

Second Sunday of Advent
December 4th, 2022
Worship 10:00 a.m.

Union Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Elk River, Minnesota 763-441-1203
[www.elkriverucc.org /](http://www.elkriverucc.org/)
churchoffice@elkriverucc.org

Advent

"Advent" comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming". The season of Advent is marked by the four Sundays (in 2022: November 27, December 4, 11, 18) leading up to Christmas. It is a season of waiting and preparing for the coming of Christ on Christmas, which lasts for 12 days until Epiphany (January 6).

We light four candles to symbolize what's coming into the world through Jesus' birth: hope, peace, joy, and love. On Christmas Eve we light the fifth candle, called the Christ candle. The themes and scriptures of Advent play with the notion of light and dark. Jesus is not only God with us, our Emmanuel but also the light of the world which shines through our darkest hours.

Welcome Rev. Sheri Nelson

Union Congregational Church is excited to welcome Rev. Sheri Nelson as our Bridge Pastor.

Pastor Sheri is a Minnesota native, growing up on a dairy farm near Wadena. After high school, she went to college in Portland, ME, lived in the D.C. area, and worked for Petco in Southern California before returning to Minnesota. Sheri felt a call to ministry after working 18 years as a Pharmacy Technician. She is a 2017 graduate of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. She served as Lay Pastor and Youth Leader at First Congregational UCC in Wadena and as Solo Pastor at First Congregational UCC in New York Mills. She currently serves as the Director of Outdoor Ministry of the MN Conference UCC. Sheri and her husband live in St. Paul with their 2 dogs and 2 cats. They have two children, Nick, 26, and Kristen, 22, both of whom live in St. Paul. Sheri and Derek are grandparents to 6 cats.

Welcome!

Union Congregational Church, United Church of Christ welcomes everyone, no matter who you are or where you are on your faith journey.



We offer worship in-person or via Facebook Live every Sunday at 10am. The recorded broadcast is also available for viewing on our website, following the livestream. You can contact the church at any time. See office hours below.

Please SILENCE cell phones during the service.

The wi-fi password is: stillspeaking1203



VISION

God has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

(Micah 6:8, (NIV))

Union Congregational Church, United Church of Christ Mission Statement



God calls us to minister to each other. This ministry goes beyond our congregation into the community, wider world, and to the earth itself. We seek to reach those in the margins of society, to empower the powerless, and to leave this earth a better place than when we each arrived



For kids: The **PRAYGROUND** is located in the Vestry (the room off of the sanctuary). Also, in the back of the sanctuary, is a table with items and bags for activities appropriate for the kids to work on and play with during the service. Children are welcome to sit at the table or bring the bag back to sit with parents.

