

Faith United Methodist Church

First Sunday of Advent

December, 2019

God's People Gather to Worship at 9:00 am

† OPENING PRAYER

God of love and mercy, deliver us! As we celebrate this joyous season, we can't help but reflect on the trying times of this year. We can't help but think of the hate, division, oppression, and tragedy that sweeps through our lands. Deliver us! Change our hearts, O God, and heal our land. In these times and the days to come, may we be your instruments to change this world, to fix what is broken, to reach out to those in need. May we find comfort and hope in you, O Christ, knowing that through you, the world might be saved.

† GREETING The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

† CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVELY)

Leader In the darkness of hopelessness, hate and fear, God longs to comfort us.

People Come, thou long-expected Jesus and make a way where there seems to be no way.

Leader As we worship and praise you, prepare our hearts to hear the voices of your prophets once more.

People Come, thou long-expected Jesus and challenge us with your truth once more.

Leader As we wait for the light to be born in our world and lives,

People Come, thou long-expected Jesus and deliver us again in this sacred season.

† OPENING HYMN 196 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (IN UNISON)

Loving God, Christmas comes but once a year. Thank you for being active in our lives all year long! Reveal the negative aspects of our behaviors and free us from their hold on us. Let us feel your empowering love sending us with love into the world. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Like the wreath, God encircles us with divine grace. Like the flame, God warms our hearts. Like the candle, God lights our darkness. In a baby, we see hope of a future and our fears vanish in the newborn Christ. Hallelujah!

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Leader Will those who will assist us in our observance of Advent, please come forward.

Reader 1 Today we light the first Advent candle, the candle of hope.

Reader 2 Let us pray.

Pastor Redeemer God, you are the one who gives us hope. As we wait, we know that you will bring justice and peace. As we wait, we find you have made your wisdom known in our lives. Come, Redeemer, come. Amen.

Reader 1 & 2 The first Advent candle is the candle of hope. We remember the hopeful longing of people waiting for a savior. And we acknowledge our own hope that we, too, might be filled with the light of Christ.

Reader 1 May the light of hope burn brightly in our hearts all our days.

Reader 2 (Use the lighter provided to light the blue candle closest to the congregation.)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 40:1-5

Page 511, pew Bible

† NEW TESTAMENT READING

Matthew 24:36-44

Page 701, pew Bible

OFFERTORY

Emmanuel, come among us once more this Advent season. Help us to hear your voice calling in the wilderness, Continue to inspire us to actively live out our faith in the world and generously give of what we have. Continue to help us create spaces of hope and healing. Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Page 95, UMH

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

As we prepare for today's offering, let us reflect on how we can help God come to our corner of the world through our ministry and mission.

† HYMN 206

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

SERMON

The Light for the Dark World

Rev. David A. E. Whitt

PRAYER

Loving Father, let your peace and your heaven come to earth. Set in motion human mercy and hospitality that reach into our own towns and around the world; set in motion economic possibilities for all people; set in motion a transparent honesty, which erases corruption; set in motion a contentment with life and things so that we are not caught in gluttonous buying. Thank you for Jesus who moved through birth, childhood to adulthood, and shared your wisdom and your grace with all the world. Refresh us with love to give away.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TIME OF JOYS

EUCHARIST (SEE INSERT)

† HYMN 418

We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder

† BENEDICTION

May the beauty of a sleeping baby fill you with wonder, the curiosity of a toddler dance in your toes, the anticipation of a lover carry you into tomorrow, the peace of Christ sooth your mind, and the joy of the Holy Spirit brighten your whole day and night! While we are absent from this place, know that you are cradled by the living God. **We go in peace to love and serve the Lord. In the name of Christ, Amen.**

† HYMN 666

Shalom to You