

First United Methodist Church

Welcome! We are a Congregation Caring For and About God's Community
December 1, 2024 - 10:00am - First Sunday in Advent

GATHERING AND PRAISE

Prelude: "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

by Rowland H. Pritchard; arr. Phil Lehenbauer

Welcome and Announcements – Please sign in on the attendance pads, or use your phone and the QR Code to the right to sign in electronically or use this link: <https://form.jotform.com/211785166356159>

Please fill out your yellow prayer cards



****Opening Hymn UMH #211:** "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (vs. 1, 2, 4, 6)

1) O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

4) O Come, thou root of Jesse's tree,
An ensign of thy people be.
Before thee rulers silent fall;
All people on thy mercy call. [Refrain]

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

2) O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
And order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show
and teach us in her ways to go. [Refrain]

6) O Come, thou dayspring, come and cheer,
Our spirits by thy justice here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
[Refrain]

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

***The Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

Dave & Judy O'Dell

One: We begin the season of Advent with expectant and believing hearts.

All: We wait upon the Lord and place our hope in God's word.

One: During Advent, we confront the darkness that often exists around us.

All: We wait upon the Lord and place our hope in God's Spirit.

One: During Advent, we confront the darkness that often resides within us.

All: We wait upon the Lord and place our hope in God's grace.

One: During Advent, we confront the divisions that often occur between us.

All: We wait upon the Lord and place our hope in God's healing.

One: This morning, we light the first candle, which reminds us of the ultimate hope that comes through our Savior's birth. In a world where we often get overwhelmed by our circumstances, Advent comes as a gentle whisper offering us hope to heal the broken, befriend the lonely, and share the good news of the Gospel. This morning, let us begin this Advent season with expectant and believing hearts...

* Please stand if you are able

All: Gracious God, as we embark upon another Advent journey, we pray that we would be encouraged by hope, strengthen in unity, and inspired through faith. May our ears be open and our hearts ready to receive the gift of hope embodied in the Word made flesh. Through Christ our Hope, we pray, Amen.

SONG LYRICS:

Hope waits for us at Advent. Hope waits for us to trust. Hope waits for our commitment to a land that's kind and just. In this time of preparation for the work of co-creation, for the birthing of a world that heals the ones in pain, hope is born in us again.

Original source of liturgy unknown; Music/lyrics © 2020 Amanda Udis-Kessler. Used by permission

ALL SINGING:

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (D major) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. Chords are indicated above the notes.

Staff 1: Chords: D, D/F#, G, A, D, D/F#, G, A, Bm, G. Lyrics: Hope waits for us at Ad-vent. Hope waits for us to trust. Hope waits for

Staff 2: Chords: A, D, Em, Cmaj7, A sus, A, G2, D/F#. Lyrics: our com - mit - ment to a land that's kind and just. In this time of

Staff 3: Chords: Em7, D/F#, G2, D/F#, Em7, D/F#, G2, D/F#, G, A, Bm. Lyrics: pre - par - a - tion for the work of co - cre - a - tion, for the birth - ing of a world that

Staff 4: Chords: C, G, D2, Em7, D/F#, G, G/B, Bm, D. Lyrics: heals the ones in pain, Hope is born in us a - gain.

Time of Prayer – *During the silent meditation, ushers will collect your yellow prayer cards to deliver to the pastor.*

Silent Meditation

Lifting our Celebrations and Concerns In 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Living Our Gratitude

♪ *You can support your church family by giving in person or online.
Enjoy the musical selection as a time to give thanks to God
for all with which you have been blessed. Thank you!
Use the QR code to the right or give online here:
<https://www.firstumcsaginaw.org/give/>*



The Offertory: “Savior of the Nations, Come”

Johann Walter; arr. Rudy Davenport

The Doxology: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; **UMH #94**
Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving: Gracious God, in this season of anticipation, we offer our gifts with hopeful hearts. As we prepare for the fullness of your kingdom, may these offerings be a sign of our readiness and desire to live attentively. Use them to bring justice, righteousness, and joy to our world, and to look up, embracing the hope you bring in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Children’s Message – *A special moment just for kids*

Chorus UMH #191: “Jesus Loves Me”

*Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong; they are weak, but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.*

Scripture Lesson:

Luke 21:25-36

Pew Bible N.T. pg. 80-81

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. ²⁸ Now 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; ³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³ Heaven 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, ³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be 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.”

