

ADVENT PRAYERS FOR A SEASON OF PREPARATION

Light looked down and beheld Darkness,
“Thither will I go,” said Light.
Peace looked down and beheld War,
“Thither will I go,” said Peace.
Love looked down and beheld Hatred,
“Thither will I go,” said Love.

So came Light and shone;
So came Peace and gave rest;
So came Love and brought Life.
And the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us.

(Laurence Housman)

*O come, Desire of Nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind.
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease,
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel will come to thee, O Israel.*

(15th-century French Carol)

That our Earth Mother may wrap herself
In a fourfold robe of white meal;
That she may be covered with frost flowers;
That yonder on all the mossy mountains,
The forests may huddle together with the cold;
That their arms may be broken by the snow,
In order that the land may be thus,
I have made my prayer sticks into living beings.

(Zuni Prayer)

A Prayer for Children

As Mary and Joseph cared for Jesus,
may (*child's name*) know your love and our care.
As we prepare for Christmas,
may *s/he* be blessed with the true meaning of this season:
light in the darkness
and your love in this world.
Amen.

Monthly publication

United Church of Santa Fe
Santa Fe, New Mexico

December 2021

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**UNITED CHURCH
OF SANTA FE**

A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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**Covenant of
The United Church of Santa Fe**

In the Lord's name we gather together here in Santa Fe

to worship and grow in the Christian tradition,

to minister in love to all persons,
to strive for justice and peace,
to respond to God's word.

We celebrate the heritage of Santa Fe and give ourselves to its challenges and opportunities.

We endeavor to live in harmony with all creation as stewards of the earth.

We share in the life and mission of the United Church of Christ and of Christians everywhere.

To these purposes we unite and covenant with God and one another, watchful for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor's Message

Dear Friends,

Poet and farmer Wendell Berry writes that when "despair for the world grows in me," he seeks out still waters and the stars—in his words, he finds the "peace of wild things."

Terra Brockman, author and farmer, finds such peace amongst the cultivated orchards of her family farm in Illinois. Each winter she, her sisters, and extended families gather around the apple trees to sing and give thanks for the bounty the trees have given them in the past and the promise they hold for the future. Their ritual draws on the ancient tradition of "wassailing."

You may know the 19th century English Christmas carol, "Here we come a wassailing" that describes carolers going from house to house to sing and receive treats. But both the tradition and the word are actually much older. "Wassail" comes from an ancient Saxon greeting: *Wæs þu hæl*, "be thou hale," or more colloquially, "be in good health." And the original recipients of the mid-winter "wassail" blessing were trees, plants, and animals, not humans.

Wassailing was a ritual that took place all across northern Europe in the dead of winter, as people braved the cold to go from field to field, stall to stall, orchard to orchard to offer plants, trees, oxen, and donkeys a drink from the Wassell-bowle and a toast to their health such as this one recorded by Henry David Thoreau on a trip to England:

*Let every man take off his hat
And shout out to th'old apple tree:
Old Apple tree, old apple tree;
We've come to wassail thee.*

According to Brockman, wassailing is an expression of gratitude to the rest of God's creatures that provide human beings with sustenance and life. She calls it "a sort of interspecies enactment of the golden rule."

We don't have apple or other fruit-bearing trees at the United Church of Santa Fe, nor do we have oxen or donkeys, but we do have lots of pinons, privets, junipers, and oaks that have blessed this land for generations. We also have a lot of people who like to sing. And this winter, we have a dry and thirsty land that hasn't had much snow or rain in recent months.

So take time this Advent to toast the trees, pray for snow, share some carols, and give thanks to God the Creator of it all. Wherever we live, we can wassail one another and also the plants, animals, and microscopic life in the earth below.

If you want to join with others at United, stay after the 10:00 service on December 19 (4th Advent) or come at 5:30 on the night of the Solstice (Tuesday, Dec. 21). Wherever this Advent and Christmas find you, find a tree to hold onto and raise a glass to all the life on earth to which we are so intricately bound: *Wæs hæl!*

And may the peace of wild things, cultivated things, **all** things be with you and with this world that God so loves.

