The United Church of Christ of Robesonia

301 West Penn Avenue, Robesonia, PA 19551

610-621-5770 -- office@sprucc.org -- www.sprucc.org

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.



Welcome to our Worship Service In-Person & Streaming Online

+ + +

Sunday, December 3, 2023 1st Sunday of Advent Hope

Welcome

May God's loving presence be very real to you, and may you receive strength and guidance today That will enable you to handle life's challenges.



Children's Bulletins

Crayons and activity bulletins are available in the narthex.

The activities match today's Bible readings and are designed for 3-6 & 7-12 year olds.

Biblias en Español

Biblias Bilingües en Español y Inglés están disponible en el vestíbulo narthex en la mesa de visitantes azul. (Bilingual Bibles in Spanish & English are available in the narthex hallway on the blue visitors' table).

Nursery

Persons of all ages (including children) are welcome to participate in the entire worship service. For an additional option, we have a supervised nursery for 0-8 year olds, located on the first floor. Please see Nursery Coordinators, Laurie Ostimchuk, Beth Miller & Geri Gammel if you are in need of the nursery.

Junior Worship

On the 2nd and 3rd Sunday of the month, following the mini message, the option of "Junior Worship" is offered downstairs for elementary age children to learn more about today's scripture lessons with fellow youth.

Restrooms

Restrooms are located both on the first and second floors to the left of the elevator.

Changing Tables

All four of our restrooms have changing tables. Each restroom has two "child care protection seats" to keep toddlers safe and secure while their parents use the restroom.

Water Fountains

Water fountains are located on both the first and second floors to the left of the elevator.

Sunday School & Adult Faith Formation Classes

Classes for all ages are held at 9:00am.

Sunday Worship

Sunday Worship is held at 10:15am.

Youth Group

Our Youth Group, for those in grades 5-12 (or ages 12-20 years old), meets on the 2nd and Last Thursday of the month from 6:00-7:00pm. Members and visitors alike are welcome.

Young Children & Family Ministries

This ministry's focus is on children younger than youth group and their families, and most of the monthly activities are welcoming of children of all ages. Members and visitors alike are welcome.

Prayer and Care

If you would like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list, or request a pastoral call, please call or email the church office. You are welcome to take home with you a copy of *Our Daily Bread* daily devotional booklet, located on a table in the narthex hallway.

Looking for a Church to Call Home

If you are looking for a new church family home, we would be happy for you to consider United Church of Christ of Robesonia. For more information about our church, we invite you to talk with our pastors, an usher, a greeter, or any member of our church.

More Information...

www.sprucc.org

Additional literature about our missions, ministries, and fellowship opportunities is located on the *Blue Visitor Table* in the narthex hallway, or contact us using the contact information on the front page of this bulletin.

Please let us know if we can be in prayer with you or if there is any way in which we can help make your worship experience more meaningful.

{Symbols used in this bulletin: *= if able please stand; ♪# = Red Hymnal Page; ♬# = Blue Hymnal Page}

Virtual Worship Service

Online: <u>Live Stream</u> at <u>spruce.org</u> - Live or Watch & Listen Later on <u>Our YouTube Channel</u>

Facebook Live at https://www.facebook.com/www.spruce.org/ - Live or Watch & Listen Later

Phone Stream at 1-888-649-5770 - Live or Listen Later

If you have any access problems, please let us know at 610-621-5770 or Office@sprucc.org



Free WiFi

ORDER FOR WORSHIP We Gather

We are coming together as a community of faith to worship our God, and provide for one another our love, support, and care.

A TIME OF GATHERING

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

{If you have not already done so, please sign and pass the pew welcome pad to the person next to you.}

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP (Unison)

Hope is the word of the day. As we come before you on this first Sunday in Advent, may you increase the hope that we have for your second coming even while we are excited to be celebrating your first coming. We expect that your love for us will be a blanket of hope, peace, and joy through this season of waiting and preparation. In the name of the precious baby we pray. Amen.

