



Union Lutheran Church

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4th Sunday of Advent

December 18, 2022

10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion

*(Please stand when indicated by *)*

Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW) green hymnal

With One Voice (WOV) blue hymnal

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude: *All Earth is Hopeful* (Cherwein)

GATHERING

* Brief Order for Confession & Forgiveness

P The days are coming, says the Lord, when God's promises to Israel and Judah will be fulfilled. Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship, in the name of the Father, the Son, + and the Holy Spirit. (Jeremiah 33:14)

C Amen.

P The Lord proclaimed, "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me." Let us take this time to examine ourselves, asking for forgiveness for the things which we have done that are not pleasing to the Lord and the things which we have neglected. (Malachi 3:1)

(Silence for self-reflection and examination)

P God of grace,

C we confess that we have not been attentive to the urgent call to prepare for the coming of your Son. Prepare our hearts to follow Jesus in doing your holy will. Forgive us, we pray, and shape our lives according to the cross of Christ who has called us to walk in his ways. Restore us to a right relationship with you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P In the name of Jesus, God's only Son who came to do the will of his Father, you are forgiven. By Christ's holy sacrifice your sins are wiped clean and you are made right with our heavenly Father. Rejoice in this free gift and take it to heart.

C Thanks be to God! Amen.

* HYMN: *All Earth is Hopeful*

WOV# 629

* Greeting

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ for whom we wait, the love of the Father who will never let us go, and the peace of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

* Kyrie *(spoken not sung)*

LBW p. 78-79

(Hymn of Praise is omitted during the season of Advent.)

* Salutation

* Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. With your great might, give us your help, that whatever is hindered by our sins may be speedily accomplished by your grace; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

Children's Message and Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Kids Choir

(4th Candle Welcoming/Angels)

First Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-17

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹"Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹²But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." ¹³And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. ¹⁷The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah — the king of Assyria!"

Psalms 24 sung responsively (Congregation (bold) and Choir (not bolded))

Choir ¹The earth is the LORD's and all | that is in it,*
the world and all who | dwell therein.

C ²**For it is he who founded it up- | on the seas*
and made it firm upon the rivers | of the deep.**

Choir ³"Who can ascend the hill | of the LORD?*"
and who can stand in his | holy place?"

C ⁴**Those who have clean hands and | a pure heart,*
who have not pledged themselves to falsehood,
nor sworn by what | is a fraud.**

Choir ⁵They shall receive a blessing | from the LORD*
and a just reward from the God of | their salvation."

C ⁶**Such is the generation of | those who seek him,*
of those who seek your face, O | God of Jacob.**

Choir ⁷Lift up your heads, O gates; lift them high, O ever- | lasting doors;*
and the King of glory | shall come in.

C ⁸**Who is this | King of glory?*"***
"The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, migh- | ty in battle."

Choir ⁹Lift up your heads, O gates; lift them high, O ever- | lasting doors;*
and the King of glory | shall come in.

C ¹⁰**Who is he, this | King of glory?*"***
"The LORD of hosts, he is the | King of glory."

Epistle Lesson: Romans 1:1-7

¹Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, ⁶including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, ⁷To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

* Gospel Acclamation

LBW p. 83

* Holy Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸The birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Sermon: *A Sign from God*

Pastor Heidi Punt

* HYMN: *Savior of the Nations, Come*

LBW# 28

Holy Baptism

LBW p. 121-125

* Prayer of the Church & Sharing of the Peace

LBW p. 85-86

Offering *The Offering is received as the Lord's Table is prepared. All loose offering will go towards the Building and Repair Fund. During the month of December, the Benevolence Teaching Moment is on Food for the Poor. Please prayerfully consider giving to the Benevolence Fund.*

Anthem: *Canticle for Advent* (Schaefer)

Chancel Choir

MEAL

* Offertory ("*Let the Vineyards...*")

LBW p. 86

* Offertory Prayer

P Loving God, we give you thanks for the generous gifts you have first given us. May that which we offer to you, come joyfully from our hearts and be pleasing in your sight.

C Amen.

* Great Thanksgiving & Sanctus

LBW p. 88-89

* Words of Institution

LBW p. 89

* Lord's Prayer

LBW p. 91

Lamb of God & Distribution of Communion

LBW p. 92

At Union Lutheran Church the Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated each Sunday. All baptized Christians who believe in the real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper are invited to commune. All who do not commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. For those who prefer individually sealed units please indicate. Gluten Free wafers and grape juice are also available upon request. Please fill out a communion card located in the pew and hand to the Usher while following their directions to receive Holy Communion or a blessing.

* Post-Communion Canticle ("Thank the Lord...")

LBW p. 92

* Post-Communion Prayer

P God of new beginnings, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Strengthen us for the journey of faith as we wait and watch for the Lord's Messiah to break into our world in ever amazing ways.