PRELUDE

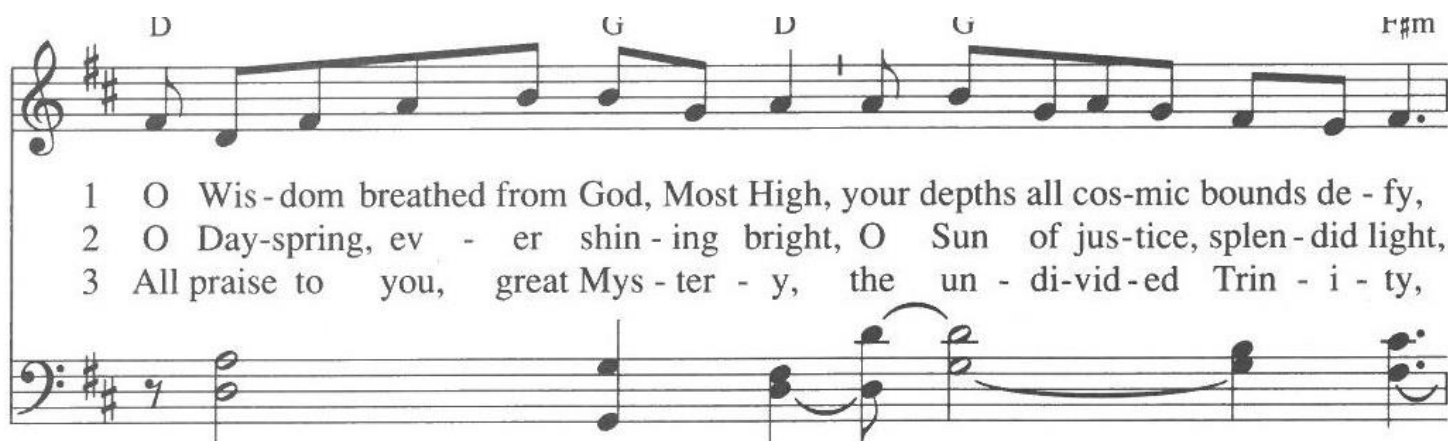
LIGHTING THE CANDLES

WELCOME

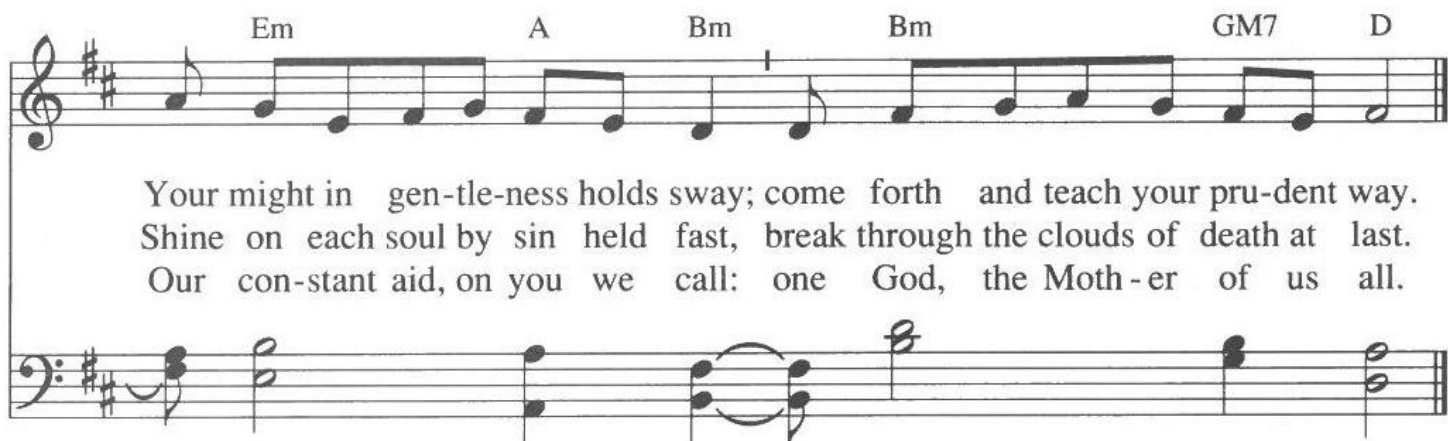
If you are in-person, we invite you to fill out the friendship pad to let us know you are here.

* We invite you to stand as your spirit or body is willing

* CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP "O Wisdom, Breathed from God"



1 O Wis-dom breathed from God, Most High, your depths all cos-mic bounds de - fy,
2 O Day-spring, ev - er shin - ing bright, O Sun of jus-tice, splen-did light,
3 All praise to you, great Mys - ter - y, the un - di-vid-ed Trin - i - ty,



Your might in gen-tle-ness holds sway; come forth and teach your pru-dent way.
Shine on each soul by sin held fast, break through the clouds of death at last.
Our con-stant aid, on you we call: one God, the Moth-er of us all.

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: In the beginning, God allowed for chaos, for troubled dreams, and uncertain sounds, and fear in the darkness. Then, when the chaos was most threatening and hope was bleakest, God said, "Let there be light."

Many: And there was light.

(light the first candle)

One: In the course of time, God allowed for a journey from ourselves to other people, from restriction to freedom, from a forgotten place to a promised land. And when the journey was hardest, and the way ahead unclear, and the desire to turn back most alluring,

Many: God reminded us of the light along the path that allows friendships to grow, truth to be discovered, and for faith to become real.

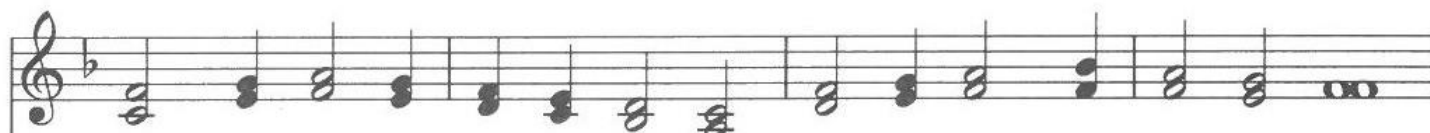
GREETING OF PEACE

In the same spirit in which we receive the unconditional love of God in Jesus Christ, let us offer to one another our own sign of peace.

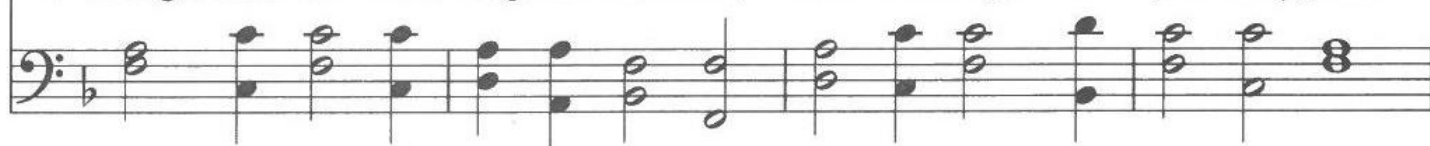

One: May the peace within me greet the peace within you.

Many: And may the peace within me greet the peace within you.


* HYMN 101 "Comfort, Comfort O My People"




1 "Com - fort, com - fort O my peo - ple, tell of peace," thus says our God;
 2 For the her - ald's voice is call - ing in the des - ert far and near,
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er pla - ces plain!


Com - fort those whose hearts are shroud - ed, mourn - ing un - der sor - row's load.
 Bid - ding us to make re - pen - tance since the realm of God is here.
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, for Mes - si - ah's ho - ly reign.




Speak un - to Je - ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them;
 Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;
 For God's glo - ry ev - er - more shall be known o'er all the world;

Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver.
 Let the val - leys rise in meet - ing and the hills bow down in greet - ing.
 And all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.



LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Hooper Family

(Reading from "Night Visions" by Jan Richardson)

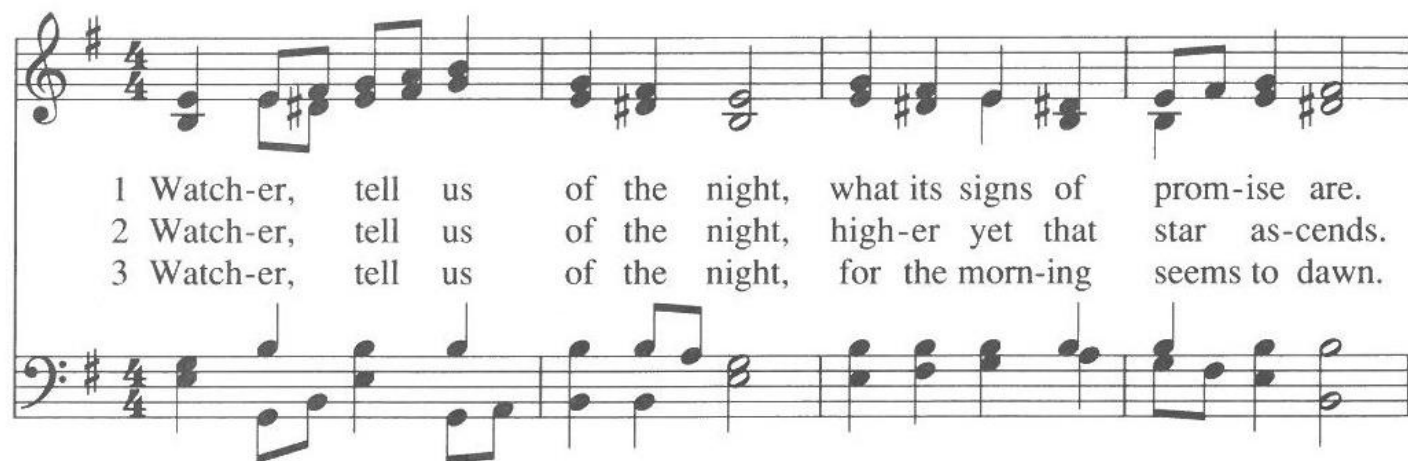
A message for lighting our second candle, the candle of Peace

Forgive us, God, when we live our lives within the lines, when we say this is the shape of our work, this is the boundary of our habitation, these are the limits to our love, these are the lines of our vision, these, and none other.

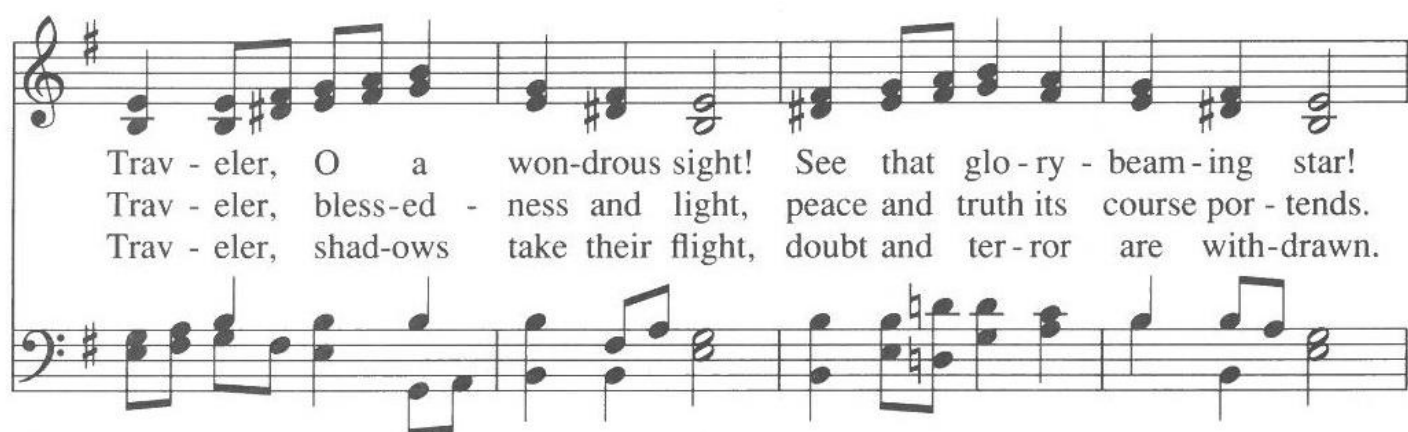
Draw us beyond our patterns into yours: shifting, moving, curving, spiraling, many-colored, ever-changing, stretching, pushing, challenging, renaming, unsettling, disturbing, casting forth, and welcoming home.

(Light one blue candle)

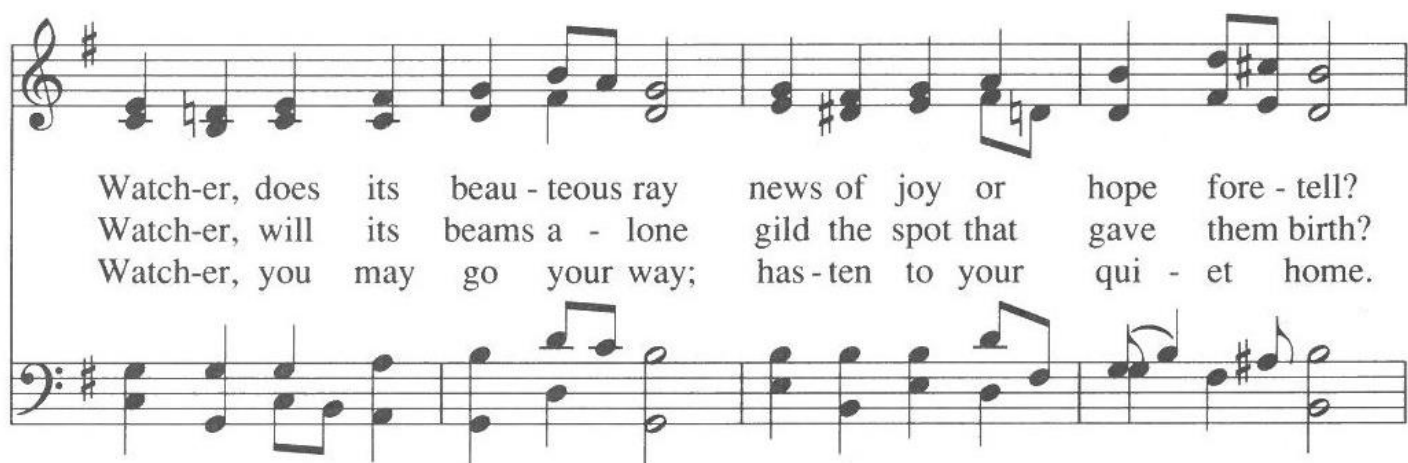
* HYMN 103 "Watcher, Tell Us of the Night"



