

Thank you for worshipping with us this morning. We extend a special welcome to our guests.

For Children: Please feel free to attend services with your children. For the safety of the children, staff and volunteers ERUCC will not be providing childcare during services until further notice. Your children are welcome to bring their own quiet activities, no materials will be provided. Please take ALL personal items with you after the service.



We have removed all items from the pew racks for your safety. Music selections will be provided within this bulletin. If you are visiting and did not stop at the welcome desk in the downstairs lobby please stop by after the service they would love to meet you or, please feel free to reach out to someone sitting near you and ask them questions about the service or church. Many of our visitors ask us about the time of offering. This is a time in our service when we respond to God's gifts of love by offering the gifts of our lives. For many of us, this is when we make a financial gift towards the ministries and programs of our church. We also use this time to ask God how we might use the gifts of our hands and hearts in sharing God's love. If you are visiting, there is no obligation to give a financial gift. We are just glad you are worshipping with us. At this time we are taking offering at the end of the service. Plates will be placed at the doors as you exit the sanctuary, Thank you.

We ask that you please silence your cell phones during our worship service. We also ask that you refrain from applause after our choirs sing and allow the music to resonate in the quiet of the sanctuary and in your hearts. Our musicians are playing and singing for the glory of God. They know you appreciate their efforts and their gift.

Rest rooms (equipped with changing stations) are located on the first floor of the church building and outside the Community Room and the Nursery.

There is much information about the church in this bulletin and our website: www.erucc.org.

Donate online by scanning this code:

or you may use our new texting donation system. Send a donation amount to 301-804-2933 . You will receive a text back within minutes with a link. Click the secure link and provide your method of payment and a receipt will be sent to you! Or, download the GivePlus Church application and make your donation via the app.



Thank you.

EVANGELICAL REFORMED CHURCH

United Church of Christ

- An Open and Affirming Congregation -

December 13, 2020

Third Sunday of Advent

10:30 a.m.

*All who are able may stand. **Bold** print indicates responses by all
Hymns are printed at the end of the bulletin

Greetings and Announcements

Prelude *Until Jesus Comes*

- D. McIntyre
ERUCC Singers

*Call to Worship *after Psalm 126*

We gather to worship with expectations:
God revealed in new and astonishing ways.

God comes to us in real time.

God comes to us in dreams.

Sometimes God's presence is hard to take in –
difficult to believe.

Oh God, we long to believe.

Help our unbelief!

God is present here.

God is working in our midst.

Then our mouths are filled with laughter,

Our tongues shout out with joy!

*Opening Prayer *after Psalm 126*

Holy God of Advent,

the world in which we live is as terrifying as it is wonderful.

We need Jesus as much today as in times of old.

Many sow in tears, and go out weeping.

Replenish our lands,

fill our hearts with gladness,

restore our faith in you and each other,

wipe away the tears of despair.

As we worship today,

we tilt an ear to listen close.

Let the voice of your angel fill our minds with new understandings.

We are waiting for you. Speak to us today. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Barbara Rhoads

Advent is a season of waiting: waiting for the hope, peace, joy, and love of God to break into our lives anew through the story of the birth of Jesus, and through acts of hope, peace, joy, and love.

Today we light the third candle, the candle of joy.

We wait.

We wait –

not because we do not know the story of Jesus, and not because you are not already and always here.

We wait

because to wait

is to expect something more.

To wait is to expect that the story

might enter our hearts

and our world

in new ways,

to bring the change for which we long.

As we light the candle of joy,

we remember the stories

of God's loyalty to all creation.

We give thanks for the messengers –

the apostles, prophets, artists, sages, faithful ones –

present in every age,

who bring us the good news of God's restoring love;

and we shout with joy,

trusting that God

is with us and before us,

and that joy will be born anew in us.

***Opening Hymn** *Awake! Awake and Greet the New Morn*

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See back of bulletin

***Call to Confession**

***Prayer of Confession** *(after Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11)*

God loves justice and despises wrongdoing,

yet God is faithful in recompense

and has made an everlasting covenant

with those who turn from sinful ways

and strive earnestly for righteousness.

May the whispers of our hearts be pleasing to God.

We bow our heads in holy reverence.

Oh God, we long to be free of burdens that hold us captive.

We long to be bearers of good news to the oppressed.

We long to return to your favor.

