



*The First Congregational Church  
of the United Church of Christ  
Stockbridge, Massachusetts*  
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
*November 26, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.*

You may leave the “sticks” you may have brought in the Narthex or the JE Room.  
Each week in worship we welcome people to share their prayers. If you like for a  
worship leader to read your prayer, please fill out a prayer slip.

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC Peter Frost  
PRELUDE *Let all things now living* (Ash Grove) Welsh Folk Song  
FRAMING WORDS FOR ADVENT Drea Pecor

## GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION *The Narrative Lectionary* Sarah Conly

**God of the promised Messiah, as we wait for the fulfilment of your  
promise, we watch, we listen, and we open our hearts for your Word.  
Show us signs of your presence: a light in the darkness, a voice in the  
silence, and a stirring deep within us.**

\*HYMN *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* vss. 1 & 5

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!

5 O come, O Key of David, come,  
and open wide your heavenly home;  
Make safe the way to endless day,  
to hell's destruction close the way.

*[Refrain]*

CANDLE LIGHTING from *Candles and Conifers* by Ruth Burgess

(The first candle is lit)

Joan and Paul Kopperl

One: A candle burns, the sign of our hope.

**All: God of hope, come to us again this Advent.**

One: May your hope live within us.

**All: May it burn brightly as a light in our lives.**

SUNG RESPONSE

*We Are In Darkness*, by Anne McKinstry, verse 1  
(to the tune of "Away in a Manger")

**We look for your light that illumines our way.**

**Without it we walk on a treacherous path.**

**Your feet will not stumble with me as your guide.**

**I am a bright star; turn your face towards my light.**

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

David Anderegg

TIME WITH CHILDREN *The Advent Wreath*

*The Lord's Prayer*

**Our God, 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Children may go to music / story time.

INTROIT

*What Star is This?* (15th c.)

CALL TO WORSHIP

written by Thom Shuman

Michael Deegan

One: The time is surely coming when our love for one another and all of God's children will increase.

**All: We would live into that time with hope and joy.**

One: The day is surely coming when God will strengthen our hearts with humility and holiness.

**All: We would anticipate that day as we reach out to serve all of those in need.**

continued

One: The days are surely coming when we will walk the paths of faithfulness and steadfast love.

**All: We begin this journey, knowing that all of God's promises will be fulfilled.**

TIME OF REFLECTION, HONESTY, AND CONFESSION Ken Ward  
Will Willimons, Abingdon Press, 2019.

**Lord, you came to us when we least expected. We thought that all hope for humanity was lost, or that it was up to humanity to save ourselves or we would not be saved, or that some god or other would swoop down from the heavens and deliver us. Then you came to us in the dark of night, born to Mary and Joseph; you came to us as a baby. Lord, forgive us when we don't see you because we look in the wrong places, or because you give us hope for your advent, or because we expect you to come in power, majesty, and glory rather than in humility, poverty, and meekness. Lord, help us to experience your birth among us. God with us. God with us not on our terms, but on your terms, as a baby, Jesus, a human one who took upon himself our humanity that we might be brought back to God. (Time for silent reflection/confession)**

SUNG RESPONSE Taize – *Nada te Turbe* See page 5

GOOD NEWS

## THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Jeremiah 33:14-18 Ron Hanft

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'

For thus says the Lord: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, and the levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt-offerings, to make grain-offerings, and to make sacrifices for all time.

REFLECTION David Anderegg

\*HYMN

*With Joy Draw Water* vss. 1-3

See page 6

## OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

David Anderegg

For today, if you wish to lift a prayer, you must write it on a slip. They will be read as written. During the prayers, people will be invited to lift the names of those they are remembering.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Let all mortal flesh keep silence* (Picardy/French)  
setting by Albert Zabel

\*DOXOLOGY

Lasst Uns Erfreuen

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low; Alleluia, Alleluia.  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; One God, Triune, whom we adore.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

\*BLESSING OF THE GIFTS

David Anderegg

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Drea Pecor

PRAYER RESPONSE

## GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

INVITATIONS

\*HYMN

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

See page 7

\*SENDING

**Dear God,  
As we journey down this Advent road,  
grant us the courage to make peace.  
Peace in our hearts,  
Peace in our homes,  
Peace in our communities. Amen.**

© Katherine Hawker. Posted on her *Liturgies Outside the Box* website.