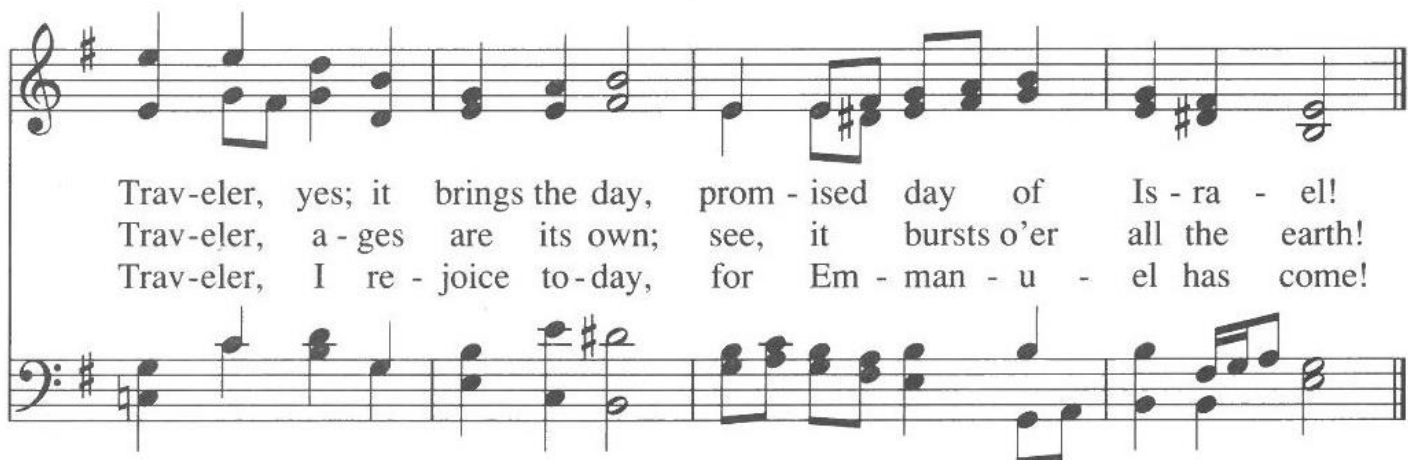
1 Watch-er, tell us of the night, what its signs of prom-ise are.
 2 Watch-er, tell us of the night, high-er yet that star as-cends.
 3 Watch-er, tell us of the night, for the morn-ing seems to dawn.



Trav - eler, O a won-drous sight! See that glo - ry - beam - ing star!
 Trav - eler, bless - ed - ness and light, peace and truth its course por - tends.
 Trav - eler, shad-ows take their flight, doubt and ter - ror are with-drawn.



Watch-er, does its beau - teous ray news of joy or hope fore - tell?
 Watch-er, will its beams a - lone gild the spot that gave them birth?
 Watch-er, you may go your way; has - ten to your qui - et home.



Trav-eler, yes; it brings the day, prom - ised day of Is - ra - el!
 Trav-eler, a - ges are its own; see, it bursts o'er all the earth!
 Trav-eler, I re - joice to-day, for Em - man - u - el has come!

*** INVOCATION** (adapt. "Cloth for the Cradle" Iona Community)

Christ Jesus, who chose, at Bethlehem, to meet us, make us ready to lose and leave all that makes us proud and sufficient. Let our knees bend to you, our hearts cradle you, and our lips sing you songs of hope, peace, love, and joy. Amen.

SCRIPTURE Jenny Sliker

Isaiah 21:11-12 (Common English Bible)

An oracle about Dumah.
Someone is calling to me from Seir: "Guard, how long is the night?
Guard, how long is the night?"
The guard said, "Morning has come, but it is still night. If you must inquire, inquire; come back again."

Philippians 1: 9-11 (Common English Bible)

This is my prayer: that your love might become even more and more rich with knowledge and all kinds of insight. I pray this so that you will be able to decide what really matters and so you will be sincere and blameless on the day of Christ. I pray that you will then be filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes from Jesus Christ, in order to give glory and praise to God.

