

# The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent

December 15, 2024

9:00 a.m.

+ Indicates those times when all who are able may stand.  
**Bold indicates congregational response.**

Ringing of the Bell

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude                    *“Once In Royal David’s City”*                    Smith

Call to Worship

Rejoice, my friends, rejoice!

**We seek time to embrace the joy.**

Rejoice, my friends, rejoice!

**We Create opportunities to embody joy.**

Rejoice, my friends, rejoice!

**Singing songs that announce joy.**

Gathering Prayer

Let us pray:

**Holy Convenor of the ages, as the memories of happiness sweep back into our minds, we delight in the Advent blessing of joy. Such blissfulness turns our spirits from the lengthened nights to God’s Divine Light which will be arriving soon. Like the saints of yesteryear, we celebrate together, rejoicing in the season, and knowing the best is yet to come. Amen.**

First Reading of Scripture

Isaiah 12:1-6 CEB

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

**Thanks be to God!**

+ Opening Hymn No. 424                    *“How Can I Keep from Singing?”*

Candle Lighting Liturgy

Sammi, Jerod, Alissa & Regan Blankenship

The Joy of God-With-Us does not come as naïve optimism, or surface-level feel-good-ness. Joy cannot be imposed from on high. Joy cannot be commanded. The Joy of God-With-Us is mingled with grief, exists side by side with mourning, knows that pain and death are all too real, but do not have the final word. This joy tends tenderly to beauty, and softness, and the gladness that comes from paying attention to what matters.

**The Joy of God-With-Us is collective, liberating us from deadly despair. Joy is gestating in darkness; it comes unexpectedly. Joy invites our expectation, and demands our participation. Prepare the way, for joy with sorrow. May Joy be birthed among, within, and through us, this Advent.**

Musical Response:

***O come, O come, Immanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to you, O Israel.***

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

**Loving God, Creator of wonder and delight, we have fallen into the crevices of worry. We have allowed the preoccupation of what was said in the past and will happen in the future to distract us from embodying joy in the present. Clear a pathway to our souls so that we can find levity and delight again. May we find ways from the chasms of concern to the daylight of hopefulness. Amen.**

Words of Grace

The blessedness of God’s grace will fill our hearts with a peace-filled joy as we move about this season and follow the light ahead.

**We are forgiven and free! Praise be to God! Amen.**

## Giving from Our Hearts



*It is the generosity of the friends and members of this church which supports this ministry. Over 95% of our budget is directly supported through our offering. While the ministry at Zion is sustained by more than dollars and cents, the monetary giving is vital to the work we do. We give thanks for all who have supported Zion over the years. For those contributing financially, there is an offering plate just outside the sanctuary or you can donate online through the online giving button at [zionunion.org](http://zionunion.org).*

### + Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

### + Prayer of Dedication

**God of Holy Darkness and Returning Light, we give of our full hearts, knowing that you will bless this world with love. We give of our full minds, knowing that you will bless this world with peace. We give of our full souls, knowing that you will bless this world with hope. May the joy of your gifts encourage us to share the best we have, creating your Realm here on earth. Amen.**

### Second Reading of Scripture

Luke 1:39-56 CEB

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

**Thanks be to God!**

### Hymn No. 465

*“Lord, Be Glorified”*

Zion Children’s Present  
*“A Wild West Christmas”*

### Anthem

*“Antiphonal Christmas”*  
Chancel Choir + Logan, Drew & Oliver Cooper, handbells

*“Away in a Manger”*  
*(Preschool children will join the Nativity Choir for this song. They may return to their seats with their parents after singing)*

### *“What Child is This?”*

Drew Cooper, soloist

### *“Silent Night”*

*(Preschool children may join the Nativity Choir, hold candles during this song, and return to their seats with their parents when the song concludes.)*

### *“Joy to the World!”*

Hymn No. 179 (verses 1, 2, and 4)  
*(Congregational Hymn with Nativity Choir)*

## Reflection on Joy

### Pastoral Prayer

#### The Prayer of Our Savior

**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.**

### + Closing Hymn No. 719

*“Go, My Children, with My Blessing”*

### + Benediction

### + Postlude

*“Let Us Adore Him!”*

Peery

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A special thank you to Carl and Jane Ridder for the treats for the youth participating in the Christmas Program!

