

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

549 Storrs Rd. P.O. Box 36 Mansfield Center, CT 06250 860.423.9008 + www.myfcc.info
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



# **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.



# **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



## 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/trespasses,

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.

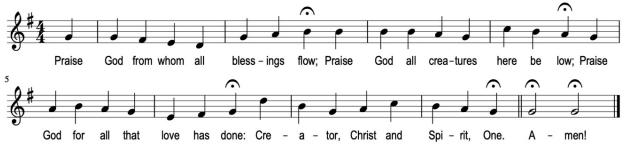
## **Musical Offering**

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 <a href="https://www.myfcc.info">www.myfcc.info</a>

# **Doxology**



## **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