

**A Service of the Word
for
The First Sunday of Advent
November 30, 2025
The United Church of Santa Fe
A United Church of Christ**

For Reflection:

Don't stop after beating the swords into plowshares, don't stop!
Go on beating and make musical instruments out of them.
Whoever wants to make war again will
have to turn them into plowshares first.

Yehuda Amichai, Israeli Poet and Author

WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE!

The One Who Comes – Worship in Advent

What – or whom—are we waiting for this Christmas? We'll explore that question all through Advent, not only in sermons, but also as we light Advent candles against the shadows and sing "Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (long before singing "O Come, All Ye Faithful)." We'll tell our children stories not of elves on shelves, but of people who beat their swords into plowshares, lions that lie down with lambs, flowers that bloom in the desert, and a poor child born in a stable.

Advent calls us to acknowledge the ache of our world and our own hearts. But Advent also calls us to open our hearts—and eyes and ears—to see and hear how God is with us in our longing. Sacred seeing is Advent's gift.

Thank you for joining Advent's search and in the journey to Christmas with the United Church of Santa Fe. We hope this time will deepen your faith and bring you closer to God's light. We also invite you to invite a friend to join you. It's one of the best Christmas gifts you can offer. Again, thank you and blessings for the journey.

WE GATHER

Music for Gathering

*Nocturne in F Minor
Huron Carol*

Frederic Chopin
arr. Andrew Wainwright

*Introit

Come, O Long-Expected Jesus
*(*Please rise in body or spirit.)*

Stuttgart

***Come, O long-expected Jesus, born to set all people free;
From our fears and sins release us; grant us your true liberty.***

***Israel's strength and consolation, hope to all the earth impart;
Dear desire of every nation, enter every longing heart.***

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Welcome and Breathing in God's Gifts

Sharing God's Gifts and Regathering

Come, O Long-Expected Jesus (vs. 1)

Breathing in God's Gifts Again

A Call to Advent from Psalm 122

I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"
Our feet have been standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem! . . .

There thrones for judgment were set,
the thrones of the house of David.
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!
"May they prosper who love you!"

Peace be within your walls,
and security within your towers!"
For my kindred and companions' sake

I will say, "Peace be within you!"
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,
I will seek your good.

Musical Call to Worship

O Radix Jesse

Isaiah 11/Plainsong

*O root of Jesse, who stands as a sign for the peoples,
over whom kings will shut their mouths over whom nations will pray.
Come to deliver us, do not delay now.*

The Call to Worship from Isaiah 2:1-5

Hear the first vision of the Prophet Isaiah: "It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains and all the nations shall flow to it."

Come, O come, Emmanuel.

"And many peoples shall come and say: Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that God may teach us the sacred ways and that we may walk in God's paths."

Come, O come, Emmanuel.

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. God shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Come, O come, Emmanuel.

O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

*Hymn

116

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (1-2)

15th c. Plainsong

WE PREPARE

The Lighting of the Advent Candle of Peace

Why is today different from all other days?

Today is the First Sunday of Advent when we light the first candle on the Advent Wreath.

Why do we light candles in this season?

The candles symbolize God's light coming into our world. Each week before Christmas, as the world moves into deeper darkness, we light another candle to proclaim God's light.

What does the first candle mean?

The first candle is the Candle of Peace. The gift of Christmas is the gift of peace, peace in our hearts, peace in our families, even peace in our world.

We await the Prince of Peace, the Prophet Isaiah proclaimed. We wait, too, for a time when we will beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks.

**And nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.**

As we light the first Advent Candle and prepare for the coming of Christ, may we also prepare for peace in every city and every land.

(The lighting of the first candle.)

Stir up your power and come, O God.

Bring your peace into our world, your word of peace into our waiting.

Stir up your power and come, O God.

Come with your vision of plowshares and pruning hooks.

Come with your call to study war no more.

Come, so that nation shall not lift up sword against nation.

Stir up your power and come, O God.

Come with your passion for peace.

Come with your love for all peoples.

Come with your courage, that we might be open to your coming. Amen.

A Carol for Advent

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

15th c. Plainsong

O come, Desire of Nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;

Make envy, strife, and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

O come, O come, Immanuel, and bless each place your people dwell.

Melt ev'ry weapon crafted for war, bring peace upon the earth forever more.