PIANO PRELUDE "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Arranged for piano by Cindy Berry

{Those who are able, please rise}

*Processional Hymn

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

▶ Red #88
Public Domain

*INVOCATION

Leader: We worship in the name of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the

Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

*Call to Worship adapted from Psalm 80

Leader: Restore us, O God.

People: Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

Leader: Give us life,

People: that we may call upon your name. Leader: Restore us. O Lord God of hosts.

People: Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

We Repent

This is a time to confess our wrongdoings and neglects, ask for God's mercy, admit our need for God's forgiving grace, hear the assurance of our forgiveness, and then give God our thanks and praise.

*Call to Confession @ (Leader)

God of love and protection and forgiveness, hear now our confession of sins which separate us from you.

*Confession of Sin (*Unison)

O Lord, God of hosts, let us not be the cause of your anger! Cleanse us! Transform us! May we be transformable. Dangle your gift of hope before our eyes. Melt our hearts in preparation to receive the baby Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

*SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

{A time to silently offer our personal prayers of confession}

*SUNG PRAYER FOR MERCY

"God of Pity, God of Grace" vs. 1 & 5

▶ Red #223

Morris/Filitz; Public Domain

God of pity, God of grace, When we humbly seek Thy face, Bend from heaven, Thy dwelling place, Hear, forgive and save.

And what e'er our cry may be, When we lift our hearts to Thee, From our burden set us free: Heal, forgive, and save.

*Assurance of Pardon (Leader)

Friends, be assured that we are forgiven, cleansed, made whole. There is a wide world of hope. In thankfulness, we are charged with increasing and spreading the hope. Let us look up to the sky. From where does our hope come? It comes from the Lord in the form of a baby, in the form of a teacher, in the form of love.

{please be seated}

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE - The Candle of Hope

Reader:

from Psalm 33:22

Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

from Psalm 62:5

For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him.

from Psalm 65:5

By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

from Jeremiah 29:11

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

from Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Holy God of Hope, be with us, inspire us, give faith and hope to us. Amen.

{The first blue Advent wreath candle is lit.}

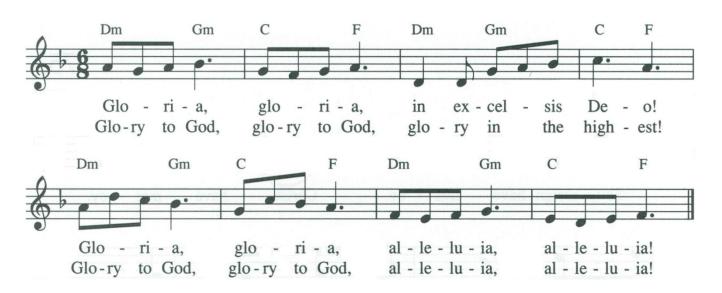
CALL TO PRAISE

Leader: Let us offer our praise to the Lord. **People: May Jesus Christ be praised.**

SUNG RESPONSE OF PRAISE

"Gloria"

Music: Jacques Berthier One License #A-728042



We Hear the Word of God

We seek to learn more about God's love and grace, and how we are to live our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Bible is our primary text on faith, which we consider to be scripture - sacred writings.

We believe the Bible to be the "inspired word of God."

Gospel (which means "Good News") refers to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are Christians' most central books of the Bible.

PROCLAMATION OF SCRIPTURE

The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

The New Testament Letter: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Lesson: Mark 13:24-37

Leader: This is the gospel of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN "All Earth is Hopeful" [using all four English verses] W&R #163
One License #A-728042

MINI-MESSAGE

SERMON "We Are Called Into The Fellowship of the Baby"

We Respond with Thanks

We have heard God's call and have come and worshiped, we have confessed our sins and been assured of our forgiveness, we have learned more about God's grace and God's will. We now respond by re-affirming our faith in God, praying with and for one another, trusting in God's providence in our world, and giving of ourselves for the sake of the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ.

{Those who are able, please rise}

*Affirmation of Faith (Unison) United Church of Christ Statement of Faith ① (Section One about God)

All: We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit,

God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify: You call the worlds into being.

create persons in your own image,

and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you.

