



**First Church of Christ in Mansfield  
(Congregational) United Church of Christ**  
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All the Members, Ministers  
Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor + Erik Haeger, Organist  
Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

**THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT + DECEMBER 18, 2022**

### **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!*

### **Centering in the Spirit**

#### **Prelude**

#### **Welcoming the Light**

Today we light the candle of love as a reminder that from the very first generation, God has surrounded us with love. May this good news—these threads of love—not only weave deeper connections between neighbors, but shape our actions and allow us to see God more clearly.

**May this light be a reminder that Christ is coming. God was with generations before, God is with us today, and God will be with us tomorrow. Even now, God is on the way. Amen.**

#### **Musical Response**

*Holy is Your Name*

WILD MOUNTAIN THYME

And ho - ly is your name through all gen - er - a - tions! Ev - er - last - ing is your  
mer - cy to the peo - ple you have cho - sen and ho - ly is your name!

#### **Welcome and Greeting**

#### **Hymn**

*People Look East*

CH142

#### **Prayer of Confession**

God of today and tomorrow, when Mary was pregnant and afraid, she ran to her cousin Elizabeth's house. Elizabeth threw open the door with joy and showered blessings upon her. How often do we have that same opportunity? How often do we leave the door locked, the curtains drawn, and the lights off? How often do we shower critique or judgment instead of blessings and joy? Gracious God, forgive us for our wrongs. We want to see you when we see our neighbor. Amen.

## Assurance of Grace

### Musical Response

*Holy is Your Name*

WILD MOUNTAIN THYME

### Hebrew Scripture

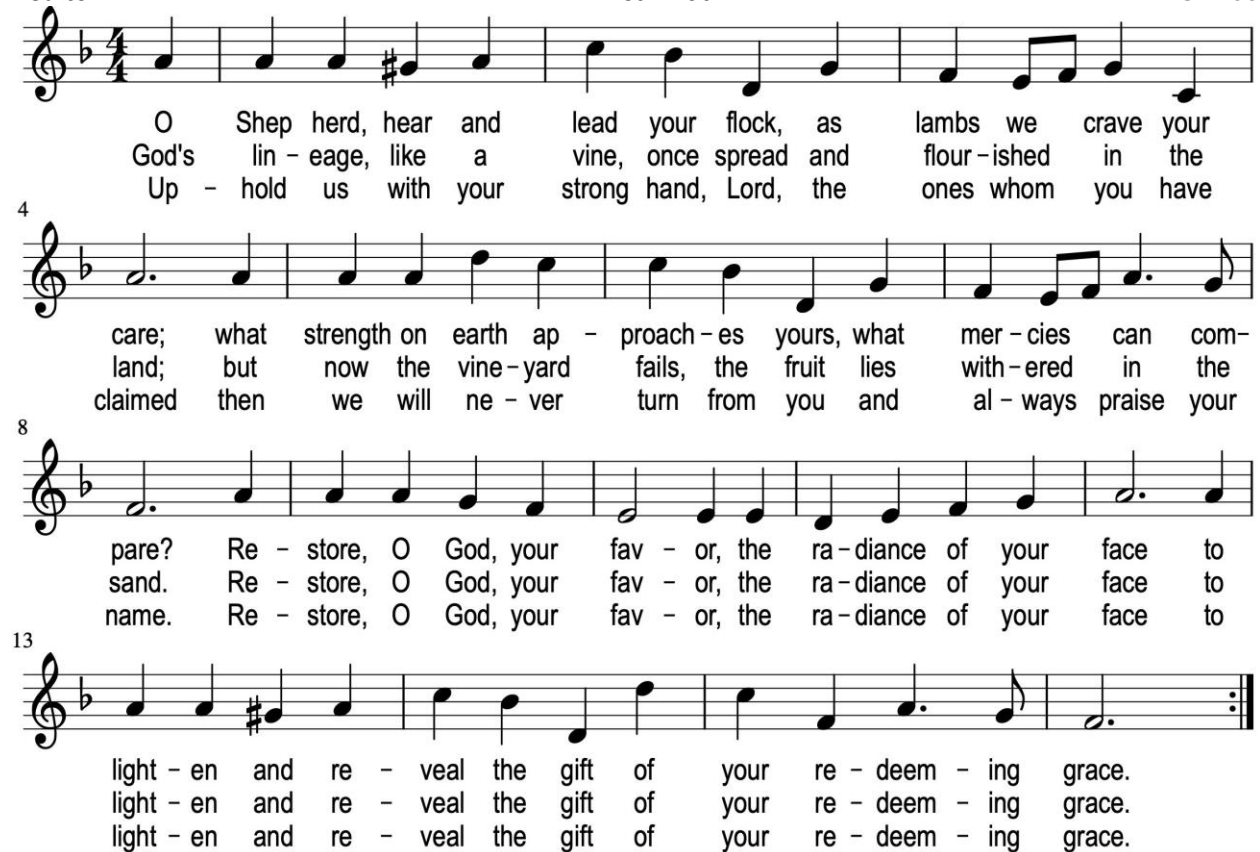
Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. Then Isaiah said "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

### Psalter

Psalm 80

CH766



O Shep herd, hear and lead your flock, as lambs we crave your  
God's lin - eage, like a vine, once spread and flour - ished in the  
Up - hold us with your strong hand, Lord, the ones whom you have  
care; what strength on earth ap - proach - es yours, what mer - cies can com -  
land; but now the vine - yard fails, the fruit lies with - ered in the  
claimed then we will ne - ver turn from you and al - ways praise your  
pare? Re - store, O God, your fav - or, the ra - diance of your face to  
sand. Re - store, O God, your fav - or, the ra - diance of your face to  
name. Re - store, O God, your fav - or, the ra - diance of your face to  
light - en and re - veal the gift of your re - deem - ing grace.  
light - en and re - veal the gift of your re - deem - ing grace.  
light - en and re - veal the gift of your re - deem - ing grace.

### Gospel

Luke 1:39-56

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said,

Hymn

*My Soul Gives Glory to My God*

CH130

Reflection

Call to Prayer

*Creator of the Stars of Night*

CH127

Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo-ple's e - ver - last - ing light,  
3  
O Christ, re-deem-er of us all, we pray you hear us when we call.

Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

*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

*Advent Alleluia*

arr Keith Christopher

*Offerings may be placed in the collection boxes at the entrances to our worship space,  
mailed to: First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC. Box 36. Mansfield Center, CT 06250,  
or given online at [www.myfcc.info](http://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**

*Christians All Your Lord is Coming*

CH136

**Benediction**

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**The Week Ahead...**

Sunday, December 18	10:15am Worship and Worship Circle
Monday, December 19	10am First Church leads Worship at St Joseph Living Center
Tuesday, December 20	6pm Adult Education on Zoom
Wednesday, December 21	1pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall
Thursday, December 22	12:15 Contemplative Communion
Saturday, December 24	7pm Christmas Eve Worship
Sunday, December 25	10:15am Worship and Worship Circle