



**First Congregational
United Church of Christ
December 3, 2023**



Sunday of Advent: Hope

Partners in Ministry: **All who are a part of this church**

Pastor: **Rev. Enno K. Limvere**

Musician: **Francie Beaster** Choir Director: **Ann Russ**

Peace Candle Lighter: **Jenny Delfs** Liturgist: **Carol Winter**

Greeter: **Bruce Tyler** Usher: **Barbara Chiles**

Coffee-Hour Hosts: **Ann Russ**

grandmaraisucc.org ~ (218) 387-2113
300 West 2nd Street, Grand Marais, MN 55604

Gathering Music
Words of Welcome
Prelude

Lighting of Advent Candle of Hope*

One: Beloveds, as we gather around this Advent wreath, what shape does our hope take today? Is it tall and wide, small yet persistent, soft or jagged with its edges?

All: May our hope be round and abundant, spherical like the earth, reminding us how everything is connected:

One: How at some point, even the barren desert bumps up against fecundity.

All: How at some point, what you thought would never end is bookended by the galaxies.

One: How in a timeline not our own, a candle appears in the Valley of Dry Bones,

All: With a voice that prophesizes, "I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live,"

One: and to a heart that aches, "Where you will go, I will go."

All: Come, let us gather around this longing for light, and feel ourselves in the here and now.

(light first candle)

One: Let us inhale the full width of our lungs and exhale a release,

All: expansive enough to let the hope in. Amen.

Opening Hymn #106 My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise ([click here](#))

Words of Lament

God of Time and Justice, there are too many in our world who do not have hope. There are too many in our world whose hope is in their own identity, strength, group, or idealism and lack wisdom to see beyond their interests. In our time of preparing, of waiting, help us to be with you, work with you, and love with you the world and all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Time of Silence

Words of Poetry & Lighting the Candle of Peace

It is a custom in our congregation to light our Peace Candle during worship, as a witness to the Prince of Peace and our communal intention to be peacemakers as a Just Peace Church.

**An Old Story
BY TRACY K. SMITH**

We were made to understand it would be
Terrible. Every small want, every niggling urge,
Every hate swollen to a kind of epic wind.

Livid, the land, and ravaged, like a rageful
Dream. The worst in us having taken over
And broken the rest utterly down.

A long age
Passed. When at last we knew how little
Would survive us—how little we had mended

Or built that was not now lost—something
Large and old awoke. And then our singing
Brought on a different manner of weather.

Then animals long believed gone crept down
From trees. We took new stock of one another.
We wept to be reminded of such color.

Passing of the Peace

Hymn #101 Comfort, Comfort O My People ([click here](#))

1st Scripture Mark 8:27-29 (New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition)

27 Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” **28** And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.”

2nd Scripture Jeremiah 33:10-11, 14-18 (The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Transl.)

10 Thus says YHWH: you say to this place, “It lies in ruins, lacking both people or animals throughout the towns of Judah and towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. All of it is a wasteland, inhabited by neither people or animal. **11** Yet in this place there will be heard once more the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of the bridegroom and the bride. Here to will be the shouting of voices:

“Praise YHWH Omnipotent,
for our God is a good God,
whose love endures forever!”

For I will restore the fortunes of this land as they were before, says the Lord.

14 “The days are surely coming, says YHWH, when I will bestow on Israel and Judah all the blessings I promised them. **15** In those days and at that time I will raise up a righteous branch from the line of David, who will bring justice and integrity to the land. **16** In those days Judah will be safe and Jerusalem shall be secure. They will call the land, “YHWH is our Justice.”

17 For thus says YHWH: David will never lack a successor on the judgment seat of Israel.

18 Nor will there ever be lacking a Levitical priest to present whole offerings, to burn grain offerings and to make other offerings ever day.

Children’s Message

Choir Anthem

Message Promise

Musical Reflections

Joys and Concerns, Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, Mother God, you are in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

News of God at Work in our Congregation & Community

Our Time of Giving

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God, for all that love has done.

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen

Closing Hymn #116 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel ([click here](#))

Benediction

Sending Music

*These worship resources were written by the Rev. Elyse Berry, who serves as the Associate for Advocacy and Leadership Development for the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM) of the United Church of Christ.



Announcements

Prayer List: Paul Leintz, Rhonda Silence, Meredith Eliot (Church-Davison), Vicki Biggs-Anderson, Paulette Anholm, Mike Carlson, Sally Dunn, The Carter Family, All Victims of Gun Violence, Immigrants and Refugees, Countries of Ukraine, Sudan, Israel/Palestine, and Planet Earth.

At home and Care Center: Jean Ljungkull, Nona Smith, Lou Goodell, Bev Denyes, Nancy Cihlar, and Tom Hedstrom.