Blessings,



Worship in December

On the Up and Up

Advent Worship Starts November 28 (both In-person & Online)

Purple candles against the darkness. Music in a minor key. “Come, O Come, Emmanuel” before “O Come, All Ye Faithful.” Advent doesn’t look or sound like the world around us as we prepare for Christmas. It’s a journey that takes us into the shadow of the Roman Empire, out to the wilderness of John the Baptist; and from the big city of Jerusalem to the little town of Belen (Bethlehem). Though the journey is hard, it leads to new life. Invite a friend to United in Advent. It’s one of the best Christmas gifts you can offer.

Look Up

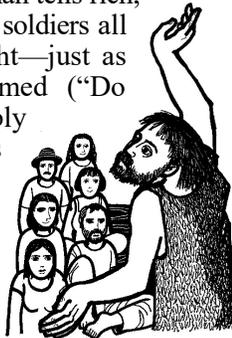
1st Sunday of Advent, Nov. 28

For Christians, the journey to Christmas doesn’t begin with cute babies and adoring shepherds. We start with the adult Jesus predicting the end-times, when “the earth will be in distress, men will faint with fear, and the power of the heavens will be shaken.” (Luke 21:23-28) Yet the Advent journey also begins with the promise of redemption—new life—and Jesus’ call to “look up,” because God’s work is at hand. Rev. Ben Larzelere is guest preacher.

Fess Up

2nd Sunday of Advent, Dec. 5

We’re still a long way from Bethlehem on the 2nd Sunday of Advent. Instead, the Gospel takes us out to the wilderness of the Jordan River where Jesus’ cousin John is scaring the bejesus out of anyone who will listen. (Luke 3:1-6) The wild man tells rich, poor, young, old, tax collectors and soldiers all alike to straighten up and do right—just as the Prophet Micah had proclaimed (“Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God.”). The funny thing is that people flocked to hear John’s hard word—maybe because he was so full of life or because he told the truth about the only real way to new life.



Stand Up

A Service of Lessons and Carols Joyous Sunday of Advent, Dec. 12

Rome still ruled, her hometown was still occupied territory, and the chasm between poor and rich as wide as ever when Mary of Nazareth threw back her head and sang to the heavens her magnificent vision of God’s intention for her and her people. (Luke 2:46-55) Her ancestor in the faith, Hannah, had done the same when she finally was freed of her shame (I Samuel 2:1-10). Whether bent over by Roman oppression or the culture’s expectations, both women knew the joy that comes with finally being able to stand up and sing God’s song of hope.

Lighten Up

4th Sunday of Advent, Dec. 19

Mary’s elderly cousin Elizabeth had a baby six months before Jesus was born. His aged father Zechariah named him John, because that’s what the angel had told him. Then the old man launched into song about the new child and that proclaimed “the day shall dawn upon us from on high, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace.” (Luke 1:57-80) Two thousand years later, we still need to hear old Zechariah’s song.

Farolito Set-up (3:00 pm Christmas Eve)

Join us Christmas Eve at 3:00 pm to help place the farolitos all around (and on top of) the church for the evening services. Many hands make light work! Please bring long grill lighters.

Christmas Eve Services



Outdoor Family and Friends, Candles & Carols – 4:30 pm

Designed for families with children, but all welcome! Dress warmly and come walk in the light.

Candlelight Service – 7:00 pm

Carols, candle lighting, the Christmas Festival Choir, and a message of hope.

Candlelight Communion – 9:00 pm

A simple service with the Christmas Story, Communion, and taking God’s light into the night.

Yet to Be Revealed (Literally) 1st Sunday of Christmastide Dec. 26

Music Notes

What a joy to be back in the Sanctuary, even as we celebrate the extraordinary creativity that brought us through all the changes of the last 19 months! Advent begins on Nov. 28, and we've planned lots of great Christmas music throughout December. We continue with our mixed choir of singers from both choirs in smaller numbers each Sunday, increasing them as we are able. And now that I'm back on the Steinway, I look forward to playing contemplative Bach pieces for Advent.

On Christmas Eve, we have three services: the 4:30 Outdoor Family Service, the 7:00 Choral Service, and a simple Communion service at 9:00 pm; all three services with lovely Christmas music.