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

(After the carol, children and youth through 5th grade join in Kids United..)

WE SEARCH

From the “Little Apocalypse” of Luke

Luke 21:25-33

And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Holy One coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees; as soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all has taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”

Musical Response

Return, My People

James Martin/Repton

The Sermon

The One Who Comes. . . As We Least Expect

Silence

Advent Carol

103

Watcher, Tell Us of the Night

John Bowring/Aberystwyth

WE RESPOND

Offering Ourselves in Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer (*Please pray a version of the Lord’s Prayer familiar to you.*)

Presenting Our Gifts

Offertory

Prayer of Dedication (unison)

Holy One, you have come to us as the Child of Bethlehem, sharing our human life and calling us to care for your people and for creation. Receive our gifts this day. Use them and use our lives for the sake of this world that you love. Amen.

A Time of Farewell and Godspeed

Kitty and Jan Jansen

WE GO IN PEACE

*Closing Hymn

O Come O Come Emmanuel (contemporary)

Barbara K. Lundblad/Plainsong

O come, dear child of Mary, come, God’s Word made flesh within our earthly home;

Love stir within the womb of night, revenge and hatred put to flight.

Rejoice, rejoice! Take heart and do not fear, God’s chosen one, Immanuel, draws near.

O come, now living water, pour your grace, and bring new life to ev’ry withered place;

Speak comfort to each trembling heart: “Be strong! Fear not, for I will ne’er depart.”

Rejoice, rejoice! Take heart and do not fear, God’s chosen one, Immanuel, draws near.

Permission is granted to reproduce the text for congregational worship.

*Benediction

*Musical Benediction

Kyrie eleison.

*Kyrie Eleison
Christe eleison.*

Ukrainian Orthodox Chant
Kyrie eleison.

WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE!

We are glad you have joined us for this First Sunday of Advent. Your presence enriches the experience of us all. On entering the Sanctuary, we invite you to enter into the spirit of worship through a time of quiet reflection. Children through 5th grade begin the service with the adults and youth, then go to *Kids United* after the Lighting of the Advent Candle. Again, welcome!

At the end of today's service, we bid farewell and Godspeed to Kitty and Jan Jansen, members of United since 2015. They've joined in United's life and ministry in a variety of ways—study groups, river clean-up, forums—and also celebrated the baptism of their grandson at United last Christmas. After 30+ years in the United States, they are moving back to the Netherlands to be closer to family. Please keep them in your prayers.

Sharing leadership are Rev. Talitha Arnold, Senior Minister; Michelle Schuman, Director of Music/Pianist; the Sanctuary Choir directed by Andre Garcia-Nuthmann; Steve Hamilton, Liturgist; Advent Candlelighters (Jessica, Phil, Sasha and Jack Smucker) and Elijah Marquez, Media Coordinator. The contemporary version of "O Come, Emmanuel" was written by Rev. Barbara Lundblad, Lutheran pastor, Professor Emerita of Preaching at Union Seminary (where she was a colleague of Larry Rasmussen's), and Yale Divinity School classmate of Talitha Arnold.

Kids and Families Get Ready for Advent!

"Advent" (from Latin for "coming" or "arrival") is a special time for families to prepare for the birth of Jesus. In *Kids United* and Confirmation, we'll explore "waiting" and "preparing." Today *Kids United* create Advent wreaths for our homes. Each family also receives an Advent booklet of short devotionals and readings to use as you light the Advent candles each week.

When the Holidays are Different

Today's Forum—November 30

For all their joy and celebration, the holiday season can be difficult when we've experienced major change—divorce, moving, death, job changes, etc. Today United offers a pastoral conversation, "When the Holidays are Different," to provide resources and ideas for dealing with change and loss, especially at holiday times. All welcome.

Soon and Very Soon – Advent/Epiphany Devotional

The new daily devotional for Advent and Epiphany by the national United Church of Christ (including reflections by Talitha Arnold) is available in the Community Room. Pick up a copy and another for a friend, then join with others in the daily journey to new life.

