

# All Creation Sings!



**A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS  
for  
The Joyous Sunday of Advent**

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE  
A United Church of Christ**

**December 15, 2024  
10:00 A.M.**

***A Reflection for the Advent Sunday of Joy***

Dear Mrs. Carr:

Here again are pine trees, and the wind, and living rock and water! .... The fragrance and the color and the form, and the whole spiritual expression of goldenrods are hopeful and strength-giving beyond any other flowers that I know. A single spike is sufficient to heal unbelief and melancholy.

Miles and miles of trees scripture along the sky, a Bible that will one day be read! The beauty of its letters and sentences have burned me like fire through all these Sierra seasons. Yet I cannot interpret their hidden thoughts. They are terrestrial expressions of the sun.

John Muir

Letter from Yosemite Valley, September 1874

## **WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH!**

*We're glad you've joined in this special service of Lessons and Carols. With scripture, reflections, and song, we join our voices with all Creation in thanks for the gift of God's light and life for all the world.*

*Youth and older children are invited to share in the whole service. Younger ones are invited to the Nurture Center during the carol after the lighting of the Advent Wreath.*

*As you enter the Sanctuary, please enter into a time of silent reflection and prayer to prepare for worship. Also, please turn off your cell phone so you and all gathered for worship can know God's peace and presence in our time together. Thank you. Again, welcome to the United Church!*

## **WE GATHER**

*(May the first note of the Prelude be a call to prayer and stillness as we prepare for worship.)*

Prelude

*Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

Es Ist Ein Ros'/arr. Mark Hayes

\*Congregational Introit

***O Come, O Come, Emmanuel***

Barbara Lundblad/15th c. Plainsong

***O come, O come, Emman-uel, And bless the place your peo-ple dwell.***

***Melt ev'ry weapon crafted for war. Bring peace upon the earth forever more.***

[Refrain]

***Rejoice, rejoice! Take heart and do not fear,  
God's chosen one, Emmanuel, draws near.***

***O come, strong branch of Jes-se, free Your own from Satan's ty-ranny;***

***Forge justice for the poor and the meek, Grant safety for the young ones and the weak.*** [Refrain]

Welcome and Sharing of Life and Ministry

Breathing in God's Gifts of Peace, Hope, and Joy

\*Sharing God's Gifts

*(Please rise in body or spirit to offer God's blessings to your neighbors around you. We regather with the following song.)*

\*Re-gathering in Song

***O Come, O Come, Emmanuel***

Barbara Lundblad/15th c. Plainsong

***O come now, living water, pour your grace, And bring new life to ev'ry withered place;  
Speak comfort to each trem-bling heart: "Be strong! Fear not, for I will ne'er depart."***

[Refrain] ***Rejoice, rejoice! Take heart and do not fear,  
God's chosen one, Emmanuel, draws near.***

Welcoming of Visitors and Breathing in God's Gifts Again

## WE BEGIN

The Call to Advent from the Letter of Paul to the United Church of Philippi

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Musical Call

***Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn***

Marty Haugen

The Call of the Prophet Isaiah

Hear the promise of Isaiah: "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing."

**Come, O come, Emmanuel.**

"The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God."

**Come, O come, Emmanuel.**

People of God, come. Open your eyes and your hearts to the glory of God all around you.

\*Hymn

104

***We Hail You God's Anointed*** (1-2, 4)

James Montgomery/Ellacombe

## WE PREPARE

Lighting the Advent Candle of Joy

Why is today different from all other days?

**Today is the Joyous Sunday of Advent, when we light the third candle on the Advent Wreath.**

Why is this candle different from the other candles?

**The pink candle reminds us of the Rose that blooms in the midst of winter. When the people of Israel were in exile, Isaiah promised that the desert would rejoice and blossom. Even in the most barren of times, God still brings joy and loveliness.**

What does the third candle mean?

**It is the Candle of Joy and reminds us of God's promise: "Sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and we shall have everlasting joy and gladness."**

As we light the third Advent Candle, let us remember this promise of our faith.

*(The lighting of the third candle.)*

A Prayer for the Joyous Sunday of Advent

Stir up your power and come, O Lord.

**Come into the wild and dry place of our lives.**

**Come into our deserts and wildernesses.**

**Come with your joy and possibility.**

Stir up your power and come, O Lord.

**Come like rain in a thirsty land.**

**Come like waters in the wilderness.**

**Come like streams in the desert.**

Stir up your power and come, O Lord.