Forgive us our transgressions;

loosen the chains of doubt that bind us.

Hear our prayers. *Silent prayers*

***Assurance of Pardon**

You are forgiven!

God loves you. God blesses you with new beginnings and new life.

Put aside your old ways and become new!

God gives a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning.

Sing, dance, rejoice!

Never forget the gift of God's redeeming grace. **Amen.**

Thought For the Day

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, for ever. Amen.

The Scriptures

Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11

Luke 1:46b-55

Reader: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Prayers of the People

Reception of New Members

Offering of Tithes, Gifts and Lives to Christ's Service

Anthem *Ave Maria*

- *Bach/Gounod, arr. R. Robinson*
ERUCC Singers

Closing Hymn *All Earth Is Waiting*

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See insert

*Benediction

Go from this place to spread God's peace.

We go planting seeds of peace in the world.

Go from this place to share God's love.

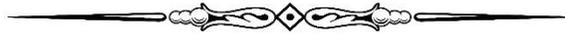
We go laughing and shouting Good News.

Go from this place to live God's spirit.

We proclaim God's liberty; God's spirit set free in the world!

Amen!

*Postlude



Worship Notes: Service Prayers for the Third Sunday of Advent, was written by the Rev. Penny L. Lowes, an ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ and has served three UCC churches in Michigan.

Every Sunday at 10:30

<https://boxcast.tv/channel/bziah0xyyacgq5fmjnoi>



Want to listen to the sermon again? Visit our YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9_hGBb5tBHeZuvqBvSbX5w

You can get to the link on our homepage at www.erucc.org

The flowers on the altar this morning are placed in in honor of our seven grandchildren: Hannah, Emma, Mady, Cole, Hayden, Zoe, and Ryder by Andy and Kathy Johnston

The **yellow rose bud** on the stand is in honor of those currently serving in the military by Jack Day and Peter Brehm.

Prayer List - Please remember the following people in your prayers this week: Cathie Duncan, Starr Schaeberle, Anne Hoffmann, Lauren Jenkins (niece of Donna Logee), Ro Higinbotham, The McCarty family, Nikki Keller, Tamara Tamas, Barbara Lee (sister of Milt Crutchley), Alyce Schimd (sister of Dennie Schmid), Lois Wilson (Dan Smith's aunt), Jerry Cassell (brother of Ave Barr), Tina Prescott (daughter in law of Barbara and Bill Prescott), Mary Remsberg,) Susan Matesa (friend of Dan Smith & Austin Byrd), Larry Maples, Jane Doll, Susan McCauley (niece of Jack Stush), Heleen (sister of Karin Mens), Kathy Blue Shores (friend of Jean Fish and Barb Biser), Terry Smiley (uncle of Scott Smiley), Shawn Smiley (cousin of Scott Smiley), Joe Jahoda (Kim Jahoda's dad), Gretchen Manuel (niece of Audrey Rayfield), Ann and Cal Theiss (parents of Katharine Alley), Frank Tymczyszyn(brother in law

of Nancy Jones), Debra Reedy (friend of Jean Fish and Barb Biser), Jess Pautz (friend of Sean Sexton).

We ask you to remember all of those currently serving in the Armed Forces. Your prayers and cards are welcomed and appreciated by those on our prayer list.

Worship Next Week: [Ctrl + Click HERE to join worship Sunday 10:30 a.m.](#)

Sunday, December 20 Lessons and Carols

As the Advent season draws to a close, we celebrate our annual lessons and carols service with our college students reading the scriptures.

Wednesday Advent Services Via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83151572425?pwd=emJjL25DV2dtSVBLOWI3WIFkRTdtZz09>

Meeting ID: 831 5157 2425

Passcode: 812725

December 16, and 23

12 noon – 12:15 p.m. Service of Prayer

12:15 – 1 pm Lunch and Reflection

Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas

We will gather in person and virtually for prayer and reflection on the names for Jesus. In *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*, best-selling author Adam Hamilton examines the names of Christ used by the gospel writers, exploring the historical and personal significance of his birth.

In the face of uncertainty and conflict, Christians reclaim the Christ Child who brings us together, heals our hearts, and calls us to bring light into the darkness.

This resource is also being used for Tuesday morning Bible Study and will enrich the conversation on Wednesdays.

