



Advent 3

Sunday December 17, 2023
Medina UCC, Congregational
uccmedina.org



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL

217 E. Liberty St. Medina, Ohio 44256 330-725-4559 www.uccmedina.org

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

LIVE STREAMING OF THE SANCTUARY SERVICE IS AVAILABLE AT UCCMEDINA.ORG

- *During the 10:30 service, Jesus Vibes Sunday School is available for ages 3-8th 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 “Greensleeves (What Child Is This?)” – arr. Carol Tornquist

Cathy Fafrak, Piano

PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

The desert will sing and rejoice!

And the wilderness blossom with flowers.

All will see the Lord’s splendor,

See the Lord’s greatness and power.

Tell everyone who is anxious,

Be strong and don’t be afraid.

The blind will be able to see,

The deaf will be able to hear.

The lame shall leap and dance.

Those who can’t speak will shout!

They will hammer their swords into ploughs,

They will turn spears into pruning hooks.

The nations shall live in peace,

No more will they train for war.

This is the promise of God.

God’s Promise will be fulfilled!

*OPENING HYMN

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, 1710
Based on ancient Antiphons from Advent Vespers

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

**O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide your heavenly home;
Make safe the path to endless day, to hell’s destruction close the way.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here;
Love stir within the womb of night, and death’s own shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The light glowing from our Advent wreath is burning brighter. This radiance warms our hearts and fills us with joy! The Lord has done great things for us. Let us rejoice.

“May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves” (Psalm 126:5-6).

The candles of Hope, Peace and Joy are lit.

Light three candles, see them glow
Brightly, so that all may know
How three candles show the way
Making our darkness bright as God’s day.
Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.

Dear God, we carry many burdens and worry over many things.

Help us to hear your promise in this Advent season, that in hearing, we may receive the Spirit’s gift of joy. And may our spirits be kept sound at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

HANDBELL ANTHEM “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” – arr. Lloyd Larson

Alleluia Ringers

Children can go downstairs at this time for Jesus Vibes

CHOIR PROGRAM

What Sweeter Music: A Cantata for Christmas

By John Leavitt

Featuring the UCC Chancel Choir & the Alleluia Ringers
Narrators: Harry Buch, Cheri Ingraham, John Kavouras, Carl Skorepa. Jenny Cochran
Instrumentalists: Deanna Ockunzzi, flute; Jennifer Vilimonovic, violin
Soloists: Tracy Gabrielsen & Jennifer Vilimonovic

A Child Is Born: *Isaiah 9:2, Matthew 1:23, Isaiah 35:10*
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

The Glory of Zion: *Matthew 3:3; 24:27; Isaiah 11:10*
"People, Look East"

Jesus' Birth Foretold: *Luke 1:26-33, 38*
"The Angel Gabriel"

Jesus' Birth: *Luke 2:1-7; Advent Prayer by Sr. Maryanna, O.P.E.; Advent Antiphons by Sr. M. Charlita, I.H.M.*
"He Is Born, the Divine Christ Child"

"What Sweeter Music" by Robert Herrick
"What Sweeter Music"

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.

*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 "God Rest You Merry" - arr. Wilbur Held

Cathy Fafrak, organ

"MORE THAN CHURCH ON SUNDAY"

+++++

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

Coffee Hour is hosted this week by Beth Hari & Becky Weber.

+++++

Music in this bulletin reprinted/podcast/streamed with permission under:

ONE LICENSE, License #A-605137. All rights reserved and CCLI, License #1637380 & #21333812



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

THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

DECEMBER 17, 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

December 17, 2023 thru December 24, 2023

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
11:45 am Caring Team Meeting
12:00 pm Instrumentalist Rehearsal
4:30 pm Men's Group
4:30 pm Youth Group

Mon 1:00 pm Breadmakers

Tues

Wed 10:30 am Quilters
6:00 pm Gathering Band Rehearsal
6:15 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal

Thurs

Fri CHURCH OFFICE CLOSSES At NOON

Sat

Sun 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT
10:30 am One service of worship
6:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
9:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Livestreamed)

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.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

6 pm – Candlelight Family Worship
9 pm – Candlelight Traditional Worship

Worship Highlights: MUSIC SUNDAY!

