



The Ivy Vine

2024

December

The Advent of God



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Advent is the lead-off season of the Christian Church Year. This season receives its name from biblical imageries of the “*parousia*” (derived from Greek verb “*pareimi*,” meaning “*to be present*” or “*to arrive*”) which Saint Jerome later translated into Latin as the word “*adventus*.” Clearly then, **Advent** signifies God’s “coming” and God’s “arrival.” The Gospel of Mark repeatedly describes Jesus as, “the Coming One.”

In the final chapter of the Bible’s last book, we hear, “Behold, I am coming soon; my reward is with me, to repay according to everyone’s work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end... It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.” The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let everyone who hears say, ‘Come!’ And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes receive the waters of the gift of life!... The One who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely, I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.” (Revelation 22:12-13, 16-17, 20-21) The Book of Revelation is a vision of the Second **Advent** of Christ.

“The Gospel of Jesus Christ” is a biography of Jesus of Nazareth, and it is the miraculous truth of God Emmanuel. Additionally, the Gospel is every disciple’s look at God’s vision for a future that will be “a world where sharing by all will mean scarcity for none.” Now, that’s spectacular! What might a world such as this actually look like?

The Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund, the Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice in the national setting of the United Church of Christ, has written a stirring essay which is posted on our denomination’s website at [this link-Imagine Together](#) or scan here →



Consider these inspiring excerpts: “*We are a nation divided by vastly different interpretations of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Key questions for all of us to ponder, pray about, discuss, and organize action around:*

What does it mean to follow Jesus and love your neighbor?

Who is your neighbor?

How will you love them?

(Continued on pg. 2)

In the gospels, Jesus teaches us to love our neighbors. Loving our neighbors includes loving those who do not vote like we do, who do not look like we do, who do not think like we do, who do not have the same religion as we do, who do not have the same culture as we do, and who do not have the same values that we do.

*I know I have family members, neighbors across the street, and church members who did not vote the same as me. God calls us to continue to live a life of **love**: love of ourselves, love of our neighbors, and love of God. This is a high, holy, and difficult calling—yet this is what Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection were all about—the heart of Christianity is **love**.*

*During this time of political and national change, we are invited to ‘Imagine Together’ a world where **God’s love** is generously shared with our neighbors.*

The immigrant neighbor.

The refugee neighbor.

The transgender neighbor.

The single mother neighbor.

The widow neighbor.

The Black neighbor.

The Brown neighbor.

The disabled neighbor.

*‘Imagine Together’ a church that shares God’s generous love, no matter what, to everyone, no matter who people are or where people are on life’s journey. ‘Imagine Together’ a church shaped after the shape of Jesus’ life: **Love**.*

*This is bigger than politics or popular ideas or social movements. This is about our faith and belief in the teachings of Jesus Christ. This is about how our faith leads us to take action. Will we be people guided by our fears or people **led by Love**?” (Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund)*

The month of December is when God’s Church begins a fresh journey to the birth of Christ, the cross of Christ, the tomb of Christ, and the Resurrection of Christ! As we sojourn, may we strive to live as children of God **led by Love**. God knows, the United Church of Christ, the United States of America, and God’s whole creation are going to need **God’s Love** in days, months and years ahead. Everywhere that we will go, you and I are going to be needed to serve boldly as living testimonies to the calling of our Savior Jesus. Our Risen and Living Savior summons us to: welcome; listen to; affirm; support; protect; care for; visit; feed; clothe; offer sanctuary; stand up for; sacrifice for; uplift; love; bless all people.

Let me say flat out, “White Christian Nationalism is *not* True Christianity.” Genuine ministries in Jesus’ name are ministries of grace. Genuine ministries, serving as Jesus serves, fearlessly nourish **“A Just World for All.”**

In a piece entitled, “Calling a Different World into Being,” one of my treasured seminary professors, the Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann, proclaims: “The church meets amid a world of violence and the threat of violence. That violence is variously offered in aggravated rhetoric, in mean-spirited posturing, and in an over-armed international community. In the midst of that world, the church meets to receive the **peace-making ways of God** and to embrace its own calling to *peace-making*. Thus, we recite again the ancient imperative: To beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:3).

We meet to consider how to convert our *armed ways of being in the world* into tools of agriculture, and so to sources of food for a hungry world. We know very well that violence can only produce more violence; that it will never lead to secure prosperous living for the entire creaturely community.