{Please be seated}

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you. **People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Leader: Merciful God.

People: receive our prayer.

LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)

Our Father, 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 as we forgive our debtors,
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory forever.

SUNG PRAYER RESPONSE

Amen.

"Gloria"

Text: Benjamin Motz; Music: Jacques Berthier One License #A-728042

We uplift our prayers, we uplift our prayers, we uplift our prayers to you Lord.

Hear our prayers, grant us peace, alleluia, alleluia!

{Ushers, please assemble at rear of Sanctuary}

OFFERTORY INVITATION (1)

Leader: We give in hope

People: of a brighter future for everyone on earth.

Leader: We give in hope

People: of fairness for each and every baby.

Leader: We give in hope

People: that people will welcome the Baby Jesus in their hearts.

RETURNING GOD'S TITHES AND PRESENTING OUR OFFERINGS

Online Giving

{Today, we will be passing the offering plate in person. You may also offer your tithe and offering to God through our secure <u>Online Giving</u> option on our website at **sprucc.org** (<u>Click Here</u>), or you may mail your offering to United Church of Christ of Robesonia; 301 West Penn Ave; Robesonia, PA 19551}.

CHORAL OFFERTORY

"When Will We See God's Son?"

Words and music by James Michael Stevens

{Those who are able, please rise}

Given to God, given to God, all we ha-ve is yours Lord! Lifted to God, lifted to God, alleluia, alleluia!

Receive our gifts, receive our gifts, all we ha-ve is yours Lord! Lifted in praise, lifted in praise, alleluia, alleluia!

*Offertory Prayer @(Leader)

Merciful and loving Father, we ask that you will accept these gifts: some for the maintenance of the building, some for the staff, some for teaching materials, and most importantly, some to care for people as we live into the hope you have for us. **Amen.**

Sacrament of Holy Communion ¹⁾⁽⁴⁾

The Sacrament of Holy Communion is the central act of Christian worship, bringing us more fully together with one another and the Triune God, through the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 26:20-30, Mark 14:17-26, Luke 22:14-23, John 13:21-30)

*Holy Communion - Pew Communion

One: We welcome all believers to the table of our Lord. The inner rings have white grape juice. The outer rings have red wine.

*COMMUNION PRAYER

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift your hearts in thanksgiving.

All: We lift them toward God.

One: Let us offer our thanks to Almighty God.

All: It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

One: With all the company of heaven and earth we praise your holy name singing...

*Sanctus

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

▶ Red #522 Alonzo P. Howard; Public Domain

Holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of thy glory, Hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Leader:

On the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." (Pastor lifts bread and breaks it.)

After supper, Jesus took the cup and said, "This is the new covenant in my blood, which was shed for you and for all people, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me." (Pastor pours wine from the flagon to the chalice.)

INVITING THE HOLY SPIRIT

One: Come, Holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking at this table that our eyes may be opened, and we may recognize the risen Christ in our midst, in each other, and in all for whom Christ died.

All: Holy Spirit, do not leave. Blow through this place; reveal yourself in this bread and this cup; make your dwelling within this congregation. Join us to one another and transform us by your presence, that we may be the sign of your life in this world. Amen

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

{This morning we will be partaking of communion in the pews.

The Elders will first distribute the bread,
Gluten free bread is in the center,
and regular bread is in the outer ring.
The Pastor will then instruct the congregation
to eat the bread at the same time.

The Elders will distribute the wine and grape juice.
The wine is red in the outer rings, and
the grape juice is white in the inner ring.
The Pastor will then instruct the congregation
to drink of the cup at the same time.}

{We invite <u>all</u> Christians who profess a belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour to participate in the sacrament of Holy Communion. You do <u>not</u> need to be a member of this congregation or of the UCC to participate in Communion.}

Youth & Children:

Children of Members who have not yet professed their Christian faith through the Rite of Confirmation are to participate in communion and refresher classes prior to communing, and follow the "Children & Communion Guide."