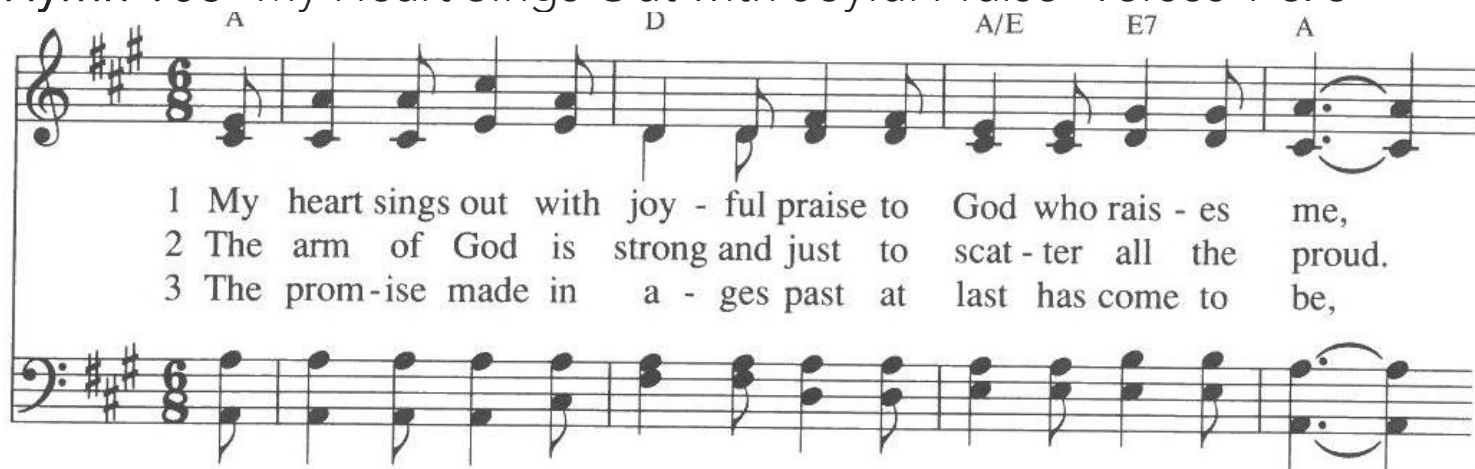
SPECIAL MUSIC Carson Schneider

TIME WITH CHILDREN Pastor Sheri

REFLECTION "Desire"
Rev. Sheri Nelson

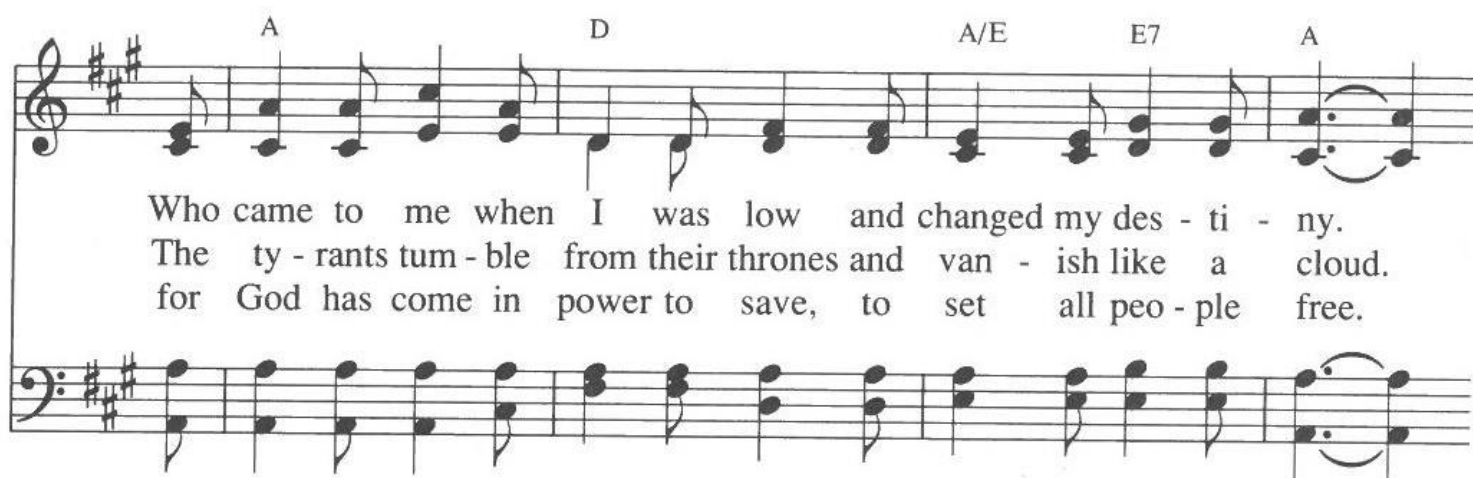
* Hymn 106 "My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise" verses 1 & 3

A D A/E E7 A



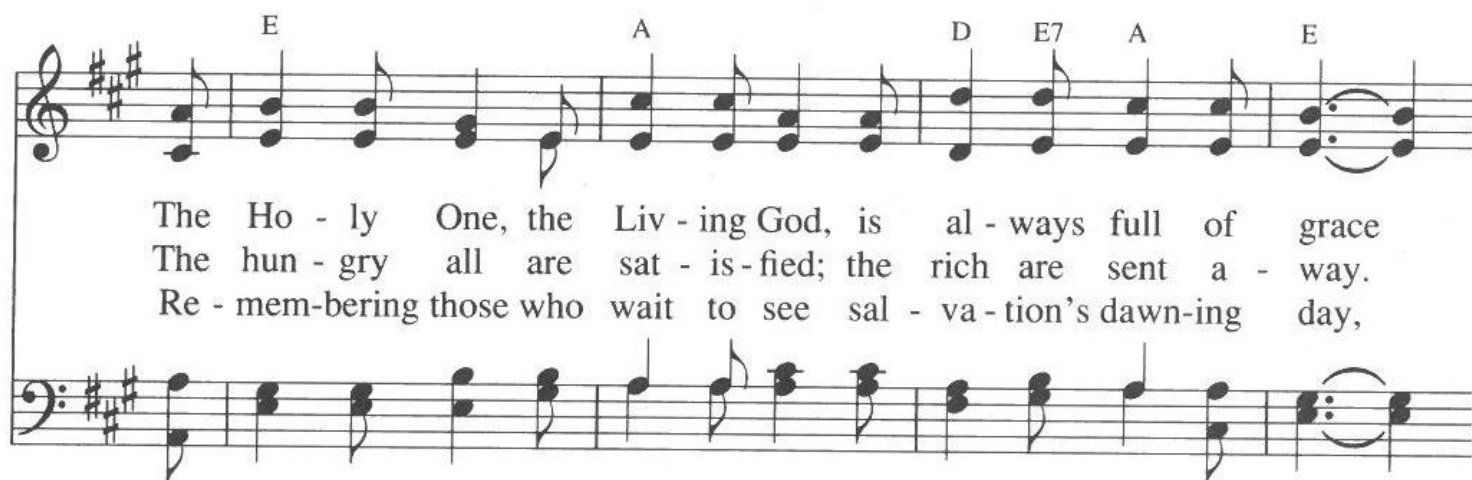
1 My heart sings out with joy - ful praise to God who rais - es me,
 2 The arm of God is strong and just to scat - ter all the proud.
 3 The prom - ise made in a - ges past at last has come to be,

