



**First Church of Christ in Mansfield
(Congregational) United Church of Christ**

549 Storrs Rd. P.O. Box 36 Mansfield Center, CT 06250

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All the Members, Ministers

Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor + Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT + DECEMBER 12, 2021

Welcome to Our Guests!

*We're delighted you have joined us for worship; the members are the ministers of this church...
if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask us!*

Waiting for the Light

O Christ, you are like a candle burning
You are the flame that guides our way.

We await the dawning of your presence
We long to see you face to face.

Three candles are lit on the Advent Wreath

Musical Response

Candle Burning

Pat Mayberry, adapted

O Christ you are like a can-dle burn-ing. You are the flame that lights the way. You are the
love that shines with - in us, fills our hearts and dawns the day.

Opening Prayer

God of hope, you call us home from the exile of selfish oppression to the freedom of justice, the balm of healing, and the joy of sharing. Make us strong to join you in your holy work, as friends of strangers and victims, companions of those whom others shun, and as the happiness of those whose hearts are broken. We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Welcome and Greeting

Gospel

Luke 3:7-18

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Canticle*First Song of Isaiah*

Jack Nobel White

Sur-ley it is God who saves me; I will trust in God and not be a - fraid. For the

5
Lord is my strong-hold and my sure de-fense, and God will be my sav-ior.

Epistle*Philippians 4:4-7*

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Musical Response*Candle Burning*

Pat Mayberry, adapted

Reflection

Call to Prayer

Face to Face Grant, Herms, & Duncan, adapted

Here I am, I'm reach - ing out. I need you al-ways,
Oh, I need you now. I'm com - ing close_ so we can stay
hand in hand un til we're stand - ing face to face.

The musical score is written on three staves in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff contains the first line of lyrics, the second staff the second line, and the third staff the third line. The music consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some rests and a final double bar line at the end of the third staff.

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

For the Church: that we may experience joy through recognizing God with us each day and be instruments in helping others become aware of God's work in their lives

For the protection of earth's resources: that God will give wisdom and understanding to all who are developing policies that affect earth's air, water, and natural resources

For a flowering of justice: that we may strive to fulfill our duties to others and use our gifts to ease the suffering and promote the wellbeing of all

For healing of violence: that God will heal and comfort all who have experienced violence, free their hearts from fear, and help us to comfort and support them

For protection and recovery: that God will protect the human family from the pandemic virus, heal all who are ill, and give strength to all who care for the sick

For all who are suffering: that God will heal the wounds of discrimination, guide all young people who are confused or misdirected, and help all who are struggling with addictions to have a new beginning

For students as they finish the semester: that God will give them strength to complete their tasks and help them to express all that they have learned over these months clearly

Please pray the Prayer of Jesus in whatever language is most comfortable for you.

The following are offered as examples...

**Our Father/Mother/Creator,
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/sins/trespases,
as we forgive our debtors/those who sin/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.

Musical Offering

Instrument of Peace

Greg Gilpin

*Offerings may be placed in the passed plates, mailed to: First Church of Christ in Mansfield
UCC. Box 36. Mansfield Center, CT 06250, or given online at www.myfcc.info*

Doxology

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise God all crea - tures here be low; Praise
5
God for all that love has done: Cre - a - tor, Christ and Spi - rit, One. A - men!

Prayer of Dedication

Accept, O God, this money offered, these gifts given, the goodwill of our hearts, that disappointment may be turned to hope, and worry may be turned to anticipation, as we await with wonder the birth of Christ.
Amen.

Hymn

I Come With Joy

CH420

Benediction

The Week Ahead...

- Sunday, December 12 10:15am Worship and Worship Circle
- Monday, December 13 10am First Church leads Worship at St Joseph Living Center
- Tuesday, December 14 6pm Adult Education on Zoom
7pm Prayers at the End of the Day on Facebook
- Wednesday, December 15 11am-1pm Open Office Hours
1pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall
- Thursday, December 16 9:30am Quilting Group
7pm Music Ministry in Fellowship Hall
- Sunday, December 19 10:15am Worship and Worship Circle