Finally, we have young musicians from United playing in a number of December performances (see below). Congratulations to all our young musicians and may your Christmas Season be joyous!

Jacquelyn Helin
Music Director



Advent and Christmas are coming! Our annual Lessons and Carols Service is the Third (Joyous) Sunday of Advent (Dec. 12). The repertoire includes a lovely arrangement "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" mixed with the pop song "The Rose," offering a wonderful theological juxtaposition. Other music includes Carolyn Jennings "A New Magnificat," a lyric dialog between Hannah and Mary, and "Then We Shall Sing for Joy," a piece by yours truly. The service also involves lots of hymns and lessons, preparing us for the birth of our Savior.

During Advent, the choir sings four of the seven "O Antiphons." These have been sung by the Roman Catholic Church since at least the 8th century and were originally intended to be sung in the final seven days leading to Christmas Eve. However, for several years we have chosen four of the seven to sing in the four weeks of Advent. The choir sings them in Latin, lending an ancient air of solemnity to our preparations.

Bradley Ellingboe
Director of Choirs



Two Musical Offerings by Coro Lux
Albuquerque-based choir (abqcorolux.org)
directed by Bradley Ellingboe

La Fiesta de la Posada by jazz greats Dave and Iola Brubeck, also with Coro Lux's new Youth Chorus, *El Faro* (led by United's Gabrielle Dietrich), and Hovey and Alexis Corbin on marimbas. Sat., Dec. 4 (7:00 pm); Sun., Dec. 5 (3:00 pm)

A Balm in Gilead, Saturday Choral Workshop and Sunday Concert with nationally known composer Rosephayne Powell, directed by Bradley Ellingboe, narrated by Rev. Talitha Arnold at United Church of Santa Fe (Feb. 19 and 20). Jointly sponsored by Coro Lux and United Church.

A Virtual Pageant about an Incarnational Gift!

Given the ever-changing corona-time, we're planning a virtual Christmas Pageant this year! Each child will have a part to record (with United's videographer Elijah Marquez' help), then Elijah will stitch it all together. Parents are invited to play a role, too. Let us know if your kids (and you, too) can participate. It'll take some organization to get all the parts coordinated, so please let us know asap. Thank you!

Simple Family Suppers

Once a month, United provides a simple take-home supper for United families to give hard-working, juggling-everything parents a break and feed both bodies and souls of kids and parents. To help by cooking or shopping, please let Talitha Arnold know.

Coming of Age in Corona-time United's Youth Ministry

We had planned the *Rite of Initiation* for our nine Youth Initiates for last May. Those plans had to change. We then planned it for this November. Those plans had to change. But we're determined one way or another to mark their rite of passage into adult life and adult faith – so stay tuned!

STAFFING FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

As United emerges from the pandemic and rebuilds our community, we want to rebuild our Children's, Youth and Family Ministries. Several staff positions available: Director, Sunday Nurture Ctr. Caregivers, Teachers, Youth Leaders. If you know of well-qualified people with a deep love for kids and a strong background in both education and the Christian faith, please spread the word and contact either Rev. Talitha Arnold or Children/Youth Ministry Chair Karen Wilbanks (469-438-6115). Keep our kids and this ministry in your prayers! Thank you!

Please keep United's Youth Musicians in prayer as they play in holiday concerts!

Santa Fe Youth Symphony (sfysa.org/yso.html):

- Intermezzo String Orchestra – Jaden Rand (Sat., Dec. 4, 12:30 pm)
- SF Youth Philharmonic – Luke Rand, Sasha & Jack Smucker (Sat., Dec. 4, 5:00 pm)
- SF Youth Symphony – Madelyn and Nathan Kingston (Sun., Dec. 5, 4:00 pm)

Santa Fe Symphony (santafesymphony.org/event/christmas-treasures-2021/) and Santa Fe Youth Symphony: side-by-side Christmas Pops; Madelyn & Nathan Kingston (Sat., Dec. 12, 4:00 pm)

Santa Fe Pro Musica (sfpromusica.org/vivaldi-four-seasons/): Madelyn Kingston, apprentice with Pro Musica's Vivaldi concerts (Sat/Sun, Dec. 29/30, 7:00 pm)