A D A/E E7 A



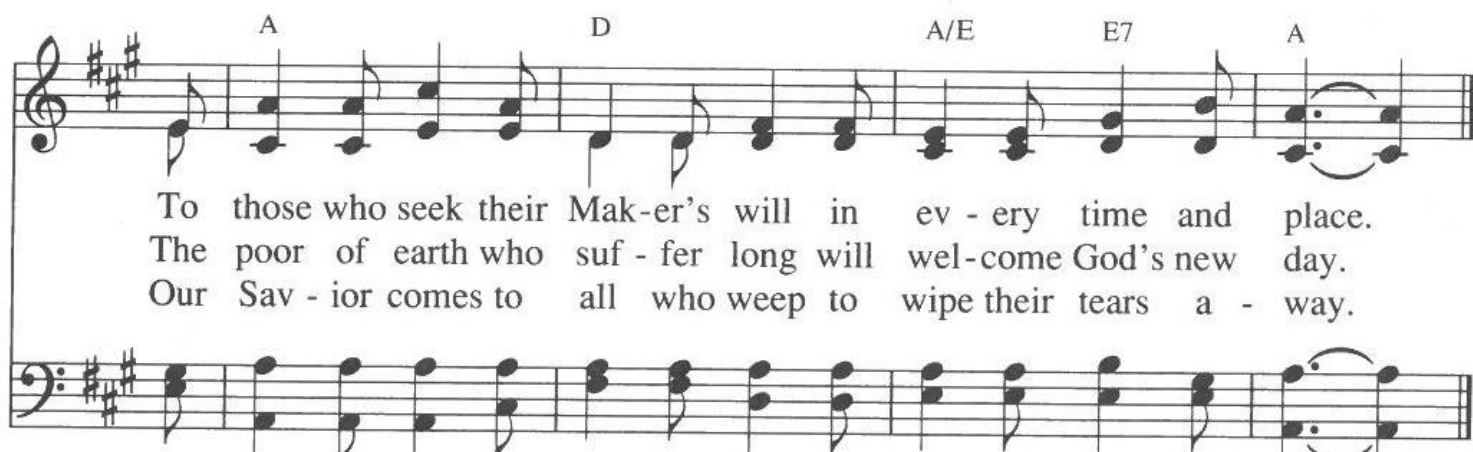
Who came to me when I was low and changed my des - ti - ny.
 The ty - rants tum - ble from their thrones and van - ish like a cloud.
 for God has come in power to save, to set all peo - ple free.

E A D E7 A E



The Ho - ly One, the Liv - ing God, is al - ways full of grace
 The hun - gry all are sat - is - fied; the rich are sent a - way.
 Re - mem - bering those who wait to see sal - va - tion's dawn - ing day,

A D A/E E7 A



To those who seek their Mak - er's will in ev - ery time and place.
 The poor of earth who suf - fer long will wel - come God's new day.
 Our Sav - ior comes to all who weep to wipe their tears a - way.

OUR TIME OF SHARING JOYS & CONCERNS, ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Notes:

INVITATION TO GIVE/RECEIVING OUR GIFTS

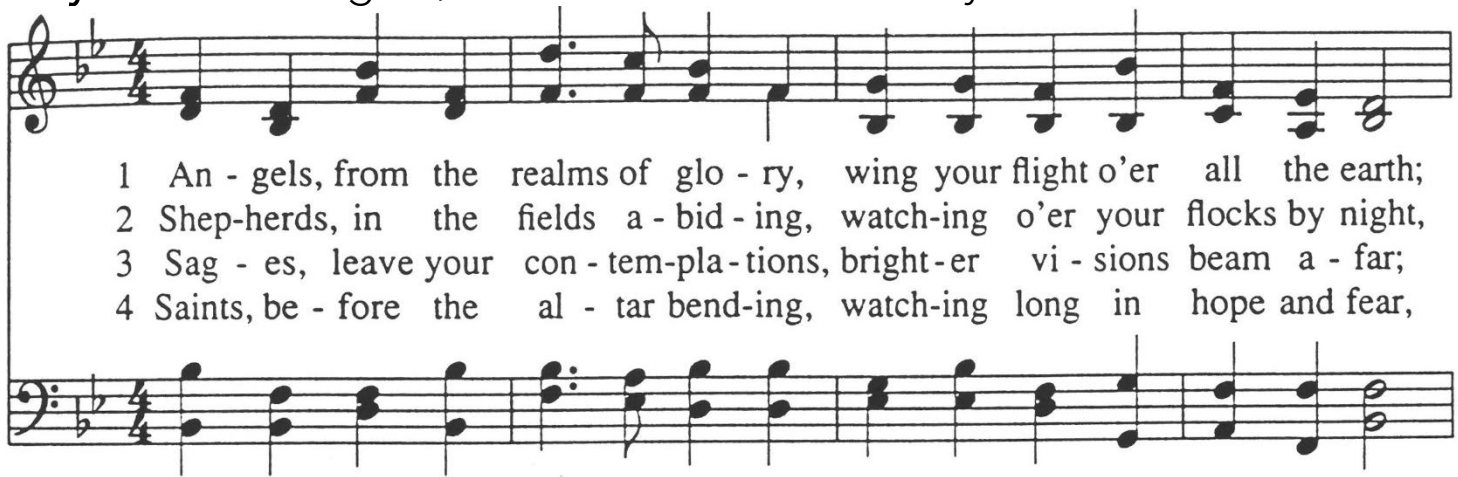
* **DOXOLOGY 782** (to the tune of Doxology 776)

To God, all glorious heavenly Light,
To Christ revealed in earthly night,
To God the Spirit now we raise
Our joyful songs of thankful praise.

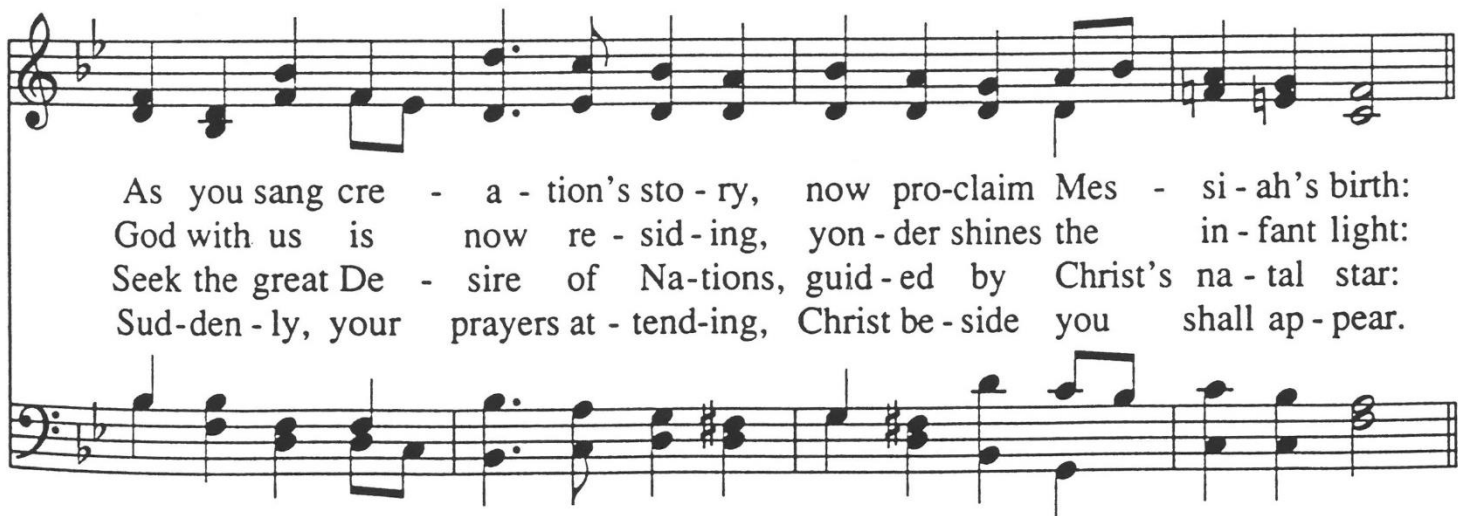
* **Prayer of Dedication** (let us pray together)

We dedicate our lives and all we have to the work of life, of love, of peace, of hope. Receive our gifts and lead us in wisdom and courage. Amen.

* Hymn 126 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" verse 1

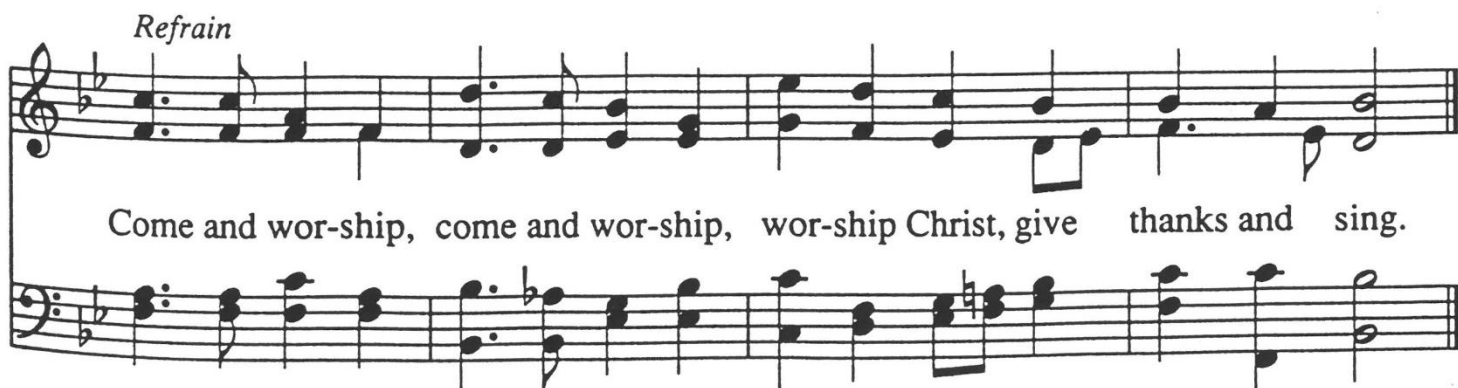


1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem-pla-tions, bright-er vi - sions beam a - far;
4 Saints, be - fore the al - tar bend-ing, watch-ing long in hope and fear,



