



# Advent 2

Sunday December 10, 2023  
Medina UCC, Congregational  
[uccmedina.org](http://uccmedina.org)



# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL

217 E. Liberty St. Medina, Ohio 44256 330-725-4559 [www.uccmedina.org](http://www.uccmedina.org)

**\*\*\*Assisted Listening Devices Available – Please Ask Your Usher\*\*\***

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

- *During the 10:30 service, Jesus Vibes Sunday School is available for ages 3-8<sup>th</sup> grade*

## “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.*

*\*Those who are able please stand*

### RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE “People, Look East and On Jordan’s Banks the Baptist’s Cry” – Curt Oliver  
Cathy Fafrak, Piano

### PASSING OF THE PEACE

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (*Cloth for the Cradle*, Iona Community 1997, Glasgow G51 3UU Scotland)

Among the poor  
**Among the proud**  
Among the persecuted  
**Among the privileged**  
Christ is coming.  
**Christ is coming to make all things new.**  
With a gentle touch,  
**With an angry word**  
With a clear conscience  
**With a burning love**  
Christ is coming.  
**Christ is coming to make all things new.**  
That the kingdom might come  
**That the world might believe**

That the powerful might stumble  
**That the humble might be raised**  
Christ is coming.  
**Christ is coming to make all things new.**  
Within us  
**Without us**  
Among us  
**Before us**  
In this place  
**in every place**  
For this time  
**For all time**  
**Christ is coming to make all things new.**  
**Amen!**

### \*OPENING HYMN

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

*Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710  
Based on ancient Antiphons from Advent Vespers*

VENI, EMMANUEL L.M. with refrain  
*melody from a 15<sup>th</sup> century French processional  
arr. Thomas Helmore, 1854*

*Unison*

3 O come, O come, O A - do - nai, who  
4 O come, O shoot of Jes - se, free your  
came to all on Si - nai high, And from its peak a  
own from Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny, From depths of hell your  
sin - gle law pro - claimed in maj - es - ty and awe.  
peo - ple save, and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.  
Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Fire burns. It hurts. It can destroy. Fire also gives warmth and light. The coming of Christ is both a day of judgment and a day of promise. Two candles, flickering brightly, help us remember that the coming of Christ has many meanings.

**"Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.**

**Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky"**

(Psalm 85:10-11).

*The candles of Hope and Peace are lit.*

Light two candles; see them glow

Brightly, so that all may know

How two candles show the way

Making our darkness bright as God's day.

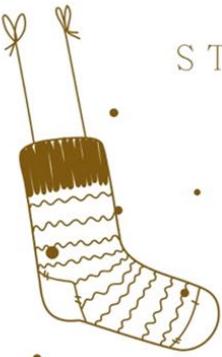
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

**Dear God, we have much to do and we are not sure we will be ready for the day of your coming. In Advent's light, help us to see what is important: to be who you want us to be, and to do what you would have us do. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**



# A Talent Filled Christmas

STARRING MEDINA UCC YOUTH  
12/10/2023





SAM LINDON

"Hark the Herald Angels Sing," Piano

KODIE WOLFF

Tumbling

LAURA MEDLEY

"O Holy Night," Violin

KIMMY SPENCER

"Truth Be Told" by Matthew West, Vocal

KALLIE ARMBRUST

"My Church," a Poem

MASON RUSYNIAK

"Jingle Bells" and "Up on the Housetop,"

Clarinet



EVE LINDON

Memorization

COLIN & GRANT

"The First Noel," Piano Duet

BIXLER

EMILY LEHMAN

Ventriloquism





MAGGIE BIXLER &  
RUBY GABRIELSEN

"Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,"  
Violin Duet

ADALEE ARMBRUST

"Merry Little Snowflake," a Poem

PAIGE RUSYNIAK

"Jingle Bells" and "Silent Night," Piano

MILO ARMBRUST

"Do Something" by Matthew West, Drums

MADELINE BAUER

"Deck The Halls," Violin

ELLIOTT AVALON

"Jingle Bells," Tuba

YOUTH CHOIR

"Longing for Light" (Christ Be Our Light)