**Come that we might blossom abundantly.**

**Come that we might rejoice and sing.**

**Come to us so that with joy and rejoicing we might finally come home. Amen.**

\*A Carol

108

*Isaiah the Prophet Has Written* (1-2, 4)

Joy Patterson/Sydney Carter

*(During the carol, younger children are invited to the Nurture Center where they'll engage the Nativity Story—  
with all the animals—and make pinecone bird feeders.)*

## **WE JOIN TO SING WITH ALL CREATION**

A Word of Introduction

### **The First Word**

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light: and there was light."

(Genesis 1:1-3)

*(Silence)*

140 ***Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light***

Luke 2:8-14/Johann Schopp, 1641



### **From the Great Seas to a Town Well**

"Bless the Lord, O my soul," proclaimed the Psalmist, "for you are very great.

You cover the earth with the seas as with a garment . . .

You make springs gush forth in the valleys, they flow between the hills,  
giving drink to every wild animal, the wild asses quench their thirst.

By the streams, the birds of the air have their habitation,  
they sing among the branches."

And in the Greek Orthodox tradition, when the Angel Gabriel  
proclaimed God's new life to a young woman named Mary,

he found her not in a house but at the town well,  
drawing God's life-giving water.

(Psalm 104 and the Gospel of Luke 2:1-2)

109 ***With Joy Draw Water***

Isaiah 11:1-10, 12:2-6/St. Columba (Irish Melody)

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## **All the Earth Is Waiting**

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; . . . We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

(The Letter of the Apostle Paul to the Church in Rome 8:18-25)

### 121 *All the Earth Is Waiting* (1-2)

Isaiah 40:3-5, Luke 3:4-6, Matthew 1:23/Alberto Taulé



### **Signs in the Heavens and on Earth**

O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good,  
for God's steadfast love endures forever.

O give thanks to the God of gods,  
who alone does great wonders,  
who by understanding made the heavens,  
who made the great lights,  
the sun to rule over the day,  
the moon and stars to rule over the night,  
for God's steadfast love endures forever; . . .

It is God who remembered us in our low estate,  
and rescued us from our foes,  
who gives food to all flesh,  
for God's steadfast love endures forever.

O give thanks to the God of heaven and earth,  
for God's steadfast love endures forever.

(Psalm 136)

*'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime*

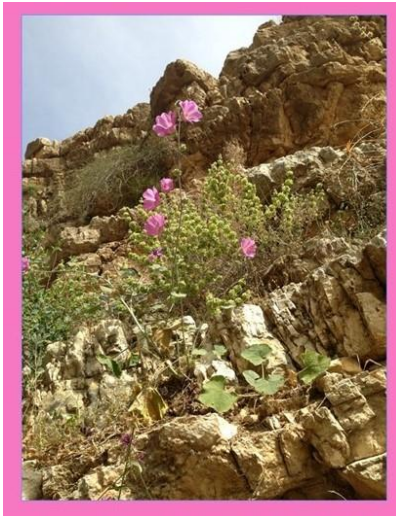
Huron Carol/arr. John Helgen

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## **Crocus in the Desert, A Rose in Winter**

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
"Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God." . . .  
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.  
(Isaiah 35)



### **127 *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*** Isaiah 11:1/Es Ist Ein' Ros

## **The Beasts of the Field and The Birds of the Air**

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots. . .  
The Holy One shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide by what his ears hear;  
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; . . .  
The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.  
The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.  
(Isaiah 11:1-11)



*The Friendly Beasts*  
arr. Robert Buckley Farlee

*(Silence)*

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**The Word of Life, The Word of Light**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
The Word was in the beginning with God.  
All things came into being through it, and without the Word not one thing came into being.  
What has come into being in the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.  
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.  
(The Gospel of John 1:1-4)

*(Silence)*

*O Nata Lux*  
Morton Lauridsen

*O nata lux de lumine,  
Jesu redemptor saeculi,  
dignare clemens supplicum  
laudes preces que sumere.*

*Qui carne quondam contegi  
dignatus es pro perditis.  
Nos membra confer effici,  
tui beati corporis.*

O born light of light,  
Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
mercifully deem worthy and accept  
the praises and prayers of your supplicants.

Thou who once deigned to be clothed in flesh  
for the sake of the lost ones,  
grant us to be made members  
of your holy body.

