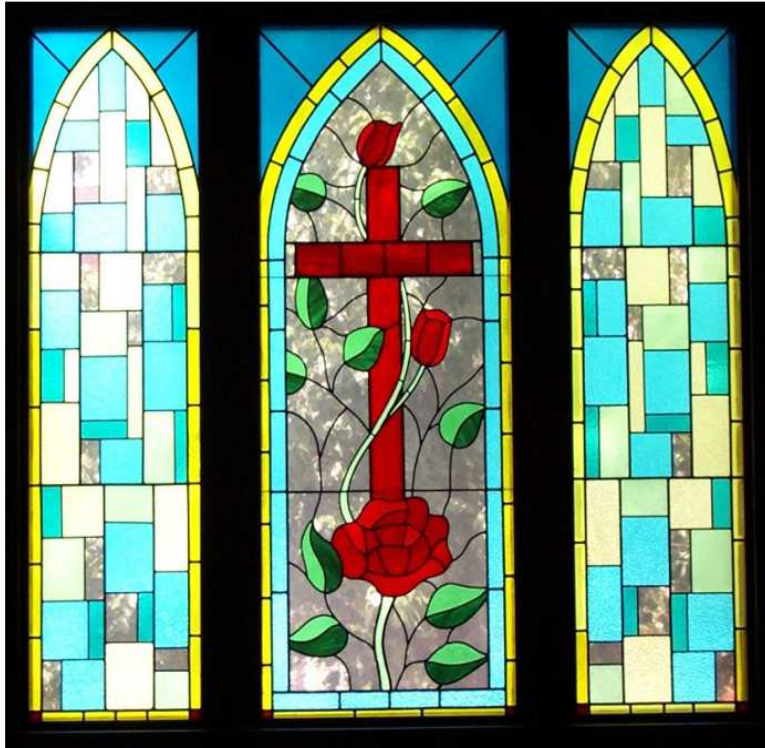
\*\*Worship Services: CANCELLED

Level 3: All roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel. No one should be out during these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary to travel.

\*\*Church closed

\*\*Worship Service: CANCELLED

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## Bicentennial Tidbits

The Rose Window, which currently hangs in the new library, is one of the few elements of the old long back stairway area which was replaced by the new entrance addition.



Did you know that you can see photographs taken by Terry Rhodes that chronicle every day of construction of the new entrance (from June 9, 2015 through May 6, 2016) at: [uccmedina.org /history/](http://uccmedina.org/history/) ... "to view photos, click here."

The Third Sunday of Advent. We are waiting with baited breath. A hymn, "God, We Await Your Advent Here" written in 1998 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, is based on the Old Testament prophet, Isaiah, chapter 35, and sung to the tune of "O Master Let Me Walk with Thee" written in 1874 by Henry Percy Smith. An old hymn with contemporary lyrics:

God, we await your advent here. When will these desert lands rejoice?  
When will new blossoms bright appear, and all earth praise you with one voice?  
We live in deserts we have made; gifts of your love we pass right by.  
We seek possessions, more each day, and then in thirst for joy, we cry.  
God, we prepare for Jesus' birth – searching for gifts from store to store!  
Yet when you sent your Christ to earth, You gave us joy worth so much more.  
When in the love of Christ we grow, streams in this desert shall abound.  
Then by your Spirit we will know: True wealth in Jesus Christ is found.

What would these verses mean for us today?

Rejoicing in times of tribulations. Praising God with one voice, in unity with others. Not letting a day go by not acknowledging or noting the beauty of nature. Not running ourselves ragged to BUY possessions we do not need, and in the end, can not take with us. Is this what Advent means by preparing for something important? WAIT! STOP! TAKE A DEEP BREATH! CHILL OUT! Remember, WHAT A GIFT WAS GIVEN in love! Given with joy! A gift that is matchless! A gift which is priceless! A gift unrivaled and unequalled. Who was this gift? JESUS! This Advent season be...

*Devoted. Empathetic. CHRIST-like. Empowered. Mindful. Believing. Ever-praising. Redeemed.*

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## *Join us for the Advent/Christmas Season*

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### **"Children's Talent Filled Christmas"**

Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> - 10:30 worship service  
*No F.I.S.H. Sunday school today*

### **Youth Group Christmas Dinner & Parties**

Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> – 4:00 pm

### **Christmas Eve Worship**

*6:00 PM—Candlelight Service*

*9:00 PM—Candlelight Service*

### **ONE SERVICE OF WORSHIP**

**Service of Remembrance**

Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 am.

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**The deadline for submission of articles for NEXT Sunday's *Messenger* is this Sunday at 11:30 am**

**Please submit articles to the church office at [office@uccmedina.org](mailto:office@uccmedina.org)**

\*\*\*\*\*CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm MONDAY THRU FRIDAY\*\*\*\*\*

Luke 1:46b-55

### Heartbeat of Justice

*Look around the room.* Everyone's circumstances were unique, but every person you see has at least one thing in common – every person here was born. And before they were born, they were carried in a womb.

*Look around the world.* Everyone's circumstances were unique but every person you see has this in common – every person on this planet we call home was born. And before they were born, every person was carried in a womb.

However you were born, the first sounds you heard were the muffled but persistent sound of the mother's heartbeat. The heartbeat of the woman's body that carries the baby is the first sound that the child can hear. Every language records it differently, but in most every language, the word we use for that first sound is as rhythmic and beautiful as a two-word poem. Lub dub, lub dub, those who speak English say. Around the world, mothers' hearts beat, saying *duru duru* (Bengali), *deg deg* (Indonesian), *pam pam* (Albanian), *tuks tuks* (Estonian), *peng peng* (Chinese), *bum bum* (Spanish), *ratama ratama* (Arabic), *doki doki* (Japanese).

After its mother's heart, the second sound a fetus can hear is the sound of their mother's voice. Like the heartbeat, to every baby in the world, this voice sounds the same. Individual words are not distinguished – just the musical cadence of the sound of her voice.

*Now look at Jesus.* His story is unique, but he is like us in this way. He was born. And before he was born, he was carried in a womb. Like us, he heard a heartbeat. Like us, he heard the cadence of his mother's voice. What did it mean for Jesus to have the first words he heard be this song - a longing of a justice?

#### *Third Sunday of Advent - Prayer for Joy*

O come, O come Emmanuel!  
This is grief and sorrow  
in our hearts and in our world.  
Save us, we pray, from our sadness.  
Remind us that you are lifegiving water,  
an endless spring of joy.  
Help us to create the joy that comes from justice,  
here and now and always. Amen.