Children of Visitors - if you commune at your home church, you are welcome to commune here.

- - -

Please hold the bread and the cup until all have received. We will eat and drink together.

Pastor: The Body of Christ given for you. Pastor: The Blood of Christ shed for you.

{Those who are able, please rise}

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: May the body and blood of Jesus Christ strengthen us until eternal life.

All: Almighty God, we give you thanks for this refreshing and healing gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would increase our faith in you and our fervent love for one another. For the sake of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

We Are Sent Out

In response to God's love and grace, we go out into the world to share God's Good News through our words and actions.

*Commission @

Leader: Let us go into the world . . .

People: into the world of war and selfishness - even our own;

Leader: into the world of pride and darkness.

People: Let us discover some humility and light;

Leader: May we spread this goodness

People: while we wait for our baby of hope!

*BENEDICTION

*THREE FOLD SUNG AMEN

♪ Red #558
Public Domain

*SENDING HYMN

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

W&R #153 Public Domain

{Acolyte carries the light back into the world, leading us, as we now go to carry God's light and love back into the world.}

Postlude

Please be seated for the Congregational Meeting to Vote on the Budget, to Elect Officers, and to Vote on a Necessary Revision of the Endowment Fund.

Visitors are welcome to stay or leave.

After the Meeting, Join Us For Fellowship and Food in Miller Fellowship Hall

The people involved in the Organizational Meeting shall please take refreshments into the Sunday School area for the meeting.

Free WiFi: StPaulsUCC-Guest & StPaulsUCC-5G-Guest **Password** (for both): iamheretoserve

The Flow of the Worship Service

Our worship service has an intentional order to it. The flow of worship is called the liturgical movement. The movement reminds us weekly of our journey in faith of moving from being separated from God by sin, to being restored by God's grace as disciples of Christ. It is based on the sixth chapter of the Biblical book of Isaiah.

(1) God welcomes us and invites us

(2) We respond to God's call by worshiping Him

(3) We confess our need for God's forgiveness and grace

(4) We are assured of God's forgiveness and grace

(5) We learn more about God's will through scripture, song, and sermon

(6) We grow closer to God and one another through prayer

(7) We give God thanks by offering our time, talent, and treasure

(8) We experience greater oneness with God and each another through Communion

(9) God sends us into the world to share His love and grace with others

Worship Service Resource Credits

Biblical quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible (1989) by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

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• United Church of Christ Neighbors in Need (NIN) 2023 Resources.

- 2 Led By Love by Lavon Baylor. (1996). United Church Press; Cleveland, OH.
- @ Occasional Services; A Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. (1982).

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6 scouting.org - resources for Boy Scouts of America

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② Lecturn Resource. (2014). Logos Productions, Inc.; Grove Heights, MN.

@ Edmonds, Robert Lee (Editor). (2008). In Our Own Way, Living a Scouting Life Through Faith; A Handbook of Prayer and Devotion. Dallas, TX: Red Honor Press

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Miller, Earl D. (1994). Consecrating Stewards. Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ.

1 The Rev. Dr. Benjamin Motz

1 The Rev. Mary Etta Mest

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Staff & Leadership

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Bell Choir Director: Miriam Borkert

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Sextons: Michael Pastor & Terry Pastor

Treasurer: Terry Pastor

Financial Secretary & Assistant Secretary: Geneva Aulenbach

Consistory President: Elsa Wertz Consistory Vice President: George McLain Consistory Secretary: Geri Gammel

About Today

Church Season: Advent - is a season of preparation for the coming of Christ: (1) the second coming of Christ; (2) the preparation for the anniversary of Jesus' birth on Christmas; and (3) the reminder to be daily aware of Christ's presence for the Kingdom of God is near.

Color of the Paraments (cloths on the altar and pulpit):

Blue - symbolizes the hope found in the anticipated coming of Christ

Violet - symbolizes royalty and penitent preparation for Christ our King, who offers forgiveness

Rose/Pink - symbolizes joy, as expressed by Jesus' mother Mary

The suggested scripture lessons are from the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), which selects passages throughout the Bible over a three year cycle. The RCL is the most common lectionary used by Christian churches. We are in **Year B**, which emphasizes the Gospel of Mark.

