

HOPE. PEACE. JOY. LOVE.



Fourth Sunday of Advent  
December 18<sup>th</sup>, 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](mailto: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!

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.*

## INSTRUMENTAL CALL TO WORSHIP

"Advent Hope" by Derek K Hakes

Handbell Choir

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

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (adapt. Iona Community)

One: Into our world as into Mary's womb...

Many: Come, Lord Jesus. (Lighting the first blue candle)

One: Into the forgotten places, as into the stable...

Many: Come, Lord Jesus. (Lighting the second blue candle)

One: Into our lives bringing hope, peace, joy, love...

Many: Come, Lord Jesus. (Lighting the pink candle)

One: This is the good news: Christ Jesus is coming, and blessed are those who wait.

Many: Come quickly, Lord. We are waiting. Amen.

## 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.

# ANTHEM

"Child Born of Mary" by Malcolm C Wilson

Handbell Choir

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Lundquist Family

(Reading from "Night Visions" by Jan Richardson)

(lighting the peace and Ukraine candles)

A message for lighting our fourth candle, the candle of Love

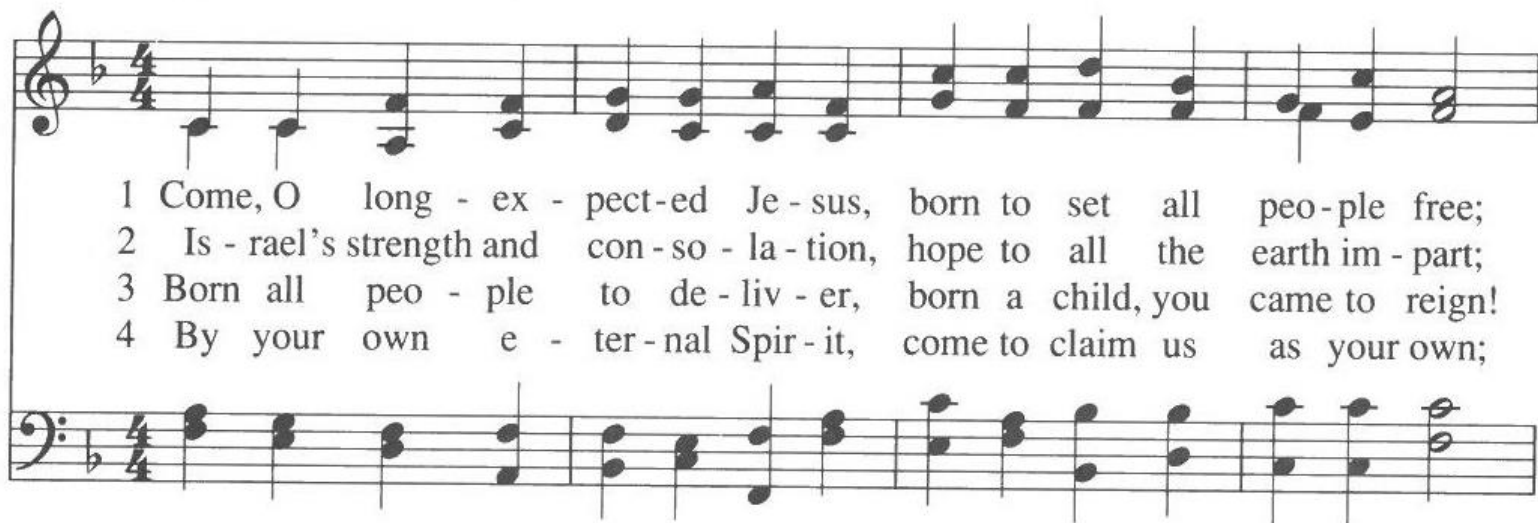
*We see the signs but cannot always divine their meanings. You call us to move forward not always knowing whether what we grasp in our hands will prove to be a seed of hope or a thorn in our flesh.*

*Train our fingers, that what brings life we may with persistence hold, and that which wastes our souls we may with grace release.*