C Amen.

SENDING

* Benediction

P As you go from this place, remember that with God, nothing is impossible. May God the Father, Son, + and Holy Spirit go before you, beside you, and with you wherever you go. (Luke 1:37)

C Amen.

* HYMN: *People, Look East*

WOV# 626

* Sending

P You have been nurtured in Word and Sacrament now go therefore and make disciples of all nations

C Baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and of the Holy Spirit.

P Union Lutheran Church you are sent!

C Amen, amen, amen

Postlude: *People, Look East* (Burkhardt)

OUR MISSION:

*Christ Centered ~ Mission Driven~ Traditionally-Grounded~
Congregationally Focused (Matthew 28:18-20)*

OUR VISION:

One Relationship at a Time

BE OUR GUEST

Can't wait to see what God can do!



Lutheran Book of Worship Setting 2 (pages 77-97)

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Union News

Sunday's Activities, December 18):

9:15 a.m. Kids Choir (Preschool-5th grade) will be singing at 10:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m. Youth Chime Practice

9:35 a.m. Sunday School

Children & Youth: Water from the Rock ~ Exodus 17:1-7

Adult Sunday School Class:

John the Baptist Appears ~ Luke 3:22b-6, 15-18

10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion

Scriptures for Sunday, December 18:

Isaiah 7:10-17; Psalm 24:1-10; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

Theme: *A Sign from God*

We welcome into our church family today through **Holy Baptism**,
Owen James Miller, son of Matt and Jill Miller.

10:30 a.m. Noisy Offering will be collected to assist with cost of
Children's Live Nativity gift and Shut-ins Caroling Basket

2:00 p.m. Live Nativity Volunteers

2:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. Live Nativity

Chili Supper and Christmas Caroling following the Live Nativity

Deadline for January Messenger articles.

During the season of Advent, the Altar Greenery is given to the glory of God.

Everyone is invited to pick up a fruit bag following worship!

Thank you to John Cauble for blessing the congregation.

This Weeks' Activities:

- Wednesday, Dec. 21 2:00 p.m. Chapel Time at Autumn Care
6:30 p.m. Belles & Beaus
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir
- Friday, Dec. 23 Church Office is closed in observance of Christmas.
10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Poinsettia drop off
- Saturday, Dec. 24 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Poinsettia drop off
4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
(informal)
8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
-

Next Sunday's Activities (Nativity of our Lord, December 25):

No Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Kids Choir (to receive bells in preparation to sing)

10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion

Scriptures for Sunday, December 25:

Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 2:1-12; 1 John 4:7-16; Matthew 1:18-25

Theme: *Amazing Birth of Jesus*

Altar Flowers are open for reservations for Christmas Sunday.

Current Fund Financial Information:

Offering received Sunday, December 11

\$4,048.00

Weekly offering needed to meet our Ministry Support plan

\$5,556.00

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER...

Nursing Home Residents - Brenda Mahaley, Pat & Wayne Miller, and Ruth Monroe (Autumn Care), and Jean Ray (Brookdale)

Homebound Members – Arnold Cauble, Rachel Earnhardt, Jean Kluttz, Frances Norris, Billy Waller, and Michael Walton

Sick/Surgery/Recovery - Kathleen Agner, Evonne Batten, Bill Broadway, Mike Cauble, Ashley Deaton, Glenn Eagle, Linda Hartley, Steve Hutchens, Tommy and Joan Kerns, James Kluttz, Pat Kluttz, Nancy Kesler, John Knight, Deena Lanning, Eric Miller, Donnie Miller, Dwight Miller, Harold Miller, Dusty Morgan, Gladys Morgan, Jesse Morgan, Sr., Kay Morgan, William Page, Doug Peeler, Sylvia Peeler, Wyatt Thompson, and Effie Vellines

Continual Prayer - Nancy Ballew (mother of Kat Clifton), Nancy Barringer (cousin of Larry Barringer), Shonna Black (daughter of Jack and Deena Lanning), Gary Brown (friend of Karen Barringer), Vanna Calloway (friend of Kat Clifton), Janet Dunning (sister of Doris Shepherd), Pastor Brack East (NALC Pastor), June Fraley, Pastor Gross (NALC Pastor in Ukraine with Russian invasion), Drew Harrington (granddaughter of Mary Elizabeth Earnhardt), Amy Lowder Harrison and Jesse Morgan, Jr., Terry Holt (friend of Frank and Dawn Merrell), Emily Jones (sister of Jimmy Plyler), Teresa Kesler, Bobby Lippard (friend of Union), Glenn and Betty Sue Lowder, Patsy Lyerly and Family, Joe and Sylvia McDaniel, David Mitchell (friend of Pete Nguyen), Della Morgan (mother of Pam Vellines), Dusty Morgan, Sr. Family (Dusty, Sr., Lisa, Felisaty, and Dusty, Jr.), Ralph Neilson (relative of Evonne Batten), Hong Nguyen (mother of Pete Nguyen), Marvin Nunn, Ben Smith (brother in law of Cathy Painter), Hailey Swanson (granddaughter of Janie Lesley), James and Mary Trexler (sister of Brenda and Linda Cauble), Brinley Rose Upchurch, Union Fire Department #76, Haiti (gangs), Nigerian Christians, and those affected by natural or political disasters.