So *Imagine* - a **church of hope** that gathers yet again to affirm the **abundance, hospitality, forgiveness,** and **peace-making** reality of God. *Imagine* further that we meet to embrace as our ethical commitment and practice a way in the world marked exactly by

- abundance** that has no fear of scarcity;
- hospitality** that is not in any way seduced by hostility;
- forgiveness** that resists any notion of vengeance; and

peace-making that intends to override the force of violence.”
(Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann)

Find more from the Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann through clicking on this link, [Calling a Different World Into Being](#) or by scanning here—>



Let us not be overwhelmed by evident darkness. In the Northern Hemisphere, the days of the Advent Season are days of marginal daylight. So it is that God’s Church participates in a sacred ritual of lighting candles on an Advent Wreath. Week by week, Sunday by Sunday, one additional candle on the wreath is lit in worship, and so *the light of Advent grows*. This light is symbolic of God’s Light. At last, on Christmas Eve, we light the large Christ Candle positioned at the center of the wreath, and all who are present in worship share the candlelight of this single, central candle with one another. The emotional significance of this simple yet profound act of worship forever will move human hearts and souls. People of God join in the glow of “Love’s pure light,” singing, lighting each other’s candles, worshiping God, *being shaped after the shape of Jesus’ life*, and devoting ourselves to following Jesus Christ.

In winter darkness and always, may you and I continue becoming human beings in whom *the Gracious Light of God grows and grows*.

Let this be the eternal Advent which we pursue in Jesus’ holy name,
Pastor Dan



God of Love, protect the most vulnerable in our communities from harm in body, mind, and spirit. Help our churches wisely use power and privilege to work for a just world for all. Create a fierce tenderness in our hearts so that we are open to love, no matter the cost. Amen.

- The Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

*God will enter into your night,
as the ray of the sun enters
into the dark, hard earth,
driving right down
to the roots of the tree,
and there, unseen, unknown,
unfelt in the darkness,
filling the tree with life,
a sap of fire
will suddenly break out,
high above that darkness,
into living leaf and flame.*

- Caryll Houselander

To everything
there is a season,
A time for every
purpose under heaven.

-Ecclesiastes 3:1









Good News!

The Lindberg family would like to share that Mark Lindberg, oldest child of the late Rev. Dennis Lindberg and his wife Jane, will be ordained to the Christian Ministry on No. 17, 2024 at First Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ in Eugene, Oregon. Mark was confirmed at Ivy Chapel in 1986 and was nurtured in faith by many congregants of Ivy Chapel. Mark served at FCC of Eugene for three years as “Director of Youth and Family Ministries” and then for five years as “Youth Minister” and has recently accepted their call to “Associate Pastor”.

If you are ever in Oregon, please drop in on FCC in Eugene!

November Council Lifted Up:

-  Sue Wilson for sharing the children's message last month (October) during worship.
-  Bruce and Janet Wilking for their quarterly Woods Mill Road cleanup.
-  Cindy Foster for eight months of delivering items to Isaiah 58.
-  Jim French for his continuing deliveries to Isaiah 58
-  Tom Glenn who cleared the wet leaves off of the sidewalk.
-  Pastor Dan and Sue Wilson for 25 years of service!

Mary^{and}Martha Wmns Grp

The Mary and Martha Women's Group met on Nov. 19th at Ivy and after a short devotion made the following decisions.

- \$100.00 will be spent to purchase \$25.00 Gift Cards for Every Child's Hope for Christmas purchases.
 - We will try to organize a craft project and refreshment time with the residents at Seven Pines Emmaus Home on Dec. 17th. Dottie Foster will check with them about setting this up. More details will be in the KYP when this is arranged.
- After this, everyone showed a well-loved treasure. All of them connected to loving family members.

Trustees

Leaves continue to fall and the Trustees will be busy with leaf removal through the end of the year. Last month, a large trailer load of metal was recycled including a 30-gallon hot water tank. The final trash pickup along Woods Mill Road of 2024 was also accomplished. Trustees are ushering in the Christmas season by assisting with the Hanging of the Greens and decorating the outside of the Church.