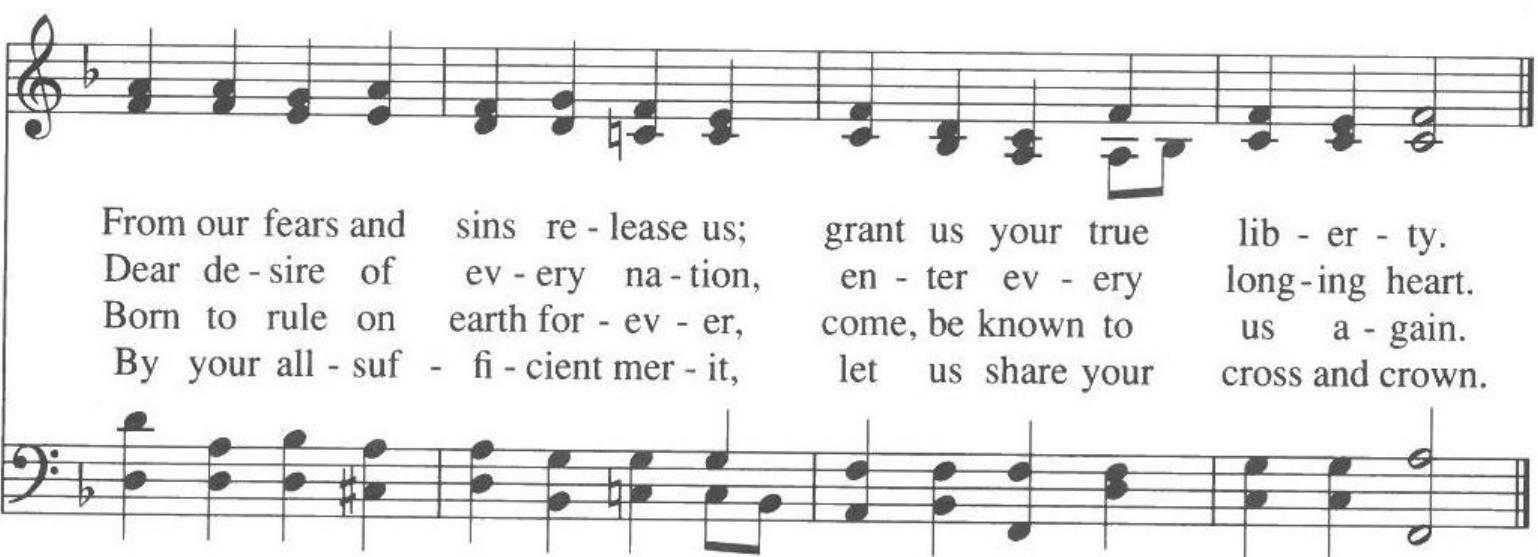
*Guardian of the seasons, keeper of every time, tune us so to your rhythms that we may know the occasion for stillness and the moment for action. May we be so prepared so aware so awakened in our waiting that when you prompt us into motion, our hands may be your hands and our purposes your own.*

*(Lighting the blue candle)*

## HYMN 122 "Come, O Long, Expected Jesus"



1 Come, O long - ex - spect-ed Je - sus, born to set all peo-ple free;  
2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope to all the earth im - part;  
3 Born all peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, you came to reign!  
4 By your own e - ter - nal Spir - it, come to claim us as your own;



From our fears and sins re - lease us; grant us your true lib - er - ty.  
Dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, en - ter ev - ery long-ing heart.  
Born to rule on earth for - ev - er, come, be known to us a - gain.  
By your all - suf - fi - cient mer - it, let us share your cross and crown.

### INVOCATION

("Night Visions" by Jan Richardson)

(let us read together)

In the center of ourselves you placed the power of choosing. Forgive us the times we have given that power away, when we have sold our birthright for that which does not satisfy our souls.

And so in your wisdom may our yes be truly yes and our no be truly no, that we may touch with dignity and love with integrity and know the freedom of our own choosing all our days.

In this we pray. Amen.

Again, the Lord spoke to Ahaz: "Ask a sign from the Lord your God. Make it as deep as the grave or as high as heaven."  
But Ahaz said, "I won't ask; I won't test the Lord."

