



Community UCC

We're worth our words

Welcoming Progressive Community

Vibrant Messengers of Hope



Champaign, Illinois

First Sunday of Advent

November 28, 2021

Thoughts Before Worship:

Today is the First Sunday of Advent and the beginning of a new Church Year. In this season we look forward to the birth of Jesus and our Christmas celebrations. What will it mean this year as we again look to understand the meaning of God coming to be with us? If you have requests to add to the prayer list (a public document), go to community-ucc.org/pray (a Google Form), or scan the QR code found in the bulletin or there are prayer cards on the table at the back of the sanctuary that you may fill out and hand to the usher.

I Will Light Candles This Christmas

I will light Candles this Christmas,
Candles of joy despite all the sadness,
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,
Candles of courage for fears ever present,
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,
Candles of love to inspire all my living,
Candles that will burn all year long. (*Howard Thurman*)

Gathering Music

Aaron Ames

Prelude

Aaron Ames

Welcome

Rev. Bill Lawser

Call to Worship

Johnalene Radek

Because of You, Righteous God, we begin our journey to Bethlehem, trusting that You will lead us down the paths of faithfulness.

For You, Child Jesus, we wait,
on this day of anticipation and hope,
in the days of doubt and worry.

With You, Spirit of Advent, we serve,
those for whom this season is not one of joy;
those whose lives are empty of family and friends.

We welcome you to our service this morning. Celebrating the diversity of creation, Community United Church welcomes persons of any age, ability, race, gender identity, sexual orientation or life condition. May the Divine Presence become real to you through this time of worship. We hope you come back!

Note: *Our worship services are live streamed. If you prefer not to have the back of your head seen on the live stream worship please do not sit in the first seven pews on the left side (organ/piano) of the sanctuary.*

*Everyone is invited to stand in body or in spirit.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

The Candle of Hope

I light one candle here for hope
and it is like a small lamp,
lighting a bedside table with open book,
after a long day,
the glow of heart monitor in ICU,
a headlamp for a hiker on an unfamiliar trail,
or a miner down a shaft,
a toddler's paw-patrol nightlight,
or early-morning oven in a bakery.

We light one candle so we will remember
to notice this week's ordinary lights of hope.

For ordinary and available to all
is the hope of Advent. (written by *Maren Tirabassi*)

Opening Song

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

NCH 116 v 1, 2, 3, 5

Transl. John Mason Neale, and others; alt. , St. 2, 7 transl. Henry Sloan Coffin, Arr. Thomas Helmore
CCLI Song #31982, CCLI License #3154689

Call to Reconciliation

Johnalene Radek

If only our hurtful words, our damaging actions, our foolish choices would just go away.
But they don't, and so we offer them, as well as ourselves, to God for forgiveness
and for our healing.

Prayer for Forgiveness

Johnalene Radek

The chances we have to be more compassionate; the moments to offer hope to a lonely friend; the good fortune we could give to those who have so little. The signs are all around us, Good and Upright God, of how we fail to live as your people.

Do not meditate on our bungling ways, God of steadfast love, but remember the mercy of Your heart. That mercy which forgives us; that mercy which makes us whole; and especially, that living mercy who came down one night so long ago, Jesus the Advent of our redemption.

Assurance of Pardon

Johnalene Radek

Raise your heads, children of God! In the bleak mid-winter of our lives, our redemption draws near. In the spring-time of our doubts, the kingdom of God approaches.

Even when we feel most alone, the One who comes to us is the salvation promised so long ago. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

Children's Moment

Rev. Bill Lawser

***Passing of the Peace**

Rev. Bill Lawser

Today, you are invited to remain in your space, turn and greet those around you, make eye contact across the room and flash a peace sign, or say "Peace" in the comments on Zoom or Facebook Live broadcast.

Prelude to Scripture

Johnalene Radek

Whether we take what is written in the Bible as fact, metaphor, myth, or story, let us listen now for the meaning it might hold for us on this day.

Sacred Reading from the Gospel

Luke 21:25-36

²⁵ 'There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in a cloud" with power and

great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.'

²⁹ Then he told them a parable: 'Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³²Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴ 'Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.'

Postlude to Scripture

Johnalene Radek

We conclude this sacred reading with this prayer: May the Spirit bless us with wisdom and wonder as we ponder the meaning of these words for our lives.

Call to Prayer

Johnalene Radek



After the sermon, we will pray together and offer up our joys and concerns. Your prayer requests will be offered aloud. Whether you are sitting here in the sanctuary, or worshipping with us remotely, you are invited to add your joys and concerns to the prayer list: go to community-ucc.org/pray (a Google Form), or scan the QR code found here or there are prayer cards on the table at the back of the sanctuary that you may fill out and hand to the usher.

Anthem

In the Bleak Midwinter

CUCC Choir

Harold Drake

CCLI Song # 1651770, CCLI License #3154689

*In the bleak midwinter Frosty wind made moan
Earth stood hard as iron, Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter Long ago*

*Our God Heav'n cannot hold Him Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away When He comes to reign
In the bleak midwinter A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ*

*Enough for him, whom cherubim Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for him, whom angels Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel Which adore.*

*What can I give Him, Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb
If I were a wise Man, I would do my part,
Yet what can I give him, Give my heart*

Message

Chronos and Kairos

Rev. Bill Lawser

Silent Meditation

Rev. Bill Lawser

Ringling of the Singing Bowl

Rev. Bill Lawser

Call to Offering

Johnalene Radek

God has told us what is good; and what does the Lord require? To do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God. Every generous act of giving is itself a gift from God above. To give to the ministry and mission of Community UCC, please visit www.community-ucc.org and click donate. If you are worshipping here in the sanctuary, you may also place offerings in the offering plates as you leave the sanctuary. May God bless the gifts and the givers.

Joys and Concerns

Johnalene Radek

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Bill Lawser

Hymn*Come, O Long Expected Jesus**NCH 122 v 1-4*Charles Wesley, Rowland Hugh Prichard,
CCLI Song #2645441, CCLI License #3154689**Commissioning of the Community**

Rev. Bill Lawser

Benediction

Rev. Bill Lawser

Postlude

Aaron Ames

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Serving Today

Ministers: The Community of Community UCC

Preaching & Presiding: Rev. Bill Lawser

Liturgist: Johnalene Radek

Ushers: Becky Sheridan

Greeter: Jan Himes

Organist: Aaron Ames **Singers:** Kathy Lee, Elena Negruta, Audrey Vallance, and Xiaoyi Zha

Audio/Video: David Gerstenecker, John Osborne, Sean Walker, and David Willcox .

Community United Church of Christ Staff

Pastor:

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser
leah@community-ucc.org, **Sabbatical - 1/3/2022**

Guest Sabbatical Pastor

Rev. Bill Lawser
pastor@community-ucc.org

Director of Youth Ministries:

Jessica Smiley | jessica@community-ucc.org

Commissioned Minister of Congregational Health:

Linda Morgan | lindamorgan@sbcglobal.net

Faith Community Nurse

Johnalene Radek | johnalene.radek@carle.com

Parish Associate:

Rev. Connie Bandy | connie@community-ucc.org

Director of Music Ministries:

Kathy Lee | music@community-ucc.org

Organist: Aaron Ames, Interim Organist

Office Manager:

Carla Rush | info@community-ucc.org

Your Ministry Team Leaders

Moderator: Elizabeth Shack*

Past Moderator: Jon Ebel*

Incoming Moderator: Erin Ewoldt*

Clerk: Shane Brownfield*

Pastoral Relations Committee: Cara Finnegan

Personnel Committee: Anna Barnes

Community Building:

Peg Wade* and Randy Musser

- **Care Team:** Jeff & Tina Stovall

- **Prayer Shawls:** Elena Kasper

- **Meal Train:** Jennifer Robbennolt

- **Driver's Ministry:** John Osborne

- **Card Ministry:** Peg Wade

- **Healing Music Ministry:** Marilou Hinrichs

- **Health and Wellness Team:** Doug Irwin

Children & Family: Julie McClure* and (pending)

Finance: Roger Wade* (treasurer), David Willcox (financial secretary)

Identity: Keri Evans* and (pending)

Mission: Jeanne Ward* and Kristy Brownfield

Sound & Ethical Practices (SEP):

Kyle Mahannah and Grant Robbennolt*

-**Buildings & Grounds:** Tom Ward and Matthew Hart

-**Contracts & Insurance:** Andrew McClure

UCC Campus Ministry Liaison: Ilsa Kantola*

Worship: Chase Skye and Susan Pawlicki*

- **Sound Coordinator:** Roger Wade

*denotes Church Life Board Member

United Church Foundation (UCC Campus Ministry)

Director of Campus Ministry: Reverend Nate Brantingham | nate@ucccampusministry.org

www.community-ucc.org/campus-ministry

Community United Church of Christ

805 S. Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois, 61820

Phone: (217) 344-5091 | Website: www.community-ucc.org | Email: info@community-ucc.org