**WE RESPOND**

Offering Ourselves in Prayer (adapted from the Greek Orthodox tradition)

What shall we offer thee, O Christ,  
Who for our sakes has appeared on earth as human?  
**Every creature made by thee offers thee thanks.**

The angels offer thee a hymn;  
**the heavens, a star; the magi, gifts;**  
The shepherds, their wonder;  
**the earth, its cave;**  
The wilderness, the manger;  
**Joseph and Mary, their love.**

And we offer thee our lives,  
**our hearts and our souls,  
our spirits and our flesh.**

Creator of the stars of night, you continue to bring light and loveliness into all the Bethlehems of our world.  
Hear now in the silence of our hearts our prayers for that light in our lives and in the life of all creation.

*(A time of silent prayer.)*



As the Light of Christ was born in the darkened stable of Bethlehem,  
**may Christ's light be born in us and in this church.**

As stars, angels, and all the animals joined with shepherds to sing your praise,  
**may we join with all creation to proclaim your joy.**

All this we offer in the name of the One whose coming we await, the Child of Bethlehem, who taught us to pray to you with boldness, courage, and most of all trust, saying. . .

*(Please pray any version of the Lord's prayer.)*

Presenting Our Gifts

*Candlelight Carol*

John Rutter

*(Today's offering goes to environmental agencies with which United Church has long-standing partnerships: Santa Fe Watershed Association, New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light, Tree New Mexico; Reunity Resources. Thank you for caring for Creation with both your song and your financial support.)*

Prayer of Dedication

## WE GO OUT IN PEACE

\*Hymn

*People, Look East!*

Eleanor Farjeon/French Carol

*People, look East, the time is near, for the crowning of the year!*

*Make yourself fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.*

*People, look East and sing today! Love the Guest is on the way!*

*Stars keep the watch, when night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,*

*Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as the moon and stars together.*

*People, look East and sing today! Love the Star is on the way!*

*Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there:*

*Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.*

*People, look East, and sing today: Love the Rose is on the way.*

\*Benediction

\*Postlude

*People, Look East*

Eleanor Farjeon/French Carol

*Angels, announce with shouts of mirth, him who brings new life to earth.*

*Set every peak and valley humming, with the word, the Lord is coming.*

*People, look East and sing today! Love the Lord is on the way!*

## Soli Deo Gloria—To God Alone the Glory!

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## WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE!

We're glad you've joined us for this special celebration and hope you'll stay for the fellowship time afterward, too. If you're visiting, please take a moment to sign the guest register by the front door. Again, welcome!

Sharing leadership are the Rev. Talitha Arnold, Pastor; Director of Music Bradley Ellingboe; Guest Pianist Jacquelyn Helin, D.M.A.; the Festival Choir; instrumentalists Skyler Stone (flute), Kasumi Leonard (oboe), and Dana Winograd (cello); and Elijah Marquez, Media Coordinator, assisted by Frank Wilbanks.

The Advent Candle Lighters are the Larsen-Kalogerini Family (Erin, Daniel, Isaac). Liturgists and Readers are Phil Kruger, Louise Cavatta, and Frank Norris. You were greeted by Kimberly Zeilik, Dusty and Catherine Caruso, Pam Hyde, Karen Wilbanks, and Sunday Aide Luis Zapata.

### Children and Youth Learn about the Animals of the Nativity and Make Pinecone Bird Feeders

Children are invited to join in the full service of Lessons and Carols or to go to Children's Ministry to learn about all the animals in Bethlehem's stable and then make pinecone bird feeders, with guidance from Destiny Muñoz and Maria Navarette.

### Blessing of the Trees after Today's Service

We'll go outside to "Bless the Trees" around United. It's an ancient custom to thank the trees for their gifts of shade, fruit, and life of the year and pray for their safe journey through the winter.

### Compassionate Christmas Gifts Market—Today!

In the true spirit of Christmas, we invite you to give United's *Compassionate Christmas Gifts* that offer hope, care, and joy to people and places in need. **Today is the last Sunday Market.** Donate today in the Community Room or order online at [unitedchurchofsantafe.org](http://unitedchurchofsantafe.org) through this week. Thank you!