As you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro-claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light:
Seek the great De - sire of Na-tions, guid - ed by Christ's na - tal star:
Sud - den - ly, your prayers at - tend-ing, Christ be - side you shall ap - pear.

Refrain



Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ, give thanks and sing.

Sacrament of Holy Communion

One: Come to the table. This is the welcome table of grace, love, and acceptance. God has prepared a feast of good things, a feast of peace and justice. Come and taste. Eat and be filled. Drink deep and never thirst again. Come to the feast that God prepares – the table to which God invites us all – no matter who we are.

Many: We are invited to this holy meal whoever we are, from wherever we are in life. We need not bring anything but ourselves.

One: May God be with you.

Many: And also, with you.

One: Open your hearts.

Many: We open them to God and to one another.

One: Let us give thanks to the God.

Many: It is good and right to give God thanks and praise.

Remembering the Story

The Lord's Prayer (let us pray together)

Our Creator in Heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

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

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

One: These are the gifts of God, for you, the people of God. Come, for all is ready.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (let us pray together)

Gracious and loving Creator, you gather us together as your beloved community, celebrating at this table of plenty. Now send us out into the world to do the work you have given us to do: to find the lost and lonely, to heal the broken, to free the imprisoned, and to make the powerful care. Grant us the strength to persevere in resisting evil, courage to proclaim peace and justice in all we say and do, and teach us always to abide in your love. Amen.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Elk River Union Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

Bridge Pastor: Rev. Sheri Nelson

Office Administrator & Virtual Production: Giuliana Beckwith

Piano & Senior Choir/Handbell Director: Carson Schneider

Deacon: Cheryl Sill

Liturgists: Hooper/Sliker Family

Greeter/Usher: Jan & Larry Wick

Sound: Marce Ediger

Sunday School: Amanda Hooper

*Hospitality: Denominational Delegates &
Liturgical Arts*

Acknowledgements

All re-printed music is licensed under CCLI 11010370

Church Materials

Copies of the Sunday sermon and bulletin are available in person or via Facebook, our website, and the UCC Squared Newsletter (email).

Office Hours

Office hours for the church are Sunday 9:00am to 1:00pm before and after worship, Monday/Wednesday 8:00am-2:00pm, and Thurs. 8:00am-3:00pm. Call the church at (763) 441-1203 if you have general questions. If you need immediate assistance outside of office hours, please email - churchoffice@elkriverucc.org.

Pastoral Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, an accident, or a death, please contact Patti Kubicka via text or call at 763-498-1196. You may also contact the church office though the response may take longer.

HOLDING IN PRAYER

(Cards and calls are appreciated)

Please keep in your prayers our congregation members: Nancy Hassett, Musz Bailey, Jim Babcock, Bobbie Berg, Susan Olsen, Joanne Burdick, Ruby Cawthra, Jane Houlton, Marion Marcott, Judy Halgren, Bailey Rosdahl, Jimmy Stevens, Dee & Jim Stevens (Jimmy's parents), Linda Fenton, Dave Halgren, Joan Axen, Marv and Nancy Andersen, Laurie Lazaretti, and Jim Kopperud, Tony Rohs.

Reminder: Cards are available in the church office.

Member Directory:

The current online member directory is available on our website at <https://servantkeeper.com/directory/elkriverucc/login>.

The password is case sensitive: BeTheChurch

SCHEDULE FOR THE COMING WEEKS

Sunday, December 4, 2022

Second Sunday of Advent

10:00 a.m. Worship Service In-person
and live via Facebook with

Rev. Sheri Nelson

11:30 a.m. Sarah Lehman

-Hospitality hosted by Liturgical Arts &
Denominational Delegates

- Lefse pick-up & Centennial Sale

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

3:00 p.m. In-person Bible Study

7:00 p.m. Virtual Bible Study

Wednesday, December 7, 2022

11:30 p.m. Centennial

3:30 p.m. SARI Vigil Sherburne

County Gov't center

5:45 p.m. Handbell Choir

7:15 p.m. Senior Choir

Thursday, December 8, 2022

9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Encore Ensembles

1:00 p.m. Outreach & Justice

6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts

Sunday, December 11, 2022

Second Sunday of Advent

10:00 a.m. Worship Service In-person
and live via Facebook with

Rev. Sheri Nelson

11:30 a.m. Congregational Life
Holiday Event

-Hospitality hosted by Trustees

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

3:00 p.m. In-person Bible Study

7:00 p.m. Virtual Bible Study

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

1:00 p.m. Centennial

3:30 p.m. SARI Vigil Sherburne

County Gov't center

5:45 p.m. Handbell Choir

7:15 p.m. Senior Choir

Thursday, December 15, 2022

9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Encore Ensembles

9:30 a.m. Montessori Event

1:00 p.m. Outreach & Justice

6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts

7:00 p.m. Diaconate



UNITED
CHURCH OF
CHRIST