

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 10, 2023
2nd Sunday of Advent
Peace

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....

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: [Live Stream](https://www.sprucc.org) at [sprucc.org](https://www.sprucc.org) - Live or Watch & Listen Later on [Our YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)
[Facebook Live](https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/) at <https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/> - Live or Watch & Listen Later
[Phone Stream](https://www.sprucc.org) 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



www.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)

Righteous and holy God, your glory is revealed to us day by day as valleys of despair are lifted up and mountainous problems are leveled. In your presence, we see more than our immediate situation. We catch a glimpse of your eternal purposes. So come among us now and speak your word of peace. Feed us with your truth, and equip us to welcome Christ's coming. Amen.

PIANO PRELUDE

"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

(Hyfrydol) arranged by Robert Thygerson

{Those who are able, please rise}

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry" vs 1 & 2

♪ Red #95

One License #A-728042

*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[®]

Leader: The day of God is coming; lift up your voices.
Cry out with the strength God provides.

People: **We will prepare the way for One who is coming.
We await God's coming day with anticipation.**

Leader: Praise the One who grants us the gift of life.
Give thanks for God's continuing faithfulness.

People: **Heaven and earth will pass away,
But the Word of God is true for all times and places.**

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)

**Forgive us, O God,
if we have blindly followed our own selfish desires;
if we have transgressed against Your Sacred Law;
if we have left undone those things which ought to be done;
if we have done those things which ought not to be done;
if we have remained entrapped in our narrow prejudices;
if we have spurned the glorious freedom that comes in serving others.
O God, we confess our sins, individually and as a community.
Gracious God, forgive us, one and all! 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)

God speaks tenderly to us and assures us that our debt has been paid, our sins forgiven, our paths made straight. God's glory is waiting to burst into the midst of all who accept the good news. Surely our salvation is at hand. Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky. Enjoy the baptism of the Holy Spirit! **Amen.**

{please be seated}

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE^① - PEACE

INTRODUCTORY SENTENCES: *(Advent Reader)*

We gather around the Advent wreath today knowing that we are not perfect-that we all make mistakes and do bad things. Only Jesus obeyed God fully. Jesus helps us to live as God wants us to live. Jesus gives us peace.

READING OF SCRIPTURE: *(Advent Reader)*

“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.”
(from Isaiah 9:6-7)

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE: *(Advent Reader)*

We light this candle to proclaim the coming of the light of God into the world. With the coming of this light there is peace, for Christ is called the “Prince of Peace.” Christ’s name is also Emmanuel, “God with us.” The second presence of Christ with us gives us peace day by day.

{Light the second blue candle in the wreath}

PRAYER:

Advent Reader: Let us pray...

ALL: **Eternal God, we thank you that through all the years you have given peace to your people. Help us to have your peace in our lives. We pray that in this Advent season, we may, by what we do, show your presence to the sick, to the hungry, and to the lonely, so that they too may have peace. Amen.**

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*

The musical notation consists of two staves of music in 6/8 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff has the following lyrics: "Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!". The second staff has the following lyrics: "Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!". Above the first staff are guitar chords: Dm, Gm, C, F, Dm, Gm, C, F. Above the second staff are guitar chords: Dm, Gm, C, F, Dm, Gm, C, F.

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 40:1-11](#)

The New Testament Letter: [2 Peter 3:9-15a](#)

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Lesson: [Mark 1:1-8](#)

Leader: This is the gospel of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

"There's a Voice in the Wilderness" vs 1 & 2

*Red #94
Public Domain*

BLESSING OF THE HYMNALS [®]

Leader: Beloved in the Lord, hymns and songs have long since been an important way in which we teach the faith. As our confirmation class is learning, the first pieces of scripture were not words typed on paper, but songs sung by individuals, families, and congregations.

Leader: The Apostle Paul teaches us,

ALL: "to be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

(Ephesians 5:18c-20)

Leader: King David put to music,

ALL: "Sing to God, sing praises to his name; lift up a song to him who rides upon the clouds-- his name is the LORD -- be exultant before him", and "Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise."

(Psalm 68:4 & 66:1-2)

Leader: The early Reformers encouraged hymns to be sung in the homes and taught us as the church to provide families with Bibles and hymnals for use in the home, and within our current United Church of Christ confirmation book, we are taught and encouraged to provide our confirmation class with a Bible and hymnal.

To that end we present our confirmation class with their hymnals.

Leader: Holy God we pray for your blessings upon these hymnals, which contain not only songs, but prayers, creeds, and liturgies of the church. May these be more than books; may they be guides and references along their life journey of faith; may they serve as a connection between their individuals homes and this household of faith; may even the sight of these hymnals remind them of their church family and the connection to you experienced together when gathered as the church; and may they help them grow to have a life of worship and praise of you, our holy, loving, ever-present God.

ALL: Amen.

MINI-MESSAGE

CHILDREN'S SONG

"God, Our Father, Hears My Prayer"

God, our Father, hears my prayer,
Anytime and anywhere.
He will listen when I pray,
Hear the loving words I say.

SERMON

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) "Apostles' Creed"**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead;
on the third day he rose again,
ascended into heaven,
and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

{Please be seated}

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

SILENT PRAYER

PASTORAL 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.
Amen.**

SUNG PRAYER RESPONSE

"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 ②

Leader: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

People: One way we prepare for Christ's appearance is to support the church's mission in our community and beyond.

Leader: Our church's programs share good news, our outreach provides comfort and practical help, and our goal is for all to know of the Good News of God's gracious love.