Scripture & Worship

1 Dec 2024, First Sunday of Advent:

Jeremiah 33:14-16, Psalm 25:1-10, 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13, Luke 21:25-36

8 Dec 2024, Second Sunday of Advent: Malachi 3:1-4, Luke 1:68-79, Philippians 1:3-11, Luke 3:1-6

15 Dec 2024, Third Sunday of Advent: Zephaniah 3:14-20, Isaiah 12:2-6, Philippians 4:4-7, Luke 3:7-18

22 Dec 2024, Fourth Sunday of Advent:

Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 80:1-7, Hebrews 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

24 Dec 2024, Christmas Eve: Isaiah 52:7-10, Psalm 98, Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12], John 1:1-14

30 Dec 2024, First Sunday after Christmas Day:

1 Samuel 2:18-20 and 26, Psalm 148, Colossians 3:12-17, Luke 2:41-52

5 Jan 2025, Second Sunday after Christmas Day:

Jeremiah 31:7-14, Psalm 147:12-20, Ephesians 1:3-14, John 1:[1-9] 10-18

<https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/index.php>



Ahead in December

Poinsettia are on sale through **December 8th for \$10.00.**
 See Donna Grote or any Deacon to place your order.

Be sure to join us for a special worship service on Christmas Eve at 5pm as we prepare the way for the Christ child.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

The 2024 Advent Season has begun!
 Please take one of the complimentary Advent materials now available for our personal use. These spiritual resources are on a table in the church entryway.

There are Daily Calendars and "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" Daily Devotional Booklets which are based on Inspiration from Henri J. M. Nouwen.

Welcome to Advent - the Church Season of preparation for the coming of Emmanuel, God-with-us!

December 15th Choral Offering

Rejoice! Here's exciting news of an upcoming Advent gift! An intergenerational vocal ensemble has been rehearsing lovely music which will be part of Sunday, December 15 Worship at Ivy Chapel UCC. We give thanks to Mike Waller and Valerie Waterman for leading Ivy's diverse choral group.

The seasonal piece composed by Joel Raney is entitled "***Antiphonal for Advent.***" Join us December 15 when this Choral Offering will be shared in worship!
 O come, Emmanuel, come!

The annual Congregational Meeting will be Dec 8th directly following worship at 11 am to discuss and approve the 2025 Budget, Slate of Officers, board members and delegates for our Association and Conference.



“ ...the Glory of God
shone around them...
Luke 2:9 ”

United Church of Christ Christmas Fund Offering

Ivy Chapel UCC will celebrate Christmas Eve at **5 pm Tuesday, Dec. 24 Worship**. This will be candlelight worship, including celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Offering gifts received during this worship

service will be given to the United Church of Christ **Christmas Fund**. The theme this year is **“The Glory of God shone around them!”** (Luke 2:9) We believe in the mission of the UCC Christmas Fund. For over one hundred years, the Christmas Fund has provided direct financial assistance to healers in our lives - namely, retired and active UCC ministers, church workers and their families.

We joyously give in support of the physical, financial and spiritual health of God’s servants engaged in the life of the Church. Thank you for your gift of loving support.



You can also [visit christmasfund.org](http://visitchristmasfund.org) to learn more and donate online or scan here—>



HELP STOCK THE PANTRIES!

The holidays are coming and the clients at Circle of Concern and Isaiah 58 would like to provide tasty treats for their families!

As you select items for the pantries consider donating flour, sugar, shortening, oil and other ingredients for holiday baking including decorating items likes sprinkles and frostings.

Everything is greatly appreciated.



You’re invited to Celebrate the Season with a special Christmas Cantata on Sunday, Dec. 15th at St. John UCC 405 South Fifth Street St. Charles, MO 63301



Happy Birthday to ...



2 Christine James
 8 Michael Winship
 10 Jan Wirtz
 12 Jane Farrell
 13 Valerie Waterman

16 Emily Pfau
 18 Gary Lindhorst
 19 Audrey Farrell

27 David Knieriem &
 Frank Pfau
 28 Catrina Lowry
 29 Scott Schurwan
 31 Jacob Knieriem

Serving God's People-DEC Schedules

Liturgists

Greeter/Ushers

1 Dec	Sue Wilson
8 Dec	Jim French
15 Dec	-----
22 Dec	Julie McAlister
29 Dec	Ann Molyneaux
5 Jan	JoAnn Moody

1 Dec	Donna Grote and Jan Wirtz communion preparer Gail Thoele
8 Dec	Kay and Earl Kreder
15 Dec	Julie McAlister and Dave Mentzel
22 Dec	Dottie Foster and Gail Thoele
24 Dec	Don Wolff and John Weiland
29 Dec	Kathryn Kuntzman and Jack Molyneaux
5 Jan	Pat and Carl Winship communion preparer Sue Wilson

CARE CORPS


- DEC — Debbie Glenn 314-954-2286 and Evelyn Stecher 636-536-6542
- JAN — GAIL THOELE 314-576-0091


Assisting in Lay Ministry:

Please find your Name to see the date you are scheduled to help.
 If you're unable to attend please switch with others serving on another date
AND let Gail Thoele know 314-576-0091 or 314-591-0057 as well as the office.


