

Longswamp United Church of Christ

December 1, 2024 ~ 10:15 am

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Facebook page: **Longswamp UCC**

Wi-Fi Guest Password: Christ200

Rev. Kimberly Berenotto, Pastor

Ann Mabry Miller, Organist

Ministry Partners: Head Usher, Reader, Greeter- Laurie Heagy

First Sunday in Advent - Hanging of the Greens

**Indicates to rise as you are able in body and spirit.*

MUSIC PREPARES US FOR WORSHIP

"What Child Is This"

Traditional, arr. Gary Lanier

"It Is Well With My Soul"

Philip P. Bliss, arr. Gary Lanier

Glenn Fisher, flute

"On Jordan's Stormy Banks"

Birchwood

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP *(based on words from the prophet Isaiah)*

Leader: In the days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hill; all the nations shall stream to it. Many people 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 God's ways and that we may walk in God's paths."

People: With what shall we come to God's house?

Leader: Bring branches of cedar and holly, bring evergreens and a pine tree, hang wreaths and garlands.

People: Make the church fragrant with living greens and our holy play. In acts of hanging greens and listening to the words of prophets, let us make our hearts, and this space, a place of inward and outward preparation. As we wait for the One who will come to us at the conclusion of this season of hope.

***HYMN**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

#135

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Candle Lighting Liturgy & First Candle is Lit

Reader- Sadie Moser

People: God of all hope, shine your light on us, we pray. Prepare our hearts as we wait for the coming of your son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION

All: God of all hopefulness, we long for the simple beauty of Christmas – for all the old familiar melodies, words, and symbols. But in that longing, help us to yearn, even more, for your renewed presence. Forgive us when we focus on the wrong things in this season of holiday preparation.

As we prepare to follow the shepherds and magi who bring you gifts, we confess that our gift of love to others has not always been as warm or sincere or real as it should be. Forgive us, and allow your love to flow through us to all people. May the true Spirit of this Advent season not only creep into our hearts, but abide there so, even when we return to the modern cares and responsibilities of the holidays, we remain centered on opening ourselves to Christ's coming to our world as a baby in a manger. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: We hope and prepare for the forgiveness we know will come to us through Jesus Christ.

People: God's grace will be born into this world. Alleluia! Amen!

LOFT CHOIR ANTHEM

***PASSING THE PEACE**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

All children are welcome to come forward for the Children's Message. After the Children's Message, children can return to sit with their families or sit in the kids' area for their special decorating project. Children are welcome to help with decorating the sanctuary during the service as well.

SPECIAL MUSIC

*"Away in a Manger" James R. Murray, arr. Gary Lanier
Glenn Fisher, Flute*

HANGING THE GREENS

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 60:13

Reflection

"Evergreen"

Pastor Kim

***HYMN**

O Little Town of Bethlehem

#155

DECORATING THE TREE

Scripture Reading
Reflection

“O Christmas Tree”

Jeremiah 17:7-8
Pastor Kim

***HYMN**

What Child Is This?

#150

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

Scripture Reading
Reflection

“Prepare the Way”

Luke 3:1-6
Pastor Kim

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LORD’S PRAYER

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.

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERING & MISSION MOMENT

***DOXOLOGY**

#809

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

***OFFERING PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

All: God of hope, may these gifts reflect our hopes for the world you long to make a reality. God of abundance, may our giving show our thankfulness for our blessings. We will trust in your goodness, Holy One, and in your ability to use our offerings for the building up of your kingdom. Amen.

***HYMN**

On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry

#136

BENEDICTION

CLOSING MUSIC

“Postlude”

Battmann

Portions of this service adapted from The United Methodist Church’s Discipleship Ministries’ “Hanging of the Greens Service” and “Hanging of the Christmas Greens: A Service for the Beginning of Advent” by Monte Nabors, Kelly