Confirmation Students: Caylea Cline, Mallory Eagle, Bailey Wilhelm, and Lucas Wilhelm

PART FIVE: The Office of the Keys

What is the Office of the Keys? As Christ himself declares: “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.” (John 20:23)



2023 Faith Formation Festival

The NALC is offering a new event- a **Faith Formation Festival**- for all parents, youth leaders, Sunday school teachers, pastors, and anyone working in youth and family ministries. The Carolinas have been asked to host the first festival, because we have shown ourselves to be dedicated to youth ministry!

This will be a great time to fellowship with one another, be inspired in our work with youth and family ministries, and gain new insights, whether your church has no kids or 100.

Join us **Friday, January 6, from 6:30-9:30 p.m.** and **Saturday, January 7, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.** for this faith-forming event.

Through our roster of amazing guest speakers, you will learn everything you need to know about youth and family ministry.

Topics will include tackling biblical illiteracy, best practices for youth and family ministry, the use of story-telling, and more!”

Registration: <https://thenalc.org/faith-formation-festival-2023/>

2023 Acolyte Training

Acolytes are a vital part of our worship service. They serve the congregation in worship and glorifying God by bringing forth the flame that will light the altar candles and candelabras which is a visual reminder of Christ as the light of the world. Additionally acolytes assist throughout the service in various areas of ministry as needed.

*Calling all 10 year olds and older to an Acolyte Training for new and returning acolytes. Join us on **Sunday, January 8, 2023** during the Little Lutherans Gathering at **4:00 p.m.***

All organizations, committees, groups, and individuals who are to turn in reports for the **ANNUAL YEARBOOK REPORT**, please do so by **Sunday, January 15, 2023**. This is a very important document in reflecting the life of Union's for the past year and for planning activities for the coming year. We want to get it out to the members of the congregation as soon as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

2023 Fresh Eyes for Mission

“Fresh Eyes for Mission” summits are being planned through 2024. This face-to-face renewal ministry will assist congregations in refocusing their mission to their community and the world. A congregation is led through an extensive pre-meeting workshop that assesses demographics and missional capacity. An on-site visit engages leaders to take hold of the opportunities that are discovered in the process. The result is a concerted effort toward congregational renewal and vitality.

*On **Sunday, January 15, at 3:00 p.m.** the congregation is invited to attend Union's Fresh Eyes summit led by Pastor Wendel from the NALC.*

2022 End of the Year Giving

2022 is quickly coming to a close. If you want to have any **special giving credited** to your account before the year ends please do so by **Sunday, December 25**.

2023 Offering Envelopes Update

Due to circumstances outside the control of the church office, 2023 Offering Envelopes will not be available until mid-January.

If you received a physical offering envelope in 2022, the same number has been assigned for 2023.

In 2023, please bring an envelope from home (this will save cost of purchasing blank envelopes for close to 200 households for several weeks) or use the small envelope provided in the pew. Place your offering inside, seal, write your name, offering number (if known), and designate amounts to be distributed to current, benevolence, etc. on the outside.

How Can You Serve?

The Sunday School Classes are serving the Union Fire Department by collecting **individual snacks** and drinks for the Union Fire Department to grab and eat on their way out for a call. These items can be protein bars, energy bars, beef jerky, water, Gatorade, etc.

A plastic container is available in the doorway across for the Music Room for the items or you can turn them in the Grade School "Joy" classroom.

Everyone is invited to participate in this month's Sunday School project!

Church Office is closed on Friday, December 23 & Monday, December 26, in observance of the Christmas Holiday.

Pastor Heidi Punt will be out of the office from December 27-December 31.

Those Serving in December

Acolytes: Jordan and Mallory Eagle

Altar Guild: Robyn Arey, Mary Hutchens, and Patsy Lyerly

Communion Assistants: Vicki Hunter, Elbert Kluttz, and Franklin Merrell

Lay Readers: Robyn Arey, Vicki Hunter, Ruby Leazer,
Wayne and Pam Vellines

Ushers: Mike Cauble, Phil Cauble (HU), Elbert Kluttz,
Wade Leazer, and Ronald Vellines

Offering Counters:

Mary Elizabeth Earnhardt, Sonya Mulkey, and Vivian Sprinkle