8:15 am – Carol Sing

9:00 am – Gathering Band Seasonal Favorites

10:30 am – Cantata: “What Sweeter Music”

Communion Table: The communion table flowers are given by Barb Rosen in memory of Keith Rosen.

GIVING FOR GARFIELD

Bring back your gifts today!

The Giving Tree is now on display upstairs next to the elevator through December 17th. 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 17th.** 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.

GIVING ENVELOPES

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

TODAY IS MUSIC SUNDAY

Please join the Chancel and Bell Choirs on Sunday, December 17th 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!

THE VETERANS OF THE CROSS OFFERING

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.

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE SOON

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 29th. Thank you.

COFFEE HOUR

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?

COMMUNION TABLE FLOWERS

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.

DONATION OF THE MONTH

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!

THANK YOU AND MERRY CHRISTMAS!

I would like to thank everyone for the many cards and prayers over the last several months. You are all truly amazing people, and your thoughts and prayers mean more than you know. My recovery is still ongoing, but I am happy to be back in the office (part time for now) and look forward to being back to full tilt in January!

I can't thank the staff and church enough for carrying me through this difficult time. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and peace, joy, happiness, and good health in the New Year!

Blessings, *Cindy Korecky*

SAVE THE DATE

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 first modern-day chili cook-off was held in October of 1952 at the Texas State Fair in Dallas. The 1952 cook-off was the brainchild of Joe E. Cooper as a way to advertise his new book *With or Without Beans*. The contest was a success with 55 contestants trying for the first prize. Mrs. F.G. Ventura of Dallas was crowned the winner. Cooper died a couple of months later and never saw his book become a best seller. *With or Without Beans* is now considered the authority on chili history and lore. It is the book all the chili authors refer to.

WINTER CRAFTS ARE READY FOR PICKUP & DELIVERY

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.

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

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: 9 am – 3 pm MONDAY THRU THURSDAY; FRIDAY 9 am – 12 pm

PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon, Senior Minister - luke@uccmedina.org

Rev. Meghan Malone, Associate Pastor of Youth & Mission - meghan@uccmedina.org

Karen Brocco-Kish, Visitation Pastor – karen@uccmedina.org

OFFICE STAFF

Cindy Korecky, Office Manager - office@uccmedina.org

Jeff Miller, Financial Director - jeff@uccmedina.org

PROGRAM STAFF

Stacie Yates, Director of Christian Education – stacie@uccmedina.org

Jennifer Cochran, Director of Music - jenny@uccmedina.org

Cathy Fafrak, Organist & Office Assistant – cathy@uccmedina.org

Jennifer Vilimonovic, Director of Hobby Horse Preschool – jen@uccmedina.org

Jack Sharpe, Maintenance

Nick Brlan, Custodian

Psalm 126

Shouts of Joy

This is the third 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.

¹*When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.*

²*Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."*

³*The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.*

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.

In the first week of Advent, we searched for a God who seemed to be lost. In the second week, we took comfort in finding our way to God at last. Now, in the third week, we lift up our voices in praise. What is your favorite way to express praise to God? Do you praise in quiet prayer or in direct action? Alone or with a group? Does your praise flow silently or through song and word?

How much time each week does your faith community spend in praising God? Do you express praise in worship? In meetings? In emails or newsletters? Do you believe that your faith community should spend more or less time in praising God?

End your time of meditation with this prayer: *I praise you, Holy One. And as I do, I breathe in your goodness. We praise you, Holy One. And as we do, we rejoice in all the ways you have been gracious to our community. In your amazing name we pray. Amen.*