



*The First Congregational Church  
of the United Church of Christ  
Stockbridge, Massachusetts*

**FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT**

*December 1, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.*

Children are invited to Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. returning to worship after the offering. Nursery care is available during worship; please ask an usher.

Note: We will lift prayers of joy and concern this morning in worship. If you would prefer to submit a prayer to be read, please write it on one of the prayer slips in the folders in each pew and return it to the prayer box in the Narthex or give it to a Deacon before our prayer time.

## **PREPARING FOR WORSHIP**

PRELUDE

*Carols for Quiet Stops*, arr. M. Celli

Tracy Wilson

FRAMING WORDS / WELCOME

Rev. Brent Damrow

## GATHERING IN WORSHIP

TOLLING OF THE HOUR / TIME OF REFLECTION

SHARING THE PRAYERS WE BRING

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.**

SONG                                      *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers* verse 1                                      See insert

CANDLE LIGHTING LITANY    Salt Project – Hope

One: When I look around, I see shadows of hunger. So many neighbors, nearby  
and around the world, will go to bed hungry tonight...

**All: When I look around, I see shadows of injustice, the rich getting richer  
and the poor getting poorer – and someone somewhere will fall asleep  
under a bridge tonight...**

One: In the face of hunger, we light a candle of hope...

**All: In the face of injustice, in the face of despair, we light a candle of hope...**  
(Light the first candle in the Advent wreath.)

One: May the light from this candle overwhelm the world.

**All: May the light from this candle say to all that God's hope is coming, on  
earth as it already is in heaven.**

One: Friends, be not afraid, God's hope is at hand!

\*HYMN                                      *With Joy, Draw Water* vss. 1 & 2                                      See page 5

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

CONTEMPORARY READING                                      Rich Geiler

## OFFERING OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come, Paul Manz*

\*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

### THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Jeremiah 33:14-16

Susan Moor

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill 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."

SERMON

*A Flurry of Activity*

Pastor Brent

\*HYMN

*Now Bless the God of Israel*

See page 6

ADVENT UNISON PRAYER written by Rev. Deborah Vaughn,  
a hospice chaplain

**silently and gently, falling and failing  
changing and resting, seeking you, Lord...**

**we watch we wait we dream**

**we pray...**

**for the earth to renew**

**for our hearts to soften**

**for your grace to cover us**

**for your justice to pour out**

**for time and space to listen**

continued



# With Joy Draw Water

Verses  
1 & 2

109

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.*

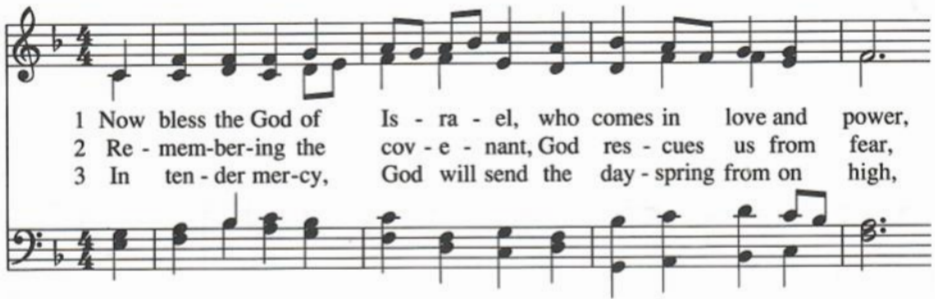
Tune: ST. COLUMBA altered to 8.6.8.6.  
Irish traditional melody  
Harm. Charles V. Stanford, 1906

*The New Century Hymnal (1995)*

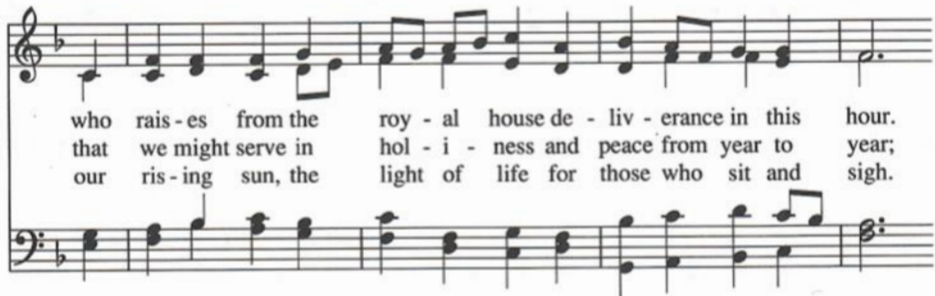
**Thank you** to all who helped with today's service, including Deacons David Anderegg, Gary Cilley, and Drea Pecor; readers Rich Geiler and Susan Moor; greeter Charlotte Rodgers; storyteller Kim Ruffing. Will Curtiss is running the Livestream and volunteers are in the nursery.

Luke 1:68-79; Ps. 18:1-3; Isa. 9:2-7

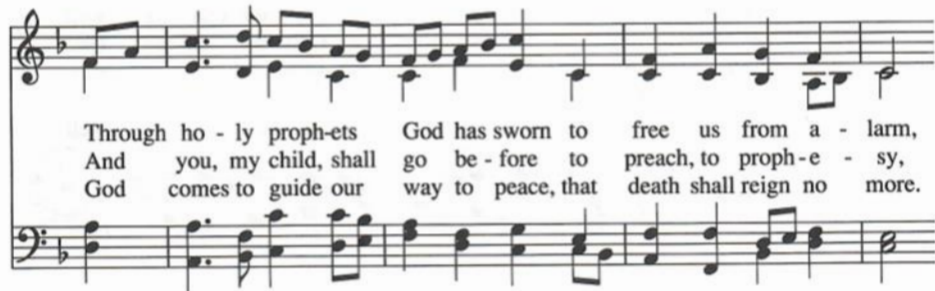
Ruth Duck, 1985



1 Now bless the God of Is - ra - el, who comes in love and power,  
 2 Re - mem - ber - ing the cov - e - nant, God res - cues us from fear,  
 3 In ten - der mer - cy, God will send the day - spring from on high,



who rais - es from the roy - al house de - liv - erance in this hour.  
 that we might serve in hol - i - ness and peace from year to year;  
 our ris - ing sun, the light of life for those who sit and sigh.



Through ho - ly proph - ets God has sworn to free us from a - larm,  
 And you, my child, shall go be - fore to preach, to proph - e - sy,  
 God comes to guide our way to peace, that death shall reign no more.



to save us from the heav - y hand of all who wish us harm.  
 that all may know the ten - der love, the grace of God most high.  
 Sing prais - es to the Ho - ly One! O wor - ship and a - dore!

*This text by United Church of Christ clergywoman Ruth Duck is a paraphrase of the "Benedictus," which is often sung at morning prayer. She came to appreciate daily prayer while studying at the University of Notre Dame.*

Tune: FOREST GREEN C.M.D.  
 Traditional English melody  
 Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

## 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.

## **Advent Potluck Lunch and Craft Party – Today**

Lunch and the crafts are open to all ages. The event will go from 11:15 to 1:30, beginning with the Potluck lunch, then the crafts.

## **The Giving Tree**

Pick a tag or three for our neighbors so that they have a Merry Christmas. We need the packages wrapped and returned by Sunday December 15. Thank you!

## **Holiday Centerpiece Design and Construction – December 4**

Come help make evergreen decorations to be sold at the Holly Fair on December 7. Bring gardening shears. Sign-up on J.E. Room bulletin board or call or text Anne Hutchinson (413-854-7798).

## **Donate Toys and Games**

Lightly used and loved toys and games are needed to stock the Children's Shop at the Holly Fair. Young people under 12 may shop in their own room for friends and family. All items are 50 cents. (This room is staffed by youth over 12).

## **Poinsettias**

We invite you to help transform the sanctuary on Christmas Eve. Donate one or more poinsettias to the church in honor or memory of someone who is in your heart this Christmas. You can then choose to take your plant home or let us to bring it to someone who could use some joy. There are paper forms in the JE Room or just call Will in the church office. The gifts will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Deadline: December 16.

*Welcome! We are Open and Affirming, 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.*

*As followers of Christ and committed to Isaiah's charge to "maintain justice and do what is right," we acknowledge with gratitude and humility that we are learning, speaking, gathering, and worshiping on the ancestral homelands of the Mohican people, who are the indigenous peoples of this land. Despite tremendous hardship in being forced from here, today their community resides in Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all.*

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