Words & Music: Bernadette Farrell

SOLOIST VERSE 2

Kaelyn Miller

SOLOIST VERSE 3

Addisyn Miller

SOLOIST VERSE 4

Sam Lindon

ALL THE CHILDREN

"We Wish You A Merry Christmas"





SHOW NARRATORS



Sammy Ockunzsi

Kaelyn Miller

Addisyn Miller

STAGE CREW

Eve Lindon

Max Ockunzsi

Charlie Spencer

THANK YOU YOUTH,  
FOR SHARING YOUR TALENTS WITH US!  
YOU BRING LIGHT TO OUR WORLD!

SPECIAL THANKS TO MS. STACIE,  
THE JESUS VIBES VOLUNTEERS,  
AND ALL OF OUR PARENTS!



MERRY  
*Christmas*



## Prayer of Thanksgiving

Gracious Mystery, your prophet said a child shall lead us. Thank you for our children. Thank you for the joyful noise they make. Thank you for teaching us that a noisy church is a growing church. For their energy. Their talents. For the gift of who they are and all they are: gifts from you. Amen!

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns

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.

## \*CLOSING HYMN

### "On Jordan's Bank"

WINCHESTER NEW LM

Charles Coffin (1676-1749), tr. John Chandler (1806-1876)

Georg Wittwe's Musikalisches Hand-Buch, Hamburg, 1690; adapt. William H. Havergal (1793-1870)



1. On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An -
2. Then cleansed be ev - 'ry soul from sin; Make
3. We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, Our
4. To heal the sick stretch out your hand, And
5. To God the Son all glo - ry be, Whose



1. nounc - es that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and heark - en,
2. straight the way of God with - in, And let each heart pre -
3. ref - uge, and our great re - ward; With - out your grace we
4. bid the fall - en sin - ner stand; Shine forth, and let your
5. ad - vent set your peo - ple free; Whom with the Fa - ther



1. for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings.
2. pare a home, Where such a might - y guest may come.
3. waste a - way Like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
4. light re - store Earth's own true love - li - ness once more.
5. we a - dore, And Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

**\*ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*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      "Every Valley" – John Ness Beck/transcribed by Janet Linker      Cathy Fafrak, organ**

**"MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY"**

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

***Coffee Hour is hosted this week by the Discipleship & Education Leadership Team (DELTs) Team.***

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Nick Brlan, Custodian



# MEDINA

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. CONGREGATIONAL

## UPCOMING EVENTS



ADVENT FAMILY FUN NIGHT 4:30 P.M.



YOUTH TALENT SHOW 10:30 A.M.



JAZZY CHRISTMAS CONCERT 7 P.M.



CHRISTMAS CANTATA 10:30 A.M.



ADVENT WORSHIP 10:30 A.M.  
CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP 6 & 9 P.M.



NEW YEAR'S EVE WORSHIP 10:30 A.M.

217 E. LIBERTY ST. ~ [UCCMEDINA.ORG](http://UCCMEDINA.ORG)

# THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

## DECEMBER 10, 2023

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

Live streaming of the Sanctuary service is available at [www.uccmedina.org/live](http://www.uccmedina.org/live)

### December 10, 2023 thru December 17, 2023 WEEK AT A GLANCE

<b>Sun</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>
	8:15 am Chapel Worship
	9:00 am Gathering Worship
	9:45 am Children’s Choir Rehearsal
	10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
	<b>11:30 am Mission Team Meeting</b>
	3:00 pm Confirmation Class
	4:30 pm Podcast Talkback
<b>Mon</b>	7:00 pm Endowment Fund Committee
<b>Tues</b>	<b>7:00 pm Worship Team Meeting</b>
<b>Wed</b>	10:30 am Quilters
	6:00 pm Gathering Band Rehearsal
	6:15 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
	<b>7:00 pm DELTs Meeting</b>
	7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal
<b>Thurs</b>	7:00 pm Support Group: Keep Talking About Mental Health
<b>Fri</b>	7:00 pm Jazzy Christmas Concert
<b>Sat</b>	
<b>Sun</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>
	8:15 am Chapel Worship
	9:00 am Gathering Worship
	10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
	<b>11:45 am Caring Team Meeting</b>
	12:00 pm Instrumentalist Rehearsal
	4:30 pm Men’s Group
	4:30 pm Youth Group