Then Isaiah said, "Listen, house of David! Isn't it enough for you to be tiresome for people that you are also tiresome before my God? Therefore, the Lord will give you a sign. The young woman is pregnant and is about to give birth to a son, and she will name him Immanuel. He will eat butter and honey, and learn to reject evil and choose good. Before the boy learns to reject evil and choose good, the land of the two kings you dread will be abandoned.

**TIME WITH CHILDREN**

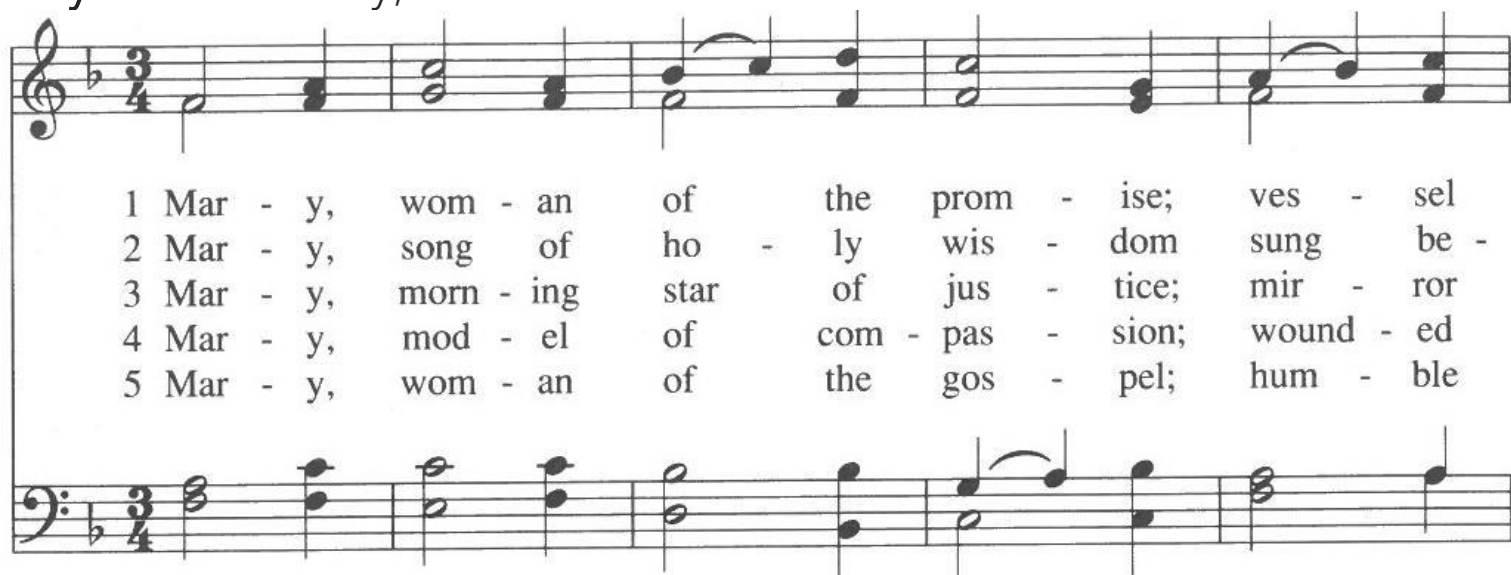
Pastor Sheri

**REFLECTION**

"Hope"  
Rev. Sheri Nelson



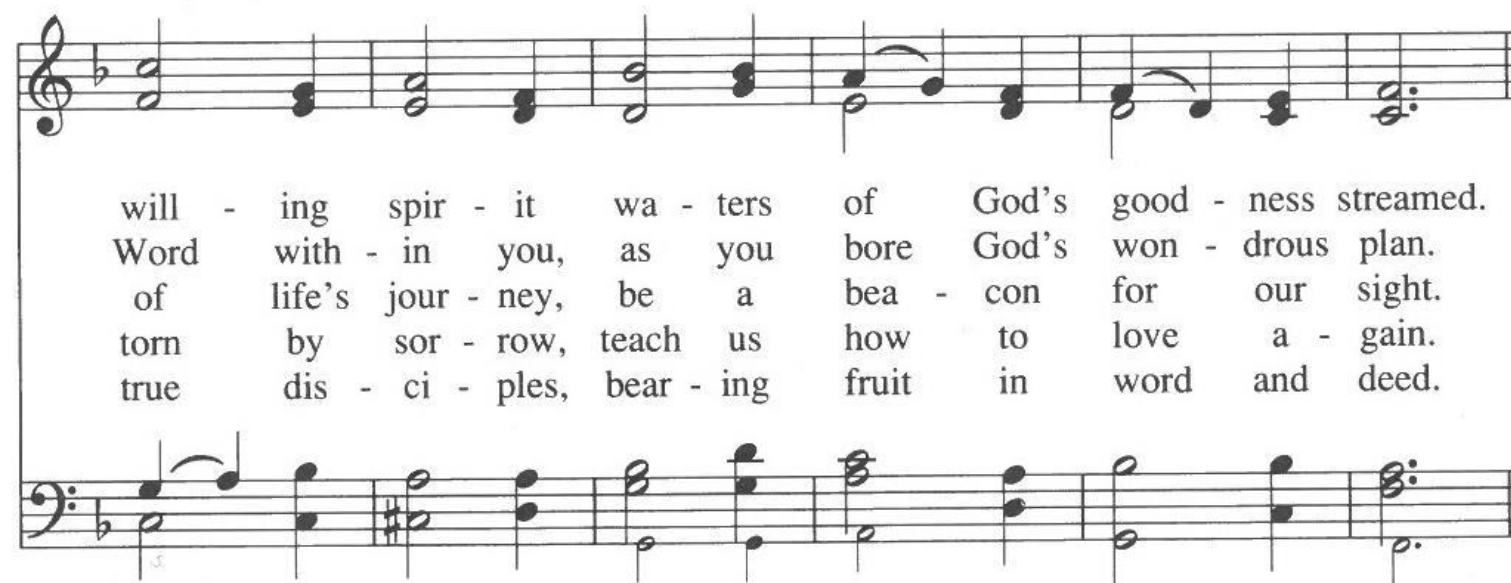
\* Hymn 123 "Mary, Woman of the Promise"



1 Mar - y, wom - an of the prom - ise; ves - sel  
 2 Mar - y, song of ho - ly wis - dom sung be -  
 3 Mar - y, morn - ing star of jus - tice; mir - ror  
 4 Mar - y, mod - el of com - pas - sion; wound - ed  
 5 Mar - y, wom - an of the gos - pel; hum - ble



of your peo - ple's dreams: Through your o - pen,  
 fore the world be - gan: Faith - ful to the  
 of the Ra - diant Light: In the shad - ows  
 by your off - spring's pain: When our hearts are  
 home for trea - sured seed: Help us to be



will - ing spir - it wa - ters of God's good - ness streamed.  
 Word with - in you, as you bore God's won - drous plan.  
 of life's jour - ney, be a bea - con for our sight.  
 torn by sor - row, teach us how to love a - gain.  
 true dis - ci - ples, bear - ing fruit in word and deed.



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

Notes:

**New Zealand Lord's Prayer** (The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand)

Eternal Spirit,

Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver,

Source of all that is and that shall be,

Father and Mother of us all,

Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe;

The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world;

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings;

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom  
sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trial too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,  
now and forever. Amen.

# INVITATION TO GIVE/RECEIVING OUR GIFTS

Veterans of the Cross Christmas Fund Offering

With joy and abundance in our hearts, let us give back as we are able to ensure God's kin-dom on earth for all God's creation.