THANK YOU!

Charities we serve: Please place items on the designated shelves in the cloak room or otherwise designated.

CIRCLE OF CONCERN—*Shopping and monthly needs List* is on FH bulletin board. Place on **TOP SHELF**.
 636-861-2623 <https://www.circleofconcern.org/> 

Isaiah 58 Ministries Bag of Blessings list on FH bulletin board. Place on **3rd-4th SHELVES**:
 food items, egg cartons, clothing, plastic bags, glass cases. <https://i58ministries.org/> 

Every Child's Hope <https://everychildshope.org>
Lydia's House <https://www.lydiashouse.org>
UP—Unleashing Potential <https://upstl.org>

INSTITUTO EL REY: Explore the website how YOU can help students in rural northern Honduras pursue their dreams. www.ierschool.org 

RITENOUR CO-CARE FOOD PANTRY: Place food and personal care items on **2nd SHELF**. Rccfoodpantry.org

Getting new eyeglasses? Ask your eye doctor if they will take your old pair to recycle or go to this web site
<https://allaboutvision.com/resources/donate.htm>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 DECEMBER 						
1 1ST S OF ADVENT prpl 10am Worship/†LS HANGING OF THE GREENS	2 TKD 5:30-6:30pm	3 AAS.O.S. 10-11am AA 12pm #349 Office Closed	4 TKD 5:30-6:30pm	5 AA (Ladies #744) 10am TKD 6-7pm	6 Square dancing 3:30-5:30pm 7-9pm	7 AA 10:30am #350
8 2ND S OF ADVENT prpl 10am Worship Congregational Meeting after worship	9 TKD 5:30-6:30pm Council Mtg 7pm	10 AAS.O.S. 10-11am AA 12pm #349 Deacons-7pm Zoom Office Closed	11 TKD 5:30-6:30pm	12 AA (Ladies #744) 10am TKD 6-7pm	13 The Ivy Vine Articles DUE	14 AA 10:30am #350
15 3RD S OF ADVENT prpl 10am Worship/ Special Choral Offering- Antiphonal for Advent."	16 TKD 5:30-6:30pm	17 AAS.O.S. 10-11am AA 12pm #349 Mary & Martha Wms Grp 1pm Office Closed	18 TKD 5:30-6:30pm Men's Luncheon 11:30am-HuHot Mongolian Grill	19 AA (Ladies #744) 10am TKD 6-7pm	20	21 AA 10:30am #350
22 4TH S OF ADVENT prpl 10am Worship	23 TKD 5:30-6:30pm	24 AAS.O.S. 10-11am AA 12pm #349 Christmas Eve Worship 5pm	25 TKD 5:30-6:30pm Christmas Day Office Closed	26 AA (Ladies #744) 10am TKD 6-7pm Office Closed	27	28 AA 10:30am #3
29 1st S after Christmas Day 10am Worship	30 TKD 5:30-6:30pm	31 AAS.O.S. 10-11am AA 12pm #349 New Year's Eve Office Closed	January 1 TKD 5:30-6:30pm Office Closed	January 1 AA (Ladies #744) 10am TKD 6-7pm	January 1	January 1 AA 10:30am #350

AHEAD IN JAN: 6TH—Epiphany 12TH— Installation of New Members and All Boards meeting after worship 13TH-Council Meeting 15th-Men's Lunch 11:30am @ Hunan Express 20th-MLK Jr. Day 21st-Mary & Martha Women's Grp 26th— Pastor Dan's Retirement Reception (time-TBD)

LS=THE LORD'S SUPPER KYP=KEEPING YOU POSTED M&M GRP=MARY AND MARTHA WOMEN'S GROUP	FH = Fellowship Hall EMMP=Eric Moody Memorial Pavilion SY=SANCTUARY	AA=Alcoholics Anonymous JRWP=JUNIPER ROOT WOODLAND PRESCHOOL TKD= INERTIA MARTIAL ARTS
Monday JRWP 8:30-3:30	Tuesday JRWP 8:30-3:30	Wednesday JRWP 8:30-3:30
Thursday JRWP 8:30-3:30	Friday JRWP 8:30-3:30	

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Dan Wilson, Pastor