December 16 Emmanuel in the Midst of a Pandemic

December 23 Light of the World, Word of God and Lord

Longest Night Service in the Main Sanctuary/Live Streamed

Thursday, December 17 at 7:30 p.m.

The holiday season can be filled with excitement and anticipation. As the days grow shorter and the nights longer, we await the birth of the Christ Child within us. However, the holidays can also be a time of sadness, stress, and busy-ness that leave little room for praise and thanksgiving. The death of a loved one, the end of a relationship, recovery from addiction, illness, and financial struggles all mirror the lengthening of the nights at this time of the year. There will be gentle music, readings, and a time for quiet reflection.

Thursday, December 24 Christmas Eve Services

5:30 p.m. Children's Service in the main sanctuary (also live streamed)

7:30 p.m. Candlelight & Carol Service in the main sanctuary (also live streamed)

10:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Communion Service (Trinity Chapel)

SUNDAY SCHOOL Join us for Zoom Sunday School for Children/Youth at 9:30 a.m.

Kindergarten thru 4th grade Sunday School Teachers: Dawn Lagrotteria and Kim Sexton
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89653038025?pwd=djRPU05TNDFYczFMVUdOVzdmWnpuUT09>
Meeting ID: 896 5303 8025 Passcode: 667229

5th - 7th Grade Sunday School Teachers: Kathryn King, Arthur Slade and Jim Weitz
<https://zoom.us/j/92955152861?pwd=VStwT3ZISDILOVhhTWJRdTB0aHRyUT09>
Meeting ID: 929 5515 2861 Passcode: hpQSF1

High School Teachers: Pastor Daniel, Stephanie Sites and Glenn Wallace
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84314617999?pwd=Rkd1N2JyZDFHdmtPY1BMTitkUzhUdz09>
Meeting ID: 843 1461 7999 Passcode: 979546

DECEMBER CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TODAY

Sunday, December 13 at 11:30 am

Participate In person in the Community Room or via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89756497994?pwd=QjQwczR2anhOVmF2R3FDeVA0L2RmUT09>
Meeting ID: 897 5649 7994 Passcode: 642147

The Consistory hopes that you will be present for the annual meeting at which time the annual budget will be shared. In addition, there will be an extensive report on the much needed repairs to preserve our beautiful buildings. **YOU ARE THE CHURCH** and we need your participation!! Draft agenda was in packets or available on line.

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY WITH PASTOR DANIEL

INCARNATION: REDISCOVERING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTMAS

Tuesdays at 11 am

Via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/608416206?pwd=NzFtVUsxUmQ5eGpxMmk4WDB6Z0lUUT09>
Password: 588188

His parents gave him the name Jesus. But the prophets, the shepherds, the wise men, and the angels addressed him by other names. They called him Lord, Messiah, Savior, Emmanuel, Light of the World, and Word Made Flesh.

In *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*, best-selling author Adam Hamilton examines the names of Christ used by the gospel writers, exploring the historical and personal significance of his birth.

In the face of uncertainty and conflict, Christians reclaim the Christ Child who brings us together, heals our hearts, and calls us to bring light into the darkness. Now more than ever, you are invited to reflect upon the significance of the Christ-child for our lives and world today.

December 15 Session 3 Emmanuel in the Midst of a Pandemic

December 22 Session 4 Light of the World, Word of God and Lord

THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY from 7-8 pm

The Gospel of Mark

ON BREAK UNTIL JANUARY 7

COVID Support-Encouragement Group

The class is called “Surviving and Thriving During the Covid Virus.” The virus pandemic has been difficult for everyone. This group will provide a safe place to talk about what it’s like to go through the pandemic. The group will meet the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 2-3 pm. It is a drop-in group, no preparation needed. Joan and Allen Maples will be hosting the group using Zoom, For additional information please contact Allen Maples at allen.maples@gmail.com or call 301-663-5351.

Join us for Christmas Bingo at 4 p.m. tonight

You will need a bingo card for each person playing and bingo markers (pennies, buttons, M&M’s) Bingo cards can be printed from the church website or you can contact Kim Sexton at ksexton@ERUCC.org and I will get one to you

Topic: ERUCC Christmas Bingo

Time: Dec 13, 2020 04:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86295489396?pwd=aWkzR1M3bWIwczZFalYxR2Y5blFEEdz09>

Meeting ID: 862 9548 9396

Passcode: 374103

Stay Connected and Get Informed!