CARE AND CONCERN

PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH AND OUR WORLD



Prayers of Thanks to:

- > Everyone who is helping with our **“Live Generously, Connect Deeply” Campaign for United 2022!**
- > The **Sacred Space Task Force** for getting the Sanctuary ready for Advent; the **Congregational Care Team and Communion Bag Deliverers** for keeping us connected;
- > The **Combined Choir** and United’s music staff (**Jacquelyn Helin, Bradley Ellingboe, and Choral Scholars**);
- > **Children’s and Youth Team, and videographer Elijah Marquez**, for organizing our “Virtual Christmas Pageant;” the **Outreach Team** for organizing Compassionate Christmas Gifts.

Prayers of Blessing for:

- > **Mary Hasbah Roessel and Joe Neidhardt** who with their daughter Nicole spoke at the Glasgow Climate Change Conference;
- > **Nathan Kingston** and the Santa Fe Boys Soccer Team, celebrating their State win.

Prayers of Healing and Hope for:

- > **Georgia Carson and her family** following the death of her husband Bill in Baltimore; the family of **Olivia Rindone Dodson**, whose memorial service was at United November 13; family and friends of **Pamela McCorduck**, who died in California in October;
- > Those living with cancer and their loved ones who care for them, including **Roger and Linda Knapp, Jody and Peter Spalding** and their daughter **Anna**, and others;
- > Persons living with various medical conditions, including **Theresa Kline, Phil Laughlin** (recovering from a fall), **Robyn Covelli, Mary Noonan**, and others;
- > **United’s health care workers (Cheryl Haskin, Boud Atterbury, Rachel Joyce, Jennifer and Eric Manske, Joanna Toews, Matt Schmidt, Phil Smucker, Russell Stowers, Karen Dailey, Betsy and Jaycob Ross, and others)**, along with grocery store stockers and clerks, educators (**Jack Lain, Carlos Lee, Alicia Wolfe, Gail Ansheles, Katherine Freeman**), and others on the front lines of the pandemic;
- > Persons living with chronic pain, including **Jan McGough, Carol Ingells, and Ed Barker** (as he and **Ann** are at Mayo Clinic for his treatments);
- > **Cliff Beck, Sandy Vermillion, Eric Manske’s father, Monsignor Jerome Martinez**, and others living with neurological conditions;
- > Persons with memory loss or dementia and those who care for them; those with addictions or mental illnesses and for their families; persons who are imprisoned and those who love them;
- > Persons at senior facilities (**Yvonne Fairchild, Bobbie Smith, Natalie Wells, Tracey Ebeling, Margo Clark, Linda Dillman, Helen Wagner**, and others);
- > Persons caring for family members, near and far, and persons with families in other countries (**Blanca Surgeon’s and Zulema Zambrano’s** family, Honduras; **Joohee and Lee Rand**, Korea; **John Walker**, Scotland; **Avril and Jim Ekstrand**, Ireland; and others);
- > Immigrant children, teenagers, and adults fleeing violence and poverty, seeking refuge in our country; **policymakers** who determine their fate;
- > Persons speaking out and standing up for racial justice in our country and around the world;
- > Military people and law enforcement officers, including those in our congregation;
- > Prayers for rain in the thirsty West and for all leaders making decisions that impact climate change;
- > Prayers for an end to the pandemic;
- > Deep prayers for our nation and for all governors, health and medical officials, and national leaders that they might have God’s vision of justice, grace, and abundant life for people and all creation.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Congregational Care for December</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>On Call: Dusty Pruitt (302) 393-3265 Food: Debbie Maloney (940) 867-2169</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Prayer Chain Keeps Others in Prayer</p> <p>United has an email prayer chain of people who have offered to hold others in prayer, particularly in difficult times. If you would like to be part of it, please let us know. (unitedchurchsf@gmail.com)</p> |
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**STUDY AND FELLOWSHIP GROUPS
(In-person, Inside)**

All participants must sign up by 5:00 pm
the day before the group meeting
at unitedchurchsf@gmail.com.

Masks and vaccination confirmation required.
Thank you!

**Wednesday Women’s Study Group
Dec. 1 and 15 (10:00 am)**

All women are invited to join the discussion of *The Light of Days* by Judith Batalion. (Marcia Gardner: 505 -670-5186, marcia.chavez3@gmail.com)

Pretty Good Guys

Wednesdays, Dec. 8 and 22 (10:30 – noon)

All men welcome! We get know one another by talking about our lives and spiritual journeys. Newcomers have no trouble participating right away! (Ken Bordner: ken.bordner2@gmail.com, 585-734-4548,)

Hope in a Hard Time

Thursdays (8:00 - 9:00 am via Zoom)

Dec. 2, 9, 16

The visions of the ancient Prophet Isaiah have given people hope down through the ages. Join in this Advent study to explore those visions and find that hope. Please pre-register. (unitedchurchsf@gmail.com)

**Thank You for YOUR Pledges to
LIVE GENEROUSLY, CONNECT DEEPLY
Campaign for United 2022**

Both in-person and virtually, lots of people are connecting deeply with the United Church of Santa Fe and many have already committed to “Campaign for United 2022!” Great gratitude for all who led small groups, spoke in worship, stuffed envelopes—and to members and friends near and far, who’ve pledged so generously. As of November 17, we have 86 pledges totaling \$303,100, well on the way to the \$550,000 goal. We’ll make it with your help! Bring your pledge card to worship, drop it off at the church or mail USPS or via email. Also please consider the electronic debit/credit program. Email unitedchurchsf@gmail.com or call (505) 988-3295 for more info and forms. Thank you and thanks be to God!

Year-End Giving

To claim a charitable deduction for 2021, donations must be received or postmarked by Dec. 31, 2021. Checks received after Dec. 31 can’t qualify for a charitable deduction for 2021, even if predated 2021. (Sorry!) To contribute online, go to unitedchurchofsantafe.org and click “Donate Now.” Many thanks!

The Desert Shall Bloom

Advent Retreat

Saturday, Dec. 11 (8:30 am-12:00 pm)

Take time for reflection, prayer and silence and consider the real gifts God wants to offer us this season with a half-day “Advent Retreat” based on Isaiah’s promises. RSVP by Monday, December 6. (Childcare provided, if needed.)



Memorial Gifts for Christmas Wreaths, Poinsettias, and Flowers for Congregational Care

Christmas is coming! United will be adorned with wreaths and poinsettias. We’ll also deliver Christmas Flowers to United members and friends for whom this holiday season is particularly difficult. Your contributions in honor or memory of loved ones helps underwrite it all. (Suggested minimum donation is \$15.) Please fill out this form, then return to the church or email to unitedchurchsf@gmail.com with names of persons to be remembered or honored. We need names by **Sunday, Dec. 12** to list in the 4th Advent and Christmas Eve bulletins.



CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS AND REMEMBRANCES
(Please bring or mail your contribution to the church office:
1804 Arroyo Chamiso, Santa Fe, NM 87505, by **December 12.**)

DONOR: _____ Phone: _____

Name of person to be remembered/honored (please circle one): In memory of / In honor of

(Please print) _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____ (Please make checks to “UCSF” with note for “Flowers”)

THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE
A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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Mailing Date — November 19, 2021

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE

The United Church of Santa Fe invites you to join us as we grow in faith and hope. We are a part of the United Church of Christ, a progressive and inclusive Christian tradition that historically emphasized freedom of thought and belief as well as a commitment to the community. As Christians, we are many individual members, each with different gifts to offer and contributions to make. We are also one body in Christ, members of one another.

As an expression of the practice and conviction of this congregation, we declare ourselves to be an “open and affirming church,” welcoming people who share a faith journey with Christ and who share with us the covenant that binds us together regardless of age, gender, race and ethnic background, mental or physical disability, or sexual orientation. We welcome you!

BOTH RECORDED AND INDOOR WORSHIP SERVICES OFFERED

United (even apart) Church is also United (indoors) Church! We'll continue to offer the **recorded worship services** and also a **10:00 am Sunday service indoors**. The two services are similar in content but with different music. For the indoor service, please register by noon each Friday. Proof of vaccination (except if unable to be vaccinated due to age or medical condition) and masks required. You can keep your vaccination confirmation on file at the church. Email unitedchurchsf@gmail.com for more information.