

THE  
WEARY  
WORLD  
*Rejoices*



TRUTH



# 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 “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” – arr. James Mansfield

Cathy Fafrak, Organ

### WELCOME

### PASSING OF THE PEACE

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Advent marks the beginning of the church calendar, and this season may find us tired.

**Tired of political vitriol, Tired of us-versus-them mentalities**

**Tired of distrust and line drawing, Tired of waiting for prayers to be answered.**

**We come weary for a world that will one day be made right.**

But that day is not today. It is a world we can only glimpse,

**Through tears, Through longing,**

**Through the words of the prophets,**

**Through song.**

Gather your courage church, and rise in body or spirit and sing.

### \*OPENING HYMN

### “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

VENI EMMANUEL. L.M.

*Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, 1710, based on ancient antiphons*

*Trans. John Mason Neale, 1851, and others; alt;*

*St. 2, trans. Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916; alt.*

*Melody from a 15<sup>th</sup> century French “processional”*

*Arr. Thomas Helmore, 1854*

*Unison*

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and  
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, and

ran - som cap - tive Is - ra - el That mourns in lone - ly  
or - der all things far and nigh; To us the path of

ex - ile here, un - til the Child of God ap - pear.  
knowl - edge show, and help us in that way to go.

*Refrain*

Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

*The Oswald Family*

Lighting a candle in the darkness helps us find our way. In darkness we lose direction. We cannot see where we have been or where we are going. A single candle, flickering brightly, helps us find our way again.

**"Stir up your might, and come to save us. Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved" (Psalm 80:2b-3).**

*The Candle of Truth is lit.*

## CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

"O Holy Night" vs. 1

O holy night! the stars are brightly shining; It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining, Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope- the weary world rejoices, For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!  
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices! O night divine, O night when Christ was born!  
O night, O holy night, O night divine!

Let us pray:

God, you have made us for truth-telling. Our Truth is embodied in Jesus who is compassion, restoration, and justice incarnated. May we have the eyes to look long and see this promise of truth coming towards us again. Let us meet it with joy, together. Amen.

## ANTHEM

"Prepare Ye the Way" – Joseph M. Martin

Chancel Choir

## SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 33:14-16

(O.T. pg. 694)

Deb Waldron, Liturgist

## MESSAGE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY OF GOD

Stacie Yates

## 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.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns, Pastoral Prayer

## SERMON

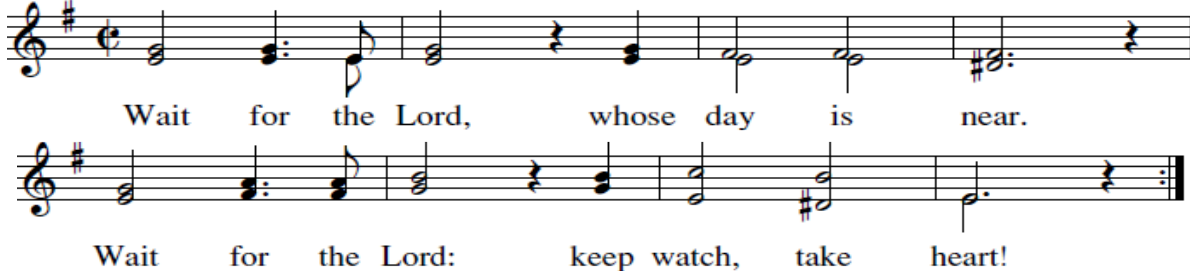
"The Promise of Truth"

Rev. Meghan Malone

## REFLECTION HYMN

### "Wait for the Lord"

*Text: Taizé Community, 1984; Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994; © 1982, 1983, 1984, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent*



## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*All are welcome at the Lord's Table. You do not need to be a member of the United Church of Christ to partake in the Holy Sacrament. All bread served is gluten free.*

**Invitation to the Table**

**The Words of Institution**

**Distribution of the Elements**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

## INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

*There is an offering plate if you feel led to deposit your envelope or an offering there. You can also give through our Realm app or get the link to give by texting UCCMEDINA to 73256. You can also give through VENMO. Look for our Venmo QR codes by the offering plates. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!*

**Offering Invitation** (A Blessing for Beginning Again in Advent by Kate Bowler)

We need truths that can stand the test of time.

**Could this be the Advent when we notice the inbreaking of your coming promise?**

Promises full of blessing:

**of truth so clear, so bright, that every shadow must flee away.**

Of compassion so deep, so strong,

**Everyone is encircled in it's embrace.**

**\*Doxology** (Tune: "Morning Song" from Kentucky Harmony, 1816. Harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1940; Text: "My Soul Gives Glory to My God", NCH # 119, vs. 5, Miriam Therese Winter, MMS, © 1987 Medical Mission Sisters)

**Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress,  
Remembering past promises with present faithfulness.**

**\*Give Thanks** (A Blessing for Beginning Again in Advent by Kate Bowler)

**May this Advent be the new beginning, as we learn to live by the light of your coming promises. Glimpsing the world through tears, while also seeing something sacred shining through. Our Truth. Our Light. Our Promised Incarnate. God with us. Amen.**

**\*SENDING HYMN**

**"Come, O Long Expected Jesus"**

STUTT GART 8.7.8.7.