There are many ways to receive information about what is happening at church each week. The weekly bulletin, the weekly informational email, and our monthly newsletter, The Trinity Chimes, Facebook, and Instagram. @eruccfred

Thursday Thoughts-A weekly emailed message that shares updates, highlights the upcoming service’s scripture and focus, and includes announcements about Sunday School. To sign up to receive Thursday Thoughts, contact Amy Aguilar at 301-662-2762 or aaguilar@erucc.org and share your preferred email address.

Trinity Chimes—ERUCC’s monthly newsletter. A more in-depth look on what’s happening with the congregation. How we’re reaching out, learning and volunteer opportunities, member and social program updates. Receive Trinity Chimes by email! Contact Amy Aguilar at 301-662-2762 or aaguilar@erucc.org to request to be added. (Paper copies also available upon request.)



Ministers - All the People of Evangelical Reformed Church

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Sherry Murray, Nursery • Jaci Clayton, Facilities Mgr.

Amy Aguilar, Office Administrator (erucc@erucc.org) • Jenna Duranko, Social Media Coordinator

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Isa. 12:6; 26:9; 35:6; Matt. 11:5

Marty Haugen, 1983; rev. 1993

G Am7 G/B C D

1 A - wake! a - wake, and greet the new morn, for
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
 3 In deep - est night Christ's com - ing shall be, when
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though

G/B C Am7 D7 G Am7

an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, sing out your joy, for
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, whose hum - ble song is
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
 cold the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall

G/B C D G/B Am7 D C G

Je - sus is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing.
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less;

The musical score is written in G major and 6/8 time. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a steady eighth-note bass line and a treble line with chords and moving lines. The vocal line has four verses of lyrics. Chord symbols are placed above the vocal line: G, Am7, G/B, C, D in the first system; G/B, C, Am7, D7, G, Am7 in the second system; and G/B, C, D, G/B, Am7, D, C, G in the third system.

D D/F# G D Em Am D

Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
 Mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing
 One with - out voice breaks forth in song, a lame one leaps in
 Love be our song and love our prayer, and love, our end - less

Em D7 G C B7 Em

geth - er, to o - pen wide the heaven - ly door, and
 kind - ness, the thun - der of the an - thems roll to
 won - der, the weak are raised a - bove the strong, and
 sto - ry, may God fill ev - ery day we share, and

Am7 D7 G 1-3 G/B C 4 G/B C G

lives now in - side us for ev - er. . . .
 shat - ter all hate and in - jus - tice. . . .
 weap - ons are bro - ken a - sun - der. . . .
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry. . . .

1-3 4

Shouts of Joy

If you've ever been through a period of grieving, it's likely that someone in your life has, at one time or another, shaken their head and clucked their tongue and assured you that "God doesn't give anyone more than they can handle." Or, maybe that someone patted your hand and said "God is just testing you right now. If you have enough faith, you can get through it." Or maybe even, "Don't cry."

These platitudes, although they are usually intended to comfort, can instead sting. They can leave the recipient feeling that if only their faith was stronger, they would not feel sad or angry.

The psalmist shows us a different way of thinking of God. The psalmist knows that hard times and sorrows are neither tests from God, nor signs of the displeasure of God. The author of Psalm 126 sings instead that sorrows and grieving are just part of life. These words remind us that God does not bring misfortune; instead God is with us in our grief.

One UCC church in New Hampshire wanted to demonstrate God-with-us to the whole neighborhood last Advent. Motivated by the tragic death in their congregation, the church decided to show God's light in the darkness of grief. They invited members of the church to purchase a string of Christmas lights in memory of someone who had passed. Overseen by a professional lighting design company, it took twenty volunteers to hang all the lights that were donated. When the thousands of lights were strung together all over the outside of the building and surrounding greenery, they were a very visible reminder to all who passed of the light of the presence of God in the community. *See link below.

During Advent, we anticipate the incarnation - the coming of the God to earth in the form of a human. The Divine One comes to us as Christ Jesus to remind us that through all the ups and downs and griefs of life, God is never far from us. And, like memorial lights in a New England winter, that presence can bring more joy than all the well-meaning words in the world.

*https://www.ucc.org/news_light_bulbs_tragedy_memorial_idea_set_n_h_church_aglow_for_christmas_12202019



8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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