**THE FEMININE DIVINE – THIS SUNDAY!**

**Coro Lux, Luminare, El Faro Youth Chorus**

**Bradley Ellingboe, Artistic Director**

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church (4020 Lomas Blvd., NE in Albuquerque)

Today, Dec. 15, 2024 – 2:00 and 5:00 PM

J.S. Bach's *Magnificat* with Coro Lux's 60 voices and 15 of New Mexico's finest instrumentalists, plus other works offered by the Chamber Choir *Luminare* and *El Faro* Youth Chorus, with poetry and readings read by Rev. Talitha Arnold and Rev. Kristi Koppel. United Church members and friends receive a 20% discount! To claim this discount, enter the code **UCSF24** when checking out. Tix/info: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/corolux/1362592>.

**“When the Holidays are Different”**

**Monday, Dec. 16 – 6:00 pm – KSFR (101.1)**

Tune into Santa Fe's KSFR (101.1 FM) on Monday for the Radio Forum, featuring Rabbi Martin Levy and Rev. Talitha Arnold on “When the Holidays are Different.” They'll focus on some of the challenges the holiday can bring, whether it's remembering the loss of a loved one or being overextended. They'll also share ways to keep the holidays—and your sanity.

**Las Posadas at United — This Friday, Dec. 20 at 6:00 pm**

Share in this wonderful New Mexico tradition as we welcome the community of our “sister congregation,” Santa Maria de la Paz, for an early evening of song, prayer, and a visit from a couple of newlyweds—and good food! That night, United becomes the stable of Bethlehem to welcome both Santa Maria and United friends (and provide hospitality and refreshments). Please sign up to let us know you can help. And plan to come—all ages welcome!

**Make United's Welcome a Real Deal this Christmas!**

Ushers and greeters needed for the Christmas Eve services (Tuesday, Dec. 24 – 5:00 and 7:00 pm) and the Christmastide service (Sunday, Dec. 29 – 10:00 am). We also want to be a welcoming community every Sunday—we need your help to do that! Sign up today to greet/usher. Thanks!

**Christmas Eve Services – Tuesday, Dec. 24**

- **Candles & Carols (5:00):** Designed for families with children—but everyone is welcome! Carols, a Christmas story, a gift for every child, and the Candle-lighting Service. (Childcare.)
- **Candlelight Service (7:00):** Carols, candles, Festival Choir, and a message of hope. (Childcare)

**Christmastide Service – Sunday, Dec. 29**

(one service only at 10:00 am)

**Wise Enough to Follow**

**Jan. 5 – Epiphany Sunday**

Lots of travelers had a hard time that first Christmas. Joseph and Mary ended up in Bethlehem with no place to stay. The shepherds needed a whole angel chorus to help them find their way. And the Wise Ones got off-track and ended up in King Herod's court, because that's where conventional wisdom told them to find a new king. (Matthew 2:1-11) This Sunday, a Readers' Theater of children, youth, and adults offered the Epiphany story in a whole new way!

**BLESSED. . . to Be a Blessing!**

**84% to the 2025 Stewardship Goal!**

- We've received over 135 pledges, totaling over \$470,000! Our \$560,000 goal (and \$575,000 Challenge Goal) funds everything from the lights to Children's and Youth Ministry to music to outreach. Your pledge counts!
- **If you haven't had a chance to pledge yet, please join in.** Pledge cards and envelopes are in the Community Room.

**Year-End Giving**

To claim a charitable deduction for 2024, checks, gifts, or online donations must be received or postmarked by Dec. 31, 2024. Checks received after Dec. 31 can't qualify for a charitable deduction for 2024, even if predated 2024. (Sorry!) You can also visit our website ([unitedchurchofsantafe.org](http://unitedchurchofsantafe.org)) and click on the “give now” button to contribute online. Many thanks!

**ROOTED IN FAITH, LIVING IN HOPE, GROWING IN LOVE!**

**COUNTDOWN TO UNITED'S 45<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY!**

Mark your calendars now for United's Birthday Bash the weekend of May 31 and June! We'll celebrate the 45 years of life, community, and ministry with which God has blessed the United Church of Santa Fe. Special events include a pilgrimage from El Gancho Restaurant (and Bar) where the congregation first met to St. Michael's High School (where it gathered next), visits to organizations United helped start (Prison Family Ctr., St. Elizabeth and Interfaith Shelters, Habitat for Humanity, etc.), a “Reunion Choir”, and special visits from faraway friends! Plan to join in!

For your protection, please do not leave valuables visible in your car. Please remember to always lock your car when attending services or events at United. Thank you!