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788. alt.

Psalmody Sacra, 1715; adapt. William Henry Havergal, 1793-1870. alt.

1. Come, O long ex - pect - ed Je - sus,  
Born to set your peo - ple free; From our fears and  
sins re - lease us; Free us from cap - tiv - i - ty.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Come, O Long Expected Jesus". It is written in 4/4 time and consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are written below the notes. The second and third staves continue the melody and lyrics. The lyrics are: "1. Come, O long ex - pect - ed Je - sus, Born to set your peo - ple free; From our fears and sins re - lease us; Free us from cap - tiv - i - ty." The score is presented in a clear, legible font.

**\*ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*BENEDICTION**

As we go forth from this sacred time,  
**May we carry with us a glimmer of the promised light,**  
a truth bright enough to pierce every shadow  
**and guide our steps in hope.**  
May the God who meets us in waiting and in wandering  
**strengthen us with compassion for the weary,**  
with courage for the journey,  
**and with peace for the moments that feel unsteady.**  
Go, with hearts open to glimpses of God's inbreaking presence  
**and voices ready to sing truth into a world longing for restoration.**  
In this season of Advent and beyond,  
**May we live into God's promises with joy. 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**      “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel” – setting, John Leavitt      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 Sari Allen & Beth Hari.***  
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Jack Sharpe, Maintenance & Custodian

# THE PILGRIM MESSENGER

## DECEMBER 1, 2024

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

Live streaming of the 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary service is available at [www.uccmedina.org/live](http://www.uccmedina.org/live)

**December 1 thru December 8, 2024**

### **WEEK AT A GLANCE**

<b>Sun</b>	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT 8:00 am Blake Food List Posted 8:15 am Chapel Worship 9:00 am Gathering Worship 9:15 am Choir Rehearsal 9:45 am Children's Choir Rehearsal 10:30 am Sanctuary Worship 10:30 am Jesus Vibes 4:30 pm Advent Family Fun Night
<b>Mon</b>	<b>8:00 am Men's Breakfast @ Buehler's River Styx Rd.</b>
<b>Tues</b>	
<b>Wed</b>	10:30 am Quilters 6:00 pm Gathering Band Rehearsal 6:00 pm Bell Choir 7:00 pm Community Engagement Team 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal
<b>Thurs</b>	
<b>Fri</b>	
<b>Sat</b>	
<b>Sun</b>	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT 8:15 am Chapel Worship 9:00 am Gathering Worship 9:45 am Children's Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Blake Food Donations Due 10:30 am Sanctuary Worship – Children's Christmas Pageant 10:30 am Jesus Vibes 11:45 am Mission Team 3:00 pm Confirmation Class

### **CRAFTS FOR DELIVERY**

Through December 15<sup>th</sup> the Circle of Caring Outreach winter crafts will be available for delivery. Visit the display in the Welcome Area to sign out a craft. Please call ahead to make arrangements.

**Worship Highlights:** 8:15, 9 & 10:30 am

Scripture: Jeremiah 33:14-16

Sermon: “The Promise of Truth”

Rev. Meghan Malone

**Communion Table:** The communion table flowers are given by Medith & Earle Olson in honor of their loved ones.

### **CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

Mark your calendars now for the annual Christmas Program. On Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, the children and youth will present “Manger Tales.” We've all heard the stories of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and wise men, but what about the others who were there when baby Jesus was born? We will introduce you to the animals that were there to hear the Christmas story from a different point of view and give you a fresh perspective on the Wonder of Christmas.

### **LAST CHANCE FOR POINSETTIAS!**

This is your last week to order your poinsettia. You may donate a poinsettia to decorate the church for Christmas services and claim it afterward, or you may donate a poinsettia to be delivered by the Flower Committee to a shut-in to be enjoyed before the holiday. The cost is \$10.00. **The deadline for ordering is December 9<sup>th</sup>.** Pick up an order slip from one of the ushers, call the church office or download one off the [church website here](#) under “Upcoming Events” or you may order through [REALM here](#).

### **BAKE SALE THANK YOU**

Thanks to the organizers, bakers, and visitors who made our Candlelight Walk Bake Sale a huge success! Over \$1,200 was raised to support youth programming at the church!



## **GIVING TREE**

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Our Giving Tree will be on display upstairs next to the elevator until December 18<sup>th</sup>. The items on the tree will be distributed to the eight families we support from Blake Elementary, the Juvenile Detention Center and Prospect Pantry. Please return unwrapped gifts on or before December 18<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your continued support.

## **A GLORIOUS CHRISTMAS!**

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Join us as the Chancel Choir performs Mark Hayes' exciting three-movement "Gloria" on December 15<sup>th</sup> during the 10:30 service. The Alleluia Ringers will add the delight of an energetic handbell version of "Do You Hear What I Hear?" The morning will feature some delightful offerings from our organist, Cathy, and a vocal cameo from Music Director, Jenny Cochran.

## **ANNUAL REPORTS DUE SOON**

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Annual Report time is near! As we are working on our 2025 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.