People: May our gifts reflect God's generosity.

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 [Online Giving](https://www.sprucc.org) option on our website at [sprucc.org](https://www.sprucc.org) (Click Here), or you may mail your offering to United Church of Christ of Robesonia; 301 West Penn Ave; Robesonia, PA 19551}.

CHORAL OFFERTORY

"Return, My People"

Music by Hubert Parry; Text by James Martin

{Those who are able, please rise}

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

"Gloria"

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

**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)

O God, while we are waiting and preparing for Christ to appear, we are seeking to act as faithful followers. May our tithes and offerings extend the promise of salvation to people whose lives are broken by neglect, abuse, bad choices, and sinful ways. May these gifts offer hope to all whose suffering and loss seem too heavy to bear. May our church be a listening, caring presence for all its members, and through us for all those we meet in our work and leisure. **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: Announce the good news of Jesus Christ;
Prepare the way for Christ's witness to be heard.

**People: Christ brings hope for true peace to all people.
We turn our hearts and minds toward God.**

Leader: Lead lives of holiness and godliness;
You will be fed and blessed on life's way.

**People: God's Word brings us both comfort and challenge.
We accept God's commission to be servants in Christ's name.**

ALL: Amen.

***BENEDICTION**

***THREE FOLD SUNG AMEN**

♪ *Red #558*
Public Domain

***SENDING HYMN** *"Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"* vs 1 & 4 **NCH #107**
One License #A-728042

*{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

Join Us For Fellowship and Food in Miller Fellowship Hall

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



Worship Service Resource Credits

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 - ① United Church of Christ Neighbors in Need (NIN) 2023 Resources.
 - ② *Led By Love* by Lavon Baylor. (1996). United Church Press; Cleveland, OH.
 - ② *Occasional Services; A Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. (1982).
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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 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

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 85

This OT song is a prayer of lament, asking God for His divine favor and blessing. God responds to the prayer with an oracle of salvation. The Korahites were singers and one of the four divisions of the priestly Levite tribe of Israel.

The Second Letter of Peter

This NT Epistle (letter) is attributed to the Apostle Simon Peter and composed circa 64-65 A.D. However, some scholars, it may have been penned in his name by a writer in 80-90 A.D. seeking to write down Peter's teachings. Following the ascension of Christ, Peter ("the rock") was the head of the Christian Church. Peter was martyred in Rome. This letter was sent out from Rome, and is a final testament of how Peter would like his teachings to be remembered. It contains teachings of Christian morals and ethics, and it expresses a hope in the gospel despite opposition and critics.

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 17, 2023, Lectionary Reading for the 3rd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126 *or* Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

1. On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An -
2. Then cleansed be ev - ery Chris - tian breast, And
3. For Thou art our sal - va - tion, Lord, Our

noun - ces that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and heark - en,
fur - nished for so great a Guest! Yea, let us each his
ref - uge and our great re - ward; Once more up - on Thy

for he brings Glad ti - dings from the King of kings!
heart pre - pare For Christ to come and en - ter there.
peo - ple shine, And fill the world with love di - vine. A-MEN.

Alternative Tune, Germany.

Our Lord Jesus Christ

J. LEWIS MILLIGAN, 1930

Irregular

ASCENSION
H. HUGH BANCREFT, 1938*Unison. With spirit*

1. There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, A
 2. O Zi - on, that bring - est good ti - dings, Get thee
 3. But the word of our God en - dur - eth, The
 4. There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, A

call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a high - way,
 up to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late peo - ple
 arm of the Lord is strong; He stands in the midst of na - tions,
 call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a high - way,

A high - way for our God! The val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed,
 The com - ing of their King: Like the flow'rs of the field they per - ish,
 And He will right the wrong: He shall feed His flock like a shep - herd,
 A high - way for our God! The val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed,

The loft - y hills brought low; Make straight all the crook - ed
 The works of men de - cay, The power and pomp of
 And fold the lambs to His breast; In pas - tures of peace He'll
 The loft - y hills brought low; Make straight all the crook - ed

pla - ces, Where the Lord our . . . God may go!
 na - tions Shall pass like a dream a - way.
 lead them, And give to the wea - ry rest.
 pla - ces, Where the Lord our . . . God may go! A - MEN.

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

*Isa. 12:6; 26:9; 35:6; Matt. 11:5**Marty Haugen, 1983; rev. 1993*

1 A - wake! a - wake, and greet the new morn, for
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
 3 In deep - est night Christ's com - ing shall be, when
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though

an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, sing out your joy, for
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, whose hum - ble song is
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
 cold the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall

Je - sus is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing.
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less;

Liturgical composer Marty Haugen wrote both words and music for this Advent hymn with the twofold aim of providing an easy congregational chorale and utilizing the images of the Isaiah passages.

Tune: REJOICE, REJOICE 9.8.9.8.8.7.8.9.
Marty Haugen, 1983

ADVENT

D D/F# G D Em Am D

Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
 Mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing
 One with - out voice breaks forth in song, a lame one leaps in
 Love be our song and love our prayer, and love, our end - less

Em D7 G C B7 Em

geth - er, to o - pen wide the heaven - ly door, and
 kind - ness, the thun - der of the an - thems roll to
 won - der, the weak are raised a - bove the strong, and
 sto - ry, may God fill ev - ery day we share, and

Am7 D7 G 1-3 G/B C 4 G/B C G

lives now in - side us for ev - er. . . .
 shat - ter all hate and in - jus - tice. . . .
 weap - ons are bro - ken a - sun - der. . . .
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry. . . .