\*BLESSING



POSTLUDE *Now Thank We All Our God (Nun Danket/Cruger),  
setting by Rob Roy Peery*

**Nada te Turbe**

772

*Text: The Taizé Community, 1991;  
based on the writings of St. Teresa of Avila, 16th century*

*Music: Jacques Berthier, 1991*

Am Dm7 G CM7 F Dm6

Na - da te tur - be, na - da te es - pan - te. Quien a Dios tie - ne  
Noth - ing can trou - ble, noth - ing can fright - en. Those who seek God shall

Esus4 E Am F Dm6 E Am

na - da le fal - ta. So - lo Dios bas - ta.  
nev - er go want - ing. God a - lone fills us.

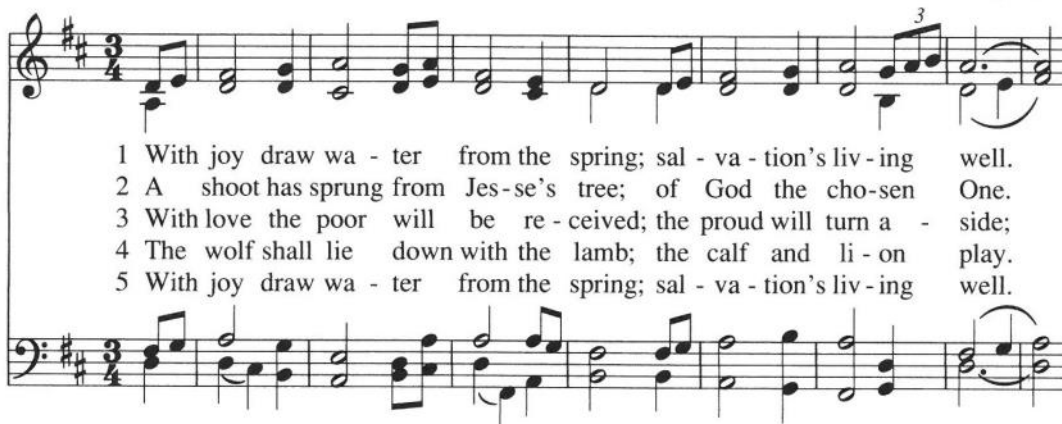
# Verses With Joy Draw Water

109

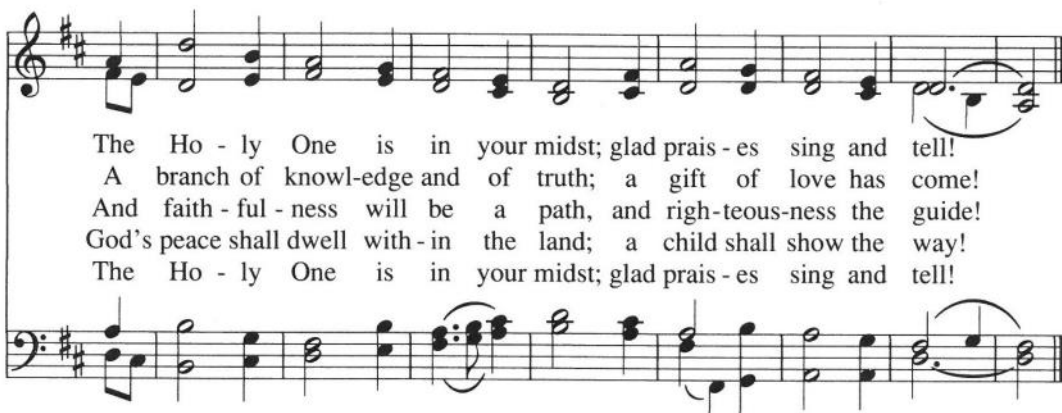
1 - 3

Anne McKinstry, 1986, 1993

*Isa. 11:1-10; 12:2-6*



1 With joy draw wa - ter from the spring; sal - va - tion's liv - ing well.  
 2 A shoot has sprung from Jes - se's tree; of God the cho - sen One.  
 3 With love the poor will be re - ceived; the proud will turn a - side;  
 4 The wolf shall lie down with the lamb; the calf and li - on play.  
 5 With joy draw wa - ter from the spring; sal - va - tion's liv - ing well.



The Ho - ly One is in your midst; glad prais - es sing and tell!  
 A branch of knowl - edge and of truth; a gift of love has come!  
 And faith - ful - ness will be a path, and righ - teous - ness the guide!  
 God's peace shall dwell with - in the land; a child shall show the way!  
 The Ho - ly One is in your midst; glad prais - es sing and tell!

*This text combines images from two Advent readings from the book of Isaiah, including the passage anticipating the reign of peace. The author, Anne McKinstry, has served as a writer-in-residence at Otis United Church of Christ in Massachusetts.*

Tune: ST. COLUMBA altered to 8.6.8.6.  
 Irish traditional melody  
 Harm. Charles V. Stanford, 1906

*The New Century Hymnal (1995)*

## 2

## Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley, 1744

HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7 D

Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831

1. Come, Thou long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy  
2. Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child and

peo - ple free; From our fears and sins re - lease us;  
yet a King, Born to reign in us for - ev - er,

Let us find our rest in Thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so -  
Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring. By Thine own e - ter - nal

la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art; Dear de - sire of  
Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone; By Thine all - suf -

ev - ery na - tion, Joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.  
fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Holly Fair** Saturday, Dec 2, 10am - 1pm.  
Baked goods, crafts and gifts, holiday greens, Grandma's Attic, and Santa! Throughout the church building.

### **All-Church Advent Celebration**

December 3 - all are invited to a Potluck Lunch, beginning about 11:30. Please sign up in the JE Room to let us know you're coming. The Craft Party will end about 1:30. This event is open to children and adults of all ages. Questions? Talk to Terry Wise or Ted Randolph.

### **The Christmas Giving Tree**

Please share in the tradition of the Christmas Giving Tree, which offers a wish list of gifts you can purchase that

will help make a brighter holiday for some of our South County neighbors. Instructions can be found next to the Giving Tree is in the JE Room.

### **Christmas Pageant**

December 17 during worship service  
We invite folks of all ages and all acting experiences to participate. We will be holding rehearsals at the church:

Thursday, November 30 - 5:15 p.m.

PIZZA to be served - finish by 6:45.

Sunday, Dec 10 – 11:20-12:50

Thursday, December 14 - 5:15 p.m.

PIZZA to be served - finish by 6:45.

On Sunday, December 17 9:00 a.m. to put on costumes and go through the final details. See Peter for more details.

### **Music Notes ~ Peter Frost**

*Now thank we all our God, With heart and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things hath done, In whom his world rejoices;  
Who from our mother's arms Hath blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love, And still is ours today.*

From 1618 to 1648 Germany, and much of Europe, was devastated by famine and disease caused by the Thirty Years' War. Martin Rinkart, in 1636, a Lutheran pastor in Eilenburg, Germany, wrote this hymn "Now Thank We All Our God" (Nun danket alle Gott), a hymn of thanksgiving which is still being sung today.

*Welcome! We are an Open and Affirming Church which means that we invite persons of every sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, racial and cultural identity, age, physical ability, economic circumstance, faith background and family structure to share fully in the ministry, leadership and fellowship of this congregation's life in Christ.*

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