## **JACKIE'S JARS**

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The Mission Team is putting out Jackie's jars during this season of giving. Collect all your loose change and give it to a place it is needed. In honor of our own saint, Jackie, these donations will be given to the Medina County Office for Older Adults which offers Monday, Wednesday, and Friday lunches for county residents. Jars are due back on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **SEND A CHRISTMAS CARD**

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The church office has updated our UCC Christmas card list for Circle of Caring. 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.

## **A LATE GIVING OPTION**

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As we near the end of 2024, The Endowment Committee would like to remind everyone that 30 for 30 Donations (\$30 for 30 years that our Endowment Fund has been in existence) are still being accepted. Need a gift idea for that person on your list that is difficult to buy for...make a donation in their honor to the Endowment Fund. Celebrate a special birth, anniversary or birthday by giving to the Endowment's 30 for 30 Campaign. Checks payable to UCC Medina and note Endowment 30 for 30 on the memo line. Donations using Realm are also accepted.

## **JAZZY CHRISTMAS**

**Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm**

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Gateway Jazz Band will once again delight the audience with a spirited concert of holiday fare, performed in the band's unique style! Featuring Jennifer Cochran and greater Cleveland area jazz musicians. A free will donation will be taken.

## **OPERATION HOMES UPDATE: December Meals Delivery**

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Our church will be providing and delivering dinners to participants staying at a local hotel during the week of December 9<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>. Please sign up by going to this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0449A8A92EAAF58-50684701-operation>

If you're interested in being added to our list of dinner providers or have questions, please contact Patrick Acurio ([pha312@gmail.com](mailto:pha312@gmail.com)). Your kindness and generosity are greatly appreciated!

## **ADVENT HOME STUDY**

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You can access this study with the link below. If you need a printed copy of the booklet, please contact the church office.

If you'd like to print your own or share this journey with others, feel free to share this link:

[katebowler.com/advent](http://katebowler.com/advent)



## COFFEE HOUR

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Please consider signing up to host a coffee hour. **Most of December, January and February are available!** If you have any questions, Sari Allen and Vicki Birce will be your “go to” people for help. **If no one signs up to host, we will not have coffee hour.** Signups are in the East Room Hallway.

## CHRISTMAS WEEK SCHEDULE

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**Christmas Eve** Worship Services will be:

6:00 pm – Family Candlelight Service

9:00 pm – Candlelight Service

Church office will be closed Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> at 12 pm and re-open at 9 am on Monday, Dec. 30<sup>th</sup>

**One service of worship at 10:30 a.m. on December 29<sup>th</sup>**

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW & SAVE THE DATE!

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The Chili Cook-Off is back once again! Mark your calendars and plan to join us! Details coming soon...

**JANUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>:**

**ONE SERVICE OF WORSHIP at 10:30 a.m.**

**ANNUAL MEETING at 11:30 a.m.**

**CHILI COOK-OFF TO FOLLOW MEETING at 12:00 p.m.**

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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**

Luke 21:25-36

### **“Sign of Things to Come”**

The stone cathedral was dim and dank, with only a few souls scattered among the pews softly singing the hymn, “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.”

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

With the last note wafting in the air, a candle was lit in a circle of evergreen — the Advent wreath. It was the only sign of the season in the sanctuary. There were no pine boughs strewn from the balcony nor poinsettias gracing the windowsills. They would come later.

For now, it was just the flickering flame of a lone candle urging on a weary world to rejoice. It was the beginning of Advent, the four-weeks leading to Christmastide. A time for quiet reflection, patient waiting and expectant watching.

But beyond the cathedral’s doors, Christmas joy in full swing with crowds swarming an open-air market — lights twinkling and speakers blaring songs about chestnuts roasting over open fires. Yes, tis the season — of missing Advent’s message that before celebrating what God has done for us through Jesus, we must first be still. We must watch for the signs of God’s realm drawing near, signs that can be easily missed amid the traditional trappings of Christmas which appear earlier each year.

Now it’s understandable why Advent quickly morphs into Christmas. We are a people who find it hard to wait, and we certainly don’t want to be walking in darkness. We want immediate gratification and light — lots of it.

Another reason Advent doesn’t get the attention it deserves is that it clashes with our cultural expectations of the holidays with scripture readings that are more apocalyptic than jolly. Luke’s gospel is the perfect example of this, as we hear about the signs that will appear in the sun, moon and stars when the Son of Man returns.

Advent, which comes from the Latin word *adventus* means “coming.” And so, we are not just celebrating Jesus’ first coming as the Babe of Bethlehem, but we are anticipating his return as well.

What are the signs to look for today?

Perhaps beyond the artificial holiday lights we might see a sign of God’s true light shining in our communities. Perhaps, if we looked into the eyes of the homeless, the disabled, and the stranger, we would see the sign that God is right in front of us.

Perhaps, if we entered a quiet sacred space this Advent, where the only light burning is that of the first candle around the Advent wreath, we would see the sign that there really is a light in which no darkness can overcome.

God of Advent waiting and hoping, we pray that You open our eyes to the many signs of a weary world being redeemed. May we remain alert to the very things that matter the most to You. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.