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

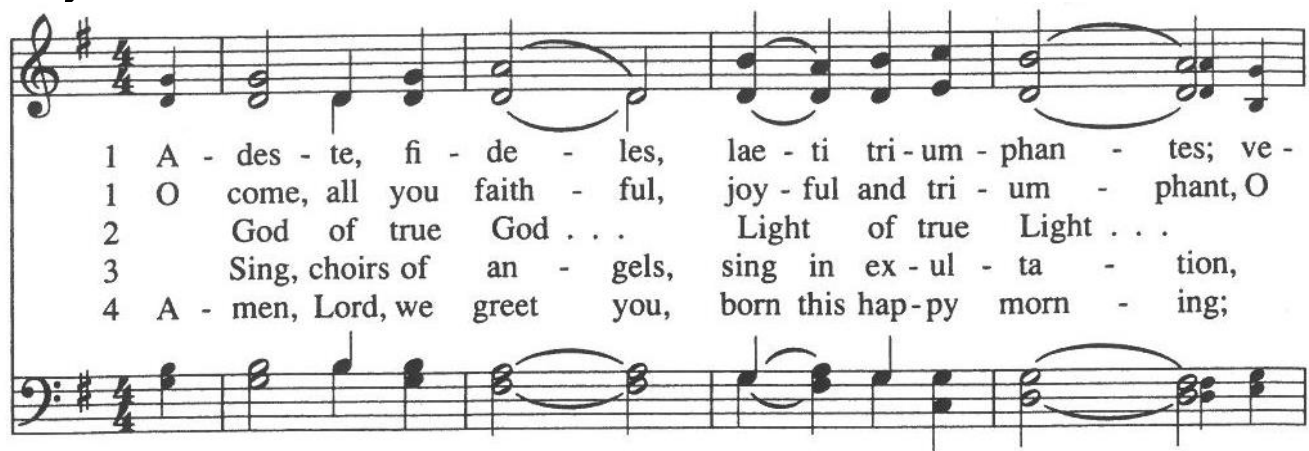
To God, all glorious heavenly Light,  
To Christ revealed in earthly night,  
To God the Spirit now we raise  
Our joyful songs of thankful praise.

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

(NCH #844)

We are blessed. We are loved. We are gifted with manna from heaven.  
With this abundance that is before us, let us bless others, love others,  
and give our abundance to others, as we would have given to us.  
Through our heavenly Guide, Jesus as the Christ, we pray. Amen.

# \* Hymn 135 "O Come, All You Faithful"



1 A - des - te, fi - de - les, lae - ti tri - um - phan - tes; ve -  
 1 O come, all you faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O  
 2 God of true God . . . Light of true Light . . .  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
 4 A - men, Lord, we greet you, born this hap - py morn - ing;



ni - te, ve - ni - te in Beth - le - hem.  
 come now, O come now to Beth - le - hem.  
 born of the Vir - gin's womb in hu - man form;  
 sing, all you mes - sen - gers of heaven - ly love:  
 Je - sus to you shall all glo - ry be given;



Na - tum vi - de - te Re - gem an - ge - lo - rum.  
 Come and be - hold the rul - er of all an - gels:  
 Tru - ly our God, be - got - ten, not cre - at - ed:  
 "Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est":  
 Word of our God . . . now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

*Refrain*



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
 O come in ad - o - ra - tion, O come in ad - o - ra - tion,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, Do - mi - num.  
 O come in ad - o - ra - tion: Christ is Lord!

# 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: Joyce Hodge  
Liturgists: Lundquist Family & Francis Family  
Greeter/Usher: Beth & Don Britt  
Sound: Marce Ediger  
Sunday School: Amanda Hooper  
Hospitality: Diaconate

## 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](mailto: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 18, 2022

Fourth Sunday of Advent

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

- Christmas Fund Offering

-Hospitality hosted by Diaconate

## Tuesday, December 20, 2022

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

7:00 p.m. Virtual Bible Study

## Wednesday, December 21, 2022

3:30 p.m. SARI Vigil Sherburne

County Gov't center

5:45 p.m. NO Handbell Choir

7:15 p.m. NO Senior Choir

## Thursday, December 22, 2022

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

6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts

## Saturday, December 24, 2022

4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

## Sunday, December 25, 2022

Christmas Day

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

No Hospitality

## Tuesday, December 27, 2022

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

5:00 p.m. Congregational Life

7:00 p.m. Virtual Bible Study

## Wednesday, December 28, 2022

3:30 p.m. SARI Vigil Sherburne

County Gov't center

5:45 p.m. NO Handbell Choir

7:15 p.m. NO Senior Choir

## Thursday, December 29, 2022

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

6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts

## Friday, December 30, 2022

6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts