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**Service Prayers for the Third Sunday of Advent Year C** was written by the Rev. Michelle L. Torigian, senior pastor of St. Paul United Church of Christ, Belleville, Illinois.  
<https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/advent-3c-december-15/>

**Candle Lighting Liturgy** © enflashed 2018, Rev. Anna Blaedel.

The *“Wild West Christmas”* was written by Kendra Smiley and comes from the book *One Rehearsal Christmas Plays*

Zion United Church of Christ, 115 S. Washington Ave., Union, MO 63084-1849  
Home Page address is: [www.zionunion.org](http://www.zionunion.org)  
Office Hours: Monday-Friday-8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (closed Tuesdays)  
Church Office: (636/583-2814) fax (636/583-7949)

**Pastor:** Rev. Nicholas Knoblauch

**Minister to Youth & Families:** Alysha Petry

**Organist:** Brenda Herring

**Music Director:** Dr. Karen Stafford

**Administrative Assistant:** Connie Thompson

**Coordinator of Elementary Youth:** Mandy Frick

**Council President:** Fern Dewert

**Church Custodian:** Joy Bradley

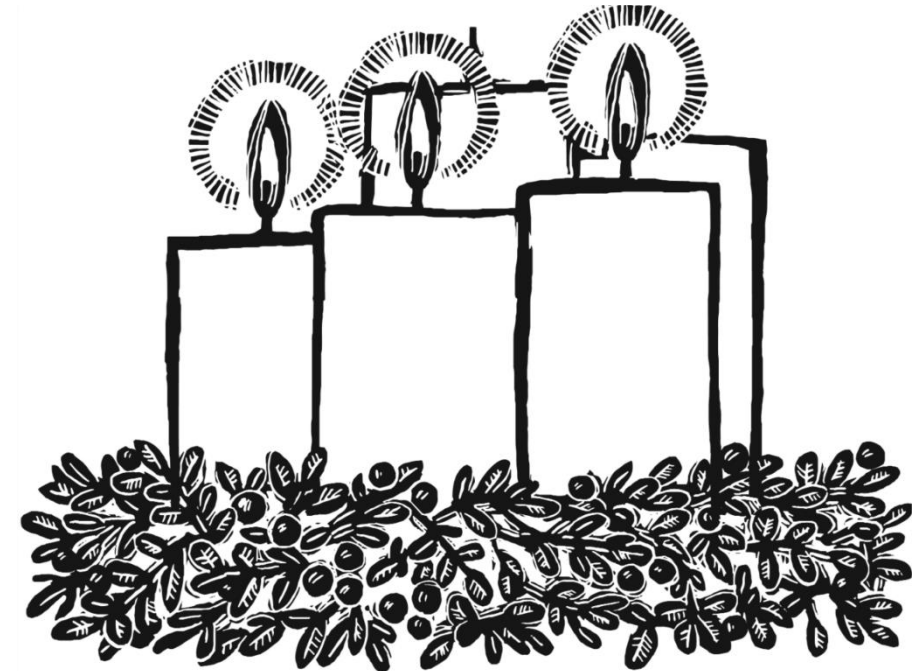
**We commit ourselves...**

**to worship God**

**to form faithful followers of Jesus**

**and to care for our wider community.**

*We care as Christ cares.*



+ The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent +

December 15, 2024 + 9:00 a.m.

Zion United Church of Christ

Union, Missouri

Please take the Sunday News home with you for information and happenings during the week at Zion Church.

# SUNDAY NEWS

# DECEMBER 15, 2024

## Serving This Morning

Ushers: Susan Merlino, Ken & Carol Rohrbach Greeters: Lee & Susan Newman  
Advent Candle Lighters: Sammi, Jerod, Alissa & Regan Blankenship  
Sound System: Jason Dewert Camera Techs: Blake & Camden Dewert  
(Hearing devices are available if needed. Please ask an usher for one.)

**Usher Dismissal** - An usher will dismiss you by row at the conclusion of the service. They will begin at the front.

**Coffee/Fellowship Hour** will be in the lower commons each Sunday following the worship service.

**Disaster Relief** - As the United Church of Christ continues relief efforts for Hurricane Helene and responds to Hurricane Milton, we invite you to give to the **Hurricanes 2024 Appeal**. Your gift will make a direct impact, providing relief to those suffering, rebuilding homes, and helping restore communities. Together, we can extend the support and hope so desperately needed during this time. Offering envelopes are available by the offering plate for your monetary gifts. Thank you for your compassion and generosity.

**Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross** - The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the UCC for over 100 years. It provides emergency grants, helps with health premiums and Christmas 'thank you' gift checks each December to lower-income retirees. The Christmas Fund is managed by the Pension Boards of the UCC. Offering envelopes were provided in the December newsletter for your gifts; additional envelopes can be found next to the offering plate in the narthex.

**2024 Church Survey** - For those who have not yet filled out the 2024 Church Survey, please take a copy from the ushers table, fill out and place in the offering plate. Thank you!

**2025 Offering Envelopes** are now available in the upper commons. If you do not have any envelopes and would like them, please contact the church office. Thank you.

## On Our List For Prayers

### **Health and Healing:**

Jim Doehring	Phyllis Olson	Carolyn Donoho	Frank Fazzari	Myrt Dunigan
Charlotte Ellison	Kim Yenzen	Kevin Vorderbruegge	Carol Bean	Keith Stahlman
Sarah Berghorn	Bruce Crane (at New Haven Care Center)	Anne Parker (at Willow Brooke in Union)		
Chris Branch (niece of Gerry Hoelscher)		Sharon Waldrop (friend of Jim Doehring)		
Mitch Angell (friend of Charlotte Ellison)		Tammy Wettling (friend of Charlotte Ellison)		
Eric Heitman (nephew of Jim Doehring)		Heather Gooch (great niece of Charlotte Ellison)		
S (Karen Stafford's CASA buddy)		Carol Mossoney (mother of Dan Mossoney)		
Bob Truel (husband of Shirley Truel)		Josh & Tricia Pardee-Jacka (friends of Charlotte Ellison)		
Mike Bailey (husband of Leslie Bailey)		Cindy Roach (friend of Charlotte Ellison)		
Liz Klemme (daughter/sister of Armin, Norma & Phil Klemme)				
Glenda Foster (friend of Charlotte Ellison)		Vanessa Dobsch (niece of Charlotte Ellison)		
Mary Dobsch (sister of Charlotte Ellison)		Aubrey Reed (granddaughter of Charlotte Ellison)		
Wayne Herring (father of Matt Herring)		Beverly Elliott (mother of Mike Elliott)		
Nancy McKenzie (sister of Vicki Hooper)		Bill Stolle (friend of Jim Doehring)		
Whitney Henle (eye surgery, granddaughter of Susan Merlino)				
Roger McDaniel (brother-in-law of Larry & Betty Clark)				
Darlene Farrell (sister of Charlotte Ellison)		Marvin Huggins (brother-in-law of Barb Harvey)		

### **Sympathy is Extended to:**

Ruth Cantrell & family on the death of her husband Rev. Bob Cantrell who died on December 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Church Family Undergoing Cancer Treatment:**

Brenda Viehland	Jake McNeil (member of Zion & son of Sarah Davenport)
Skip Buehrle	Susie Andell
Ronald Dobsch (nephew of Charlotte Ellison)	Sarah Reed (daughter-in-law of Charlotte Ellison)
Cynthia Johnson (friend of Karen Stafford)	Kim Gallagher (friend of Chris & Dawn Robinson)
Trish Kennedy (friend of Charlotte Ellison)	Allen Coffman (friend of Shawn Pehle)
Marissa Schollenberger (friend of Tom & Gayle Williams)	Aaron Dixon (nephew of Dan Mossoney)
Mike Meyer (friend of Mandy Frick)	Brenda (friend of Hettie Becker)
Leland Stahlman (brother of Keith Stahlman)	
Bill Diestelkamp (cousin of Liz Short & friend of Mandy Frick)	

## Various Concerns:

Prayer for our country and those actively serving:

Aviation Structural Mechanic 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Hunter Grafrath (son of Lindsay & Greg Traffas, grandson of Mike & Lynne Elliott)  
Ross Groenke (son of Cindy & Dale Groenke)

## Adult Education Opportunities

**This Morning** - The JOY Adult Class beings meeting again this morning in the lower commons classroom. They will be discussing the book *'If God is Love Don't Be a Jerk'* by John Pavlovitz.

## Christian Education/Faith Quest/Youth News

**This Morning** - All Sunday School classes will meet from 10-11 a.m.; Preschool - ages 3-5 will meet in the Preschool Room (the nursery); Faith Quest - grades kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade will meet in the Bible Max Theatre; Confirm NOT Conform - grades 6-12 will meet in the high school room.

**Please Note** - There will be NO Faith Quest on Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup>.

## Church Calendar - December 15, 2024 to December 22, 2024

<b>Today -</b>	<b>The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent</b>
	<b>9:00 a.m. Worship/Faith Quest Christmas Program</b>
	<b>10:00 a.m. Christian Education/Fellowship Hour</b>
<b>Mon., Dec. 16 -</b>	6:30 p.m. Church Council (lower commons)
<b>Wed., Dec. 18 -</b>	12:00 noon Loops of Love (lower commons)
	7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir (chapel)
<b>Thurs., Dec. 19 -</b>	8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon Quilting Circle
	1:00 p.m. Historical Team (conference room)
	5:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall in use
<b>Fri., Dec. 20 -</b>	6:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall in use
<b>Next Sun., Dec. 22 -</b>	<b>The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent</b>
	<b>9:00 a.m. Worship/Faith Quest Christmas Program</b>
	<b>10:00 a.m. Christian Education/Fellowship Hour</b>

**Wed., Dec. 18** - Orders for Christmas Poinsettias can be made through the church office until December 18<sup>th</sup>. Cost of the poinsettias is \$18 per plant. In lieu of a poinsettia, monetary donations are being received for the Union Food Pantry/Little Food Pantry.

**Thurs., Dec. 19** - Newsletter articles for the January 2025 newsletter are due in the church office by Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>. The newsletter will be assembled on Monday, December 30<sup>th</sup> beginning at 10 a.m. in the fellowship hall.

**Tues., Dec. 24** - Christmas Eve Service with Candlelight begins at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Do you have Christmas lights that are no longer working?** Bring them to church to be recycled! The Green Team will take them to Earthbound Recycling in Eureka -- and all funds we earn will go toward local missions. There is a box in the Lower Commons for your contributions. Thank you!

**Help Thyself Meals** - This is a gentle reminder to make use of the Help Thyself meals for you. That is what they are for.....YOU. In the Lower Commons kitchen there are in the freezer, meals, soups and simple desserts. If you are able to pick up a couple of meals for your week ahead, please do so. If unable to pick them up a church friend can do it for you or a Call to Care member would be happy to bring them to you when they come to visit. Please take advantage of this opportunity available to you. Let any of the following people know if you know of someone that needs assistance. Kathy Young, (314-580-3105), Carol Rohrbach (636-583-3659), Ann Hartley (636-346-5921), Dorothy Mitana (636-239-1296), Jane Ridder (314-520-7090) and Maxine Harrison (636-583-2159).

**Little Food Pantry** - Thank you for the great support in keeping the Little Food Pantry going! A list of the most needed items is posted on the bulletin board in the lower commons. Monetary donations can also be given - contact the church office.

**Little Free Library** - Just a reminder that Zion has a Little Free Library located close to the corner of Washington and Springfield Avenue. If you have any gently used adult/children's books please feel free to drop them in the free library or drop them off in the church office. Thank you!

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