Coming Up This Week

Mayor Alan Webber and Councilors Carol Romero-Wirth and Sig Lindahl interviewed by Talitha Arnold

This Monday, Dec. 1 – 6:00 pm – KSFR (101.1 FM)

Wednesday Women's Study -- *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman

Wed., Dec. 3 – 10:00 am

It's a Revelation! – Thursday Zoom Study – 8:00 am MST

We're almost at the end of the Book of Revelation – but it's not too late to join in! Email us at unitedchurchsf@gmail.com for the zoom link. People tune in from all across the country.

Next Friday, Dec. 5, 5:30 - 8 p.m. Parent's Night Out 'Christmas Shopping Edition' (or maybe just some time for yourself). Drop the kiddos off at United for an evening of games, crafts, and food. Sign up in Community Room today or contact Dana Bender (unitedchurch.dana@gmail.com) by tomorrow (Monday, Dec. 1) to reserve a spot.

Let the Lights Shine! – Help string Christmas Lights, Sat. Dec. 6

If you enjoy Christmas decorating, please join Bob Ansheles (Property/Maintenance chair) next Saturday between 10:00 and 1:00 to wrap some of United's trees with strands of lights. A variety of tasks, none strenuous (and no climbing, heavy lifting, or power tools!). Sign up in Community Room. Questions? Contact Bob (reansheles@gmail.com). Thank you!

Contigo Immigrant Justice (formerly "Santa Fe Dreamers") –Next Sunday's Forum (11:15--Dec. 7)

Jesus and his family were refugees. When he was still a baby, they fled King Herod's violence by going to Egypt. "Santa Fe Dreamers," children brought to the U.S. by their parents fleeing violence and starvation, have stories like Jesus. We welcome Miles Tukonow of Santa Fe's Contigo Immigrant Justice to share their stories.

More Special Advent Events for Families and Everyone

Sunday, Dec. 14 (after 10:00 "Lessons and Carols" service) All-Church Advent Family Workshop – Christmas craft, assembling hygiene packs for shelter guests, and holiday sweets. All welcome!

Sunday, December 21 – "A Francis and Clare Christmas." Intergenerational 10:00 Worship with a Reader's Theater about the very first Nativity Scene.

COMING UP IN COMING WEEKS

Pretty Good Guys – What are Biblical Values? –Wed., Dec. 10 – 10:30 am

Copies of the article by John Collins, Professor of Old Testament Studies, Yale Divinity School, in Community Room.

**BE THE ENERGY!
70% to the 2026 Stewardship Goal!**

- We've received over 110 pledges, totaling over \$400,000! Our \$625,000 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, join in!** Pledge cards and envelopes in the Community Room.
- Please hold United Church and Campaign leaders in prayer. Most of all, take time each day to **remember** all the ways God has blessed your life and be open to the ways you can share those blessings with others.

Compassionate Christmas Gifts—Starts Next Sunday, Nov. 30

In the true spirit of Christmas, we invite you to give United's *Compassionate Christmas Gifts* that give hope, care, and joy to people and places in need. The market will be **Sundays Nov. 30; Dec. 7, 14, 21**. Gifts include:

New Mexico Immigrant Law Center: \$30

Legal Services and Advocacy for Children, Youth, and Families.

Church World Service: \$10

Blankets for Refugees around the world (Ukraine, Sudan, Israel/Palestine).

A Child's "Comfort" Backpack: \$25

PJ's, Teddy Bear, and other items a child at Solace Crisis Center needs.

Changing Lenses, Changing Lives: \$50

Provides 21 nutritious lunches for primary school students in Kenya.

United Youth Immersion Trip Scholarship: \$40

Toward a youth scholarship for Youth Immersion Trips or Retreats.

Santa Fe Shelters for the Homeless: \$60

One night at St. Elizabeth, Casa Familia, or Youth Shelters.

Communities in Schools Gift Card for Families in Need: \$50

CIS started as United Church/Salazar School Partnership. It's grown and so have the needs of SF students.

My Water, My Watershed Santa Fe Student Field trip: \$25

Sponsor a public-school student for an experiential, science-based program to study and explore their watershed, learning about complex relationships between living things and their environment.



Donations for Christmas Bags for Shelter Guests

On Sunday, Dec. 14, United's children, youth, families and the rest of us will assemble Christmas Bags for guests of St. Elizabeth and Casa Familia Shelter. We welcome your donations of travel-size toothpaste, soap, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, lotion (but please no razors or sharp objects). Bins in the Community Room.

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