### LITURGIST SIGN-UP

Check out the bulletin board in the East Room hallway to sign up to be a liturgist during the 10:30 Sanctuary service. The new sign-up sheets are up for January-March.

### Worship Highlights: 8:15 & 9:00 am

Scriptures: Isaiah 40:1-11 and Mark 1:1-8

Sermon: “What Shall I Cry?”  
The Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon

10:30 am –Youth Program:  
“A Talent-Filled Christmas”

**Communion Table:** The communion table flowers are given by Frank Kish & Karen Brocco-Kish in memory of their parents.

### A TALENT FILLED CHRISTMAS

Please join us today, Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at the 10:30 service as our youth help to get us all in the Christmas spirit by sharing their amazing talents with us. You will not want to miss this special day!

### GIVING FOR GARFIELD

#### (and other local organizations)

The Giving Tree is now on display upstairs next to the elevator through December 17<sup>th</sup>. The items on the tree will be distributed to the nine families we support at Garfield Elementary, the Juvenile Detention Center and Prospect Pantry. Please return unwrapped gifts on or before December 17<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your continued support.

### SEND A CHRISTMAS CARD

The church office has updated our UCC Christmas card list for Connection Outreach Circle. Please pick up a card list and reach out to our homebound members and those in care facilities with the Spirit of the Season-LOVE.

## **JACKIE'S JARS DUE TODAY**

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It's time again for our change collection that provides meals to seniors in our community. Jackie Smith started this, so let's continue this collection in her memory! Coin jars are available in the East Room and are **due back by today, December 10<sup>th</sup>**.

## **JAZZY CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

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You are invited to a wonderful evening of holiday music on Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm! The "Jazzy Christmas" concert will feature the Gateway Band, led by our Music Director and vocalist Jennifer Cochran. Gateway Band has a unique musical style that has entertained audiences in the greater Cleveland area and on the east coast for some 20 years now! The band's musical arrangements are energetic and sentimental. This concert will get your toes tapping and your heart in the mood for Christmas! To support the choirs at Medina UCCC, a freewill offering will be taken during the concert and there will be a bake sale and raffle following the concert in Fellowship Hall! Hope to see you there!

## **COMMUNION TABLE FLOWERS**

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The 2024 Flower Chart is now hanging in the East Room hallway. This is a wonderful way to honor or remember someone, or to celebrate a special occasion. Please fill in your name and **write "Church" or "Self"** to let us know if you would like the church to order the flowers for you or if you will be ordering them yourself. The cost of the flowers ordered through the church office is \$22.50. **Also, please write what you would like printed in the Messenger and if you want to claim your flowers** after the 10:30 service.

## **COFFEE HOUR**

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Please consider hosting coffee hour one Sunday. **Dates in January and February are still available.** Never hosted before? No worries! You'll receive a letter and a call from a Caring Team member should you have any questions. Hosting is meant to be simple, so would you please consider hosting Coffee Hour one Sunday?

## **GIVING ENVELOPES**

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2024 Giving Envelopes for those who requested them are now available for pick-up in the East Room.

## **MUSIC SUNDAY**

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Please join the Chancel and Bell Choirs on Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> for a service filled with beautiful music of the Advent and Christmas season. The Alleluia Ringers will perform a rousing version of "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" by arranger Lloyd Larson. The Chancel Choir will sing five musically stirring pieces from the Cantata "What Sweeter Music: A Christmas Cantata", arranged by John Leavitt. The piece will be accompanied by our tremendously talented pianist/organist, Cathy Fafrak, and will feature several instrumentalists, the Alleluia Ringers, and narrators, all from our church congregation. It will be a glorious Sunday morning filled with inspirational sounds of the season!