Response to the Word

One: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

**All: *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!***

One: Holy are you, and blessed is your son, Jesus Christ,
Whom you sent in the fullness of time to be a light to the nations.
He humbled himself in obedience to your will, and feely accepted death on a cross.
On the night he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you,
broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Take; eat; this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”
Likewise, when the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you,
gave it to his disciples, and said: “Drink from this all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins. As often as you drink of this, remember me.
And so, in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Christ Jesus,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving, as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

All: *Christ has died; Christ is risen, Christ will come again!*

One: Let us pray: Holy God, pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here.
And on each person within reach of my voice.
Bless our offerings of bread and juice,
that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ;
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.
By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory,
and we feast together at his heavenly banquet.
Through your son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

*Those who worship with us in person this morning are invited to come forward via the center aisle,
take a piece of bread and a dip it into the chalice and partake.*

Gluten free wafers are available for those who need them. Then return to your seats via the side aisles.

If you’re unable to come forward, please raise your hand and communion will be brought to you.

*Those who worship online from home this morning are invited to use what you have in your home (bread,
crackers, juice, etc.) to participate in the sacrament along with the congregation.*

Special Music During Communion: “In the Bleak Midwinter”

arr. Wilbur Held

WE GO AS WITNESSES FOR CHRIST IN THE WORLD

***Closing Hymn UMH #209: “Blessed Be the God of Israel”**

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| <p>1) Blessed be the God of Israel,
Who comes to set us free,
Who visits and redeems us,
And grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy,
Of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill the promise
To bring our people peace.</p> <p>2) Now from the house of David
A child of grace is given;
A Savior comes among us
To raise us up to heaven.</p> | <p>Before him goes the herald,
Forerunner in the way,
The prophet of salvation,
The harbinger of day.</p> <p>3) On prisoners of darkness
The sun begins to rise,
The dawning of forgiveness
Upon the sinner's eyes,
To guide the feet of pilgrims
Along the paths of peace;
O bless our God and Savior
With songs that never cease!</p> |
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***Benediction:**

(by Dr. Lisa Hancock, https://www.umcdiscipleship.org.)

One: Beloved, go from this place blessed with a hope that takes root and grows,
preparing us to notice, listen, and join in with God’s kingdom work among us. Amen.

All: We go in hope to love and serve the Lord and all God’s creation. Thanks be to God. Amen.

*** Postlude: “Wake, Awake, For Night is Flying”**

by Philipp Nicolai; arr. Michael Burkhardt

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First United Methodist Church

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..... pastoralbt@outlook.com / (989) 274-6363 (cell phone)

Office Administrator/Treasurer..... Dina Draper

Custodian..... Tina Castle

Organist..... Bryan Latimer

Director of Music & Chancel Choir..... Rod Bieber

Bell Choir Director..... Catherine McMichael

Nursery Supervisors.....Katie Moon and Karissa Schultz

Audio Visual Technicians.....Andy Sharrow, Angie Smith, Izzy Terhune

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FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Be sure to check in on Facebook! The more of us that do, the more people learn about who we are!

YouTube: **Saginaw First UMC** Bluesky: **FirstUMCSaginaw.bsky.social**
Facebook: **@firstumcofsaginaw** Instagram: **saginawfumc**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS: Thank you for your service!! Liturgist: Anne Marks-Gaertner / Communion Servers: NEEDED / Advent Wreath: Dave & Judy O'Dell / Greeters: Bill Johnson and Jim & Linda Doane / Ushers: Bill Cowdry, Bill Johnson Jr., Dave O'Dell, Angie Smith / Welcome Desk: Jan Tolley / Coffee Hour Hosts: Bill, Xenny & Keeli Johson / Nursery: Karissa Schultz / Sound System: Izzy Terhune

OUR SYMPATHY is extended to Bonnie Dole and family upon the death of her husband Patrick Dole last Sunday. Funeral Services were held at Snow Funeral Home this past Wednesday.