Measure of our Faithfulness:

The First Congregational UCC adopted a 2023 Budget at the Annual Meeting on 28 January 2023, showing a need for a yearly income of \$164,110.00.

After forty-eight weeks, the Budget Donations and Income should be \$148,165.42. The Actual Donations so far this year have been \$143,658.88.

-Kevin LeVoir, Treasurer

This Week at the Church

Thursday, November 30

10:00 AM – Tai Chi
12:00 PM – Women’s AA

Friday, December 1

7:00 AM - AA
8:00 AM - Harbor Watch
9:00 AM - Pride Meeting
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons
7:30 PM - AA

Saturday, December 2

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM - Piano Lessons

Sunday, December 3

9:30 AM - Choir Practice

10:30 AM Worship Service - Inside AND ON ZOOM, 1st Sunday of Advent: Hope. On this Sunday we hear from the Prophet Jeremiah who sees abandoned cities and proclaims they will be filled with mirth and gladness. He doesn't dwell on the current situation, rather, Jeremiah gives a vision of the future that is filled with justice and abundance. Is he speaking to us also, assuring us that even if the worst happens, it is not the end? Do we have hope for a better future?

1:00 PM - Journey Discipleship Group
2:30 PM - Orchestra Practice for Borealis
4:00 PM - Choir Practice for Borealis

Monday, December 4

11:00 AM - Spring Forest Qi Gong
2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons
3:00 - 5:00 PM - Food Shelf
7:00 PM - Al Anon

Tuesday, December 5

1:00 PM - Earth Day Meeting
2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons

Wednesday, December 6

2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons
6:00 PM - Confirmation

Thursday, December 7

10:00 AM - Tai Chi
11:00 AM - Building and Grounds Committee
12:00 AM - Women’s AA
2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons

Friday, December 8

7:00 AM - AA
8:00 AM - Harbor Watch
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons
5:30 PM - PASJ Family Dinner
7:00 PM - Borealis Chorale and Orchestra at Bethlehem Lutheran
7:30 PM - AA

Saturday, December 2

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM - Piano Lessons
7:00 PM - Borealis Chorale and Orchestra at Bethlehem Lutheran

Sunday, December 3

9:30 AM - Pick-up Choir Practice
10:30 AM Worship Service - Inside AND ON ZOOM, 2nd Sunday of Advent: Peace. On this Sunday, we hear from the Prophet Isaiah in the 40th chapter where hope is once again given to the people of Judah. We hear part of this chapter every year and many a time, “A voice cries out: In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD.” In our time of Advent, not only are we to prepare for Jesus’ birth and coming again, Isaiah tells us God is also working to make the way easier for all to come and find Peace.

Opening Hymn #106 My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise

1. My heart sings out with joyful praise to God who raises me,
Who came to me when I was low and changed my destiny.
The Holy One, the Living God, is always full of grace.
To those who seek their Maker's will in every time and place.

2. The arm of God is strong and just to scatter all the proud.
The tyrants tumble from their thrones and vanish like a cloud.
The hungry all are satisfied; the rich are sent away.
The poor of earth who suffer long will welcome God's new day.

3. The promise made in ages past at last has come to be,
for God has come in power to save, to set all people free.
Remembering those who wait to see salvation's dawning day,
Our Savior comes to all who weep to wipe their tears away.

*Words by Ruth Duck, 1985;
Copyright 1992 G.I.A. Publications, Inc.
Tune, Swedish Folk Melody;
One-License No. A-738474*

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Hymn #101 Comfort, Comfort O My People

1. “Comfort, comfort O my people, tell of peace,” thus says our God;
Comfort those whose hearts are shrouded, mourning under sorrow’s load.

Speak unto Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;
Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over.

2. For the herald’s voice is calling in the desert far and near,
Bidding us to make repentance since the realm of God is here.

Oh, the warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise in meeting and the hills bow down in greeting.

3. Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain!

Let your hearts be true and humble, for Messiah’s holy reign.

For God’s glory evermore shall be known o’er all the world;
And all flesh shall see the token that God’s word is never broken.

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*Words, Johannes Olearius, 1671
Transl. Catherine Winkworth, 1863; alt.
Tune, Trente quatre Pseaumes, Geneva, 1551
One-License No. A-738474*



Closing Hymn #116 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Child of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

2. O come, O Wisdom from on high,
and order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show,
and help us in that way to go.

3. O come, O come, O Adonai,
who came to all on Sinai high,
And from its peak a single law
proclaimed in majesty and awe.

4. O come, O shot of Jesse,
free your own from Satan's tyranny,
From depths of hell your people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave.

5. 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.

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Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, 1710
Based on ancient antiphon from Advent Vespers
Transl. John Mason Neale, 1851, and others; alt.
St. 2, 7, transl. Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916; alt.
Melody from a 15th-century French "Processional"
Arr. Thomas Helmore, 1854
One-License No. A-738474