The Bible is in two sections: Old Testament - OT (scripture prior to Christ's birth), located in the first 2/3 of the Bible; and New Testament - NT (about Christ & early church).

This Sunday, December 3, 2023, Lectionary Reading for the 1st Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

Isaiah

The book of Isaiah (OT) is attributed to three prophets. The first of whom is from where the book gets its name, and is about Isaiah's call to become a prophet and his prophecy that Jerusalem will face God's judgement regarding its immorality in order to be God's Holy City (chaps. 1-39, written 738-688 B.C.), the second is about living in exile in Babylon (chaps. 40-55, written 597-539 B.C.), and the third is about the return from exile to Judah and the rebuilding of the Temple (chaps. 56-66, written 520-515 B.C.). A prophet is one who is divinely appointed by God to lead and instruct.

Psalm 80

This OT song is a petition for God to restore His people.

The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

This NT Epistle (letter) was written by the Apostle Paul between 53-54 A.D. to a gentile congregation he had founded several years earlier in Corinth (the capital city of the Roman province of Achaia, a large and prospering urban center that was ethnically, culturally, and religiously diverse). This letter is in response to issues within the Corinthian church, in particular fractions caused by one-upmanship and privatization of faith. Paul encourages humility, unity within diversity, and witnessing to God's grace. Paul was a Christian, Jew, Pharisee, Roman citizen, and church leader, who had a direct encounter with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus after Jesus' ascension into heaven. Paul wrote more of the NT than any other person.

The Gospel According to Mark

Mark's Gospel is the oldest and shortest of the four Gospels, written between 65-75 A.D. Papias, a church leader in the 2nd century, reported that this Gospel's author is Mark, a follower of Peter who wrote this Gospel after Peter's death.

Next Sunday, December 10, 2023, Lectionary Reading for the 2nd Sunday of Advent

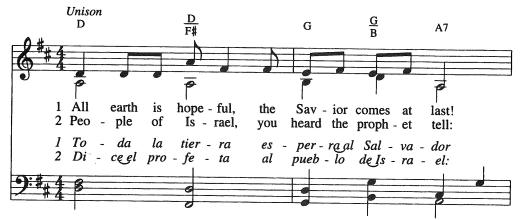
Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

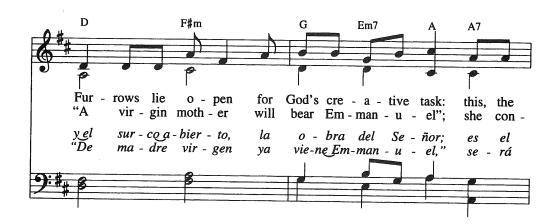


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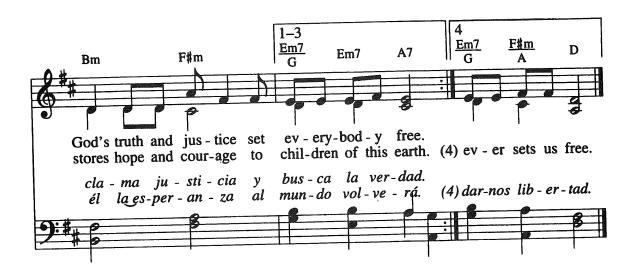
All Earth Is Hopeful

Toda la Tierra









- 3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared; new highways opened, new protocols declared. Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace! All clear every gateway, in haste, come out in haste!
- 4 We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.

 This same Lord Jesus today has come to live in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.
- 3 Montes y valles habrá que preparar; nuevos caminos tenemos que trazar. Él está ya muy cerca, venidlo a encontrar, y todas las puertas abrid de par en par.
- 4 En una cueva Jesús apareció, pero en el mundo está presente hoy. Vive en nuestros hermanos, con ellos está; y vuelve de nuevo a darnos libertad.

153 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