## **ANNUAL REPORTS DUE SOON**

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Annual Report time is near! As we are working on our 2023 budget, we will also need a few other reports to put this together. **We will need an annual report from our Church Clerk, Church Treasurer, the Finance/Stewardship Team, and the Endowment Team.** Please have your report to the office no later than Wednesday, December 29<sup>th</sup>. Thank you.

## **DONATION OF THE MONTH**

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This month we will be collecting full size candy bars for the children at the juvenile detention center. Each year, for Christmas, the kids receive a gift bag full of treats to help them feel loved during the holiday season! If you would like to help, please place a full-size candy bar in the bin across from the elevator by the Mission Team table! Thank you for your generosity!

## **SAVE THE DATE**

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### **Chili Cook Off - Sunday, January 28, 2024**

Brrr, it's getting chili! Mark your calendars for the Medina UCC Chili Cook Off following one service of worship at 10:30 and the Annual Meeting. Signups will begin the second week of January. Stay tuned for more details! A fun fact about chili: The International Chili Society says that chili was popularized during the Gold Rush of the mid-1800s. Cowboys and prospectors combined dried beef, fat, pepper, salt and chili peppers together into stackable rectangles or "chili bricks" that were then dumped into boiling water.

## **THE VETERANS OF THE CROSS OFFERING**

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The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years! These funds provide emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees. The generous financial offerings given at Christmas time by United Church of Christ congregations enable the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance Team to provide financial support to those who serve and have served the Church. Please consider offering a monetary amount, on Christmas Eve, to help support the Veterans of the Cross.

## **WINTER CRAFTS ARE READY FOR PICKUP & DELIVERY**

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**Crafts are set up in the Welcome Area.**

Sign for a craft beside the address you take...Call ahead for a delivery visit, to make.  
Thank you for serving others in so many ways...Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

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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 am – 3 pm MONDAY THRU THURSDAY; FRIDAY 9 am – 12 pm**

Isaiah 40:1-11

## Messengers of Hope

This is the second Sunday of Advent, the season when we set time aside to express the human longing for God to be right here with us. There are many moods in this season. Some of us are too busy and some of us are too lonely. Some of us take joy in all that there is, some of us grieve all that is lost. Some of us find comfort in the same story told a new way each year, some of us just want to hurry along to the turning of the year. Some of us find deep peace in the rituals of this season, and some of us feel very anxious. And many of us feel all these things! On each of our Advent Sundays, we are invited to sink deeply into our spiritual lives with a time of devotion and contemplation, knowing that God meets us exactly where we are - busy and lonely, joyful and grieving, comfortable and hurried, peaceful and anxious.

*Comfort, comfort O my people, says your God. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every 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. Isaiah 40:1, 3-4*

First, read the focus scripture for this day. Read it again, more slowly, perhaps even out loud. Now read it a third time. What are the questions or images that come to mind? Here are some to get you started. You may have others.

Last week, we sat with the Israelite people in the discomfort that comes from feeling far from God. Today, we take comfort in the now, and in God's presence with us. When have you felt truly comforted by God or God's presence? Compare this to other times you felt God with you. How was that feeling of *comfort* unique?

These words are often sung as part of Christmas cantatas or presentations. Do these words bring to mind a tune for you? If not, what other songs of Christmas can you bring to mind? Why is it important to invoke God's presence with song at this time of year?

In this scripture, A Voice calls for all of us to make ready for God to come. The scripture advises the listener to make a path where no path has been made before and where there are rough places, to make them smooth. Is there a place in your spiritual life where you have not ventured before? What would it be like to make a new path through that uncharted territory? Or, alternatively, is there a rough place in your life? A meanness, an addiction, an old hurt? What would it be like to begin to smooth out that part of your heart or mind?

End your time of meditation with this prayer: *Comforting One, wrap us in your compassion and warmth. Cover us now and always with the certainty of your healing presence. In your Holy Name we pray. Amen.*