HOSPITALIZED THIS WEEK: Ron Southgate

PLEASE HOLD IN YOUR PRAYERS: Marilyn Ashmall, Ed Babinski, David Barker, Barry Brown, Tom Brubaker, Bernie Buggia, Myrna Cammin, Judy Dawe, Bonnie Dole, Esther Cavendish Fisher, Don Hammond, Wayne Henney, Dr. Kirk Herrick, RuthAnn Hilton, Marion Hoffman, Sue Johnson, Sharon Ketcham, ZoAnn Kraynak, Barb Kropp, Mark Leffler, Joyce Maltman, Bonnie Markley, Kay Mertz, Merlyn Mondol, Bob & Sharon Mueller, Madge Richmond, Eugenia Shek, Ron & Noreen Southgate, Kathy Winkowski, and Dorothy Woods. Also, please pray for UMCOR, and for war to end in Ukraine and in Israel/Gaza.

PLEDGE CARDS welcome anytime. It's not too late! Please submit your 2025 pledge by today, if possible, as this will help us solidify our budget. But we'll take them anytime☺!

PASTOR AMY IS AWAY this week from Wednesday, Dec. 4 – Sat. Dec. 7 for a continuing education conference in Detroit. Please call her cell phone at 989-274-6363 in the case of a pastoral emergency.

READERS NEEDED for lighting the Advent Wreath. Families, Couples, and Individuals needed. See Pastor Amy if you're willing to help out with leading that time one week.

TAIZÉ SERVICE OF MEDITATIVE WORSHIP – Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 7:00pm

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT REHEARSAL – Friday, Dec. 6 at 6:30pm

YOUNG ADULT GROUP will meet on 2nd Sundays, continuing NEXT SUNDAY, Dec. 8 at 6:00pm. Dinner provided.

FREE COMMUNITY MEALS on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, continue Tuesday, Dec. 10 from 5:30-6:30pm. On the menu for December: Loaded Nachos. Sign up to Donate Food at the Welcome Desk. Volunteer to work here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B044DAFAC2BA0FD0-community>

THE BACKPACK PROGRAM for children struggling with food insecurity has begun. Sponsor a child for \$150/year. Buy Christmas things in the Narthex. Sign up to pack food and help deliver to area schools at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B044DAFAC2BA0FD0-44603782-backpack>

ADVENT BOOK STUDY (4 WEEKS) meets in person at 6pm on Tues. 12/3 and online at 7:30pm on Tues. 12/3 (NOTE: This week ONLY - not our normal Wednesday online meeting.) The book is entitled "Keep Watch With Me" by Claire Brown and Michael T. McRay. Books available in the main office for \$15. Free books available to those who need them.

THE CHRISTMAS COOKIE WALK will take place this year on Sunday, December 22. Cookies will be \$5/dozen. All proceeds go to fund the Youth Mission Trip to Milwaukee this June 2025. Please consider baking/donating cookies for the walk to help the kids out. Thank you!



Worship Schedule

- *First Advent 12/01/2024 – Worship/Communion 10:00am*
- *Advent Taizé Service – Wednesday 12/04/2024 at 7:00pm*
- *Second Advent 12/08/2023 – Worship 10:00am – Kid’s Christmas Pageant*
 - *Third Advent 12/15/2024 – Worship 10:00am*
 - *Fourth Advent 12/22/2024 – All Music Sunday 10:00am*
 - *CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE – 7:30pm*
- *Christmas I Sunday 12/29 – Worship 10:00am – Tatyana Spaulding, Guest Preacher*
- *Epiphany Sunday 1/5/2025 – Worship/Communion 10:00am*

Mission

THE CHRISTMAS MIRACLE OFFERING will be divided this year between a) the Partnership Center and b) the purchase gift cards and needed Christmas Meals for the families of our 48 Backpack Children. **Give online at <https://www.firstumcsaginaw.org/give/> or use the QR code to the right.**



Education

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS PARTY for kids up to 5th grade – Sunday 12/08/2024 – 11:30am-1:00pm.
Includes lunch, Bible story, baking project, crafts, and games.

CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALE for Youth Mission Trip – Sunday 12/22/2024 after All Music Sunday
Worship. **COOKIE DONATIONS WELCOME!!!!**

FOUR-WEEK ADVENT ADULT BOOK STUDY on *Keep Watch With Me* by Claire Brown and Michael T. McRay. Books available from the Office for \$15.
6:00-7:00pm in person on Tuesdays: 11/26, 12/3, 12/10, 12/17
7:30-8:30pm online on Wednesdays: 11/27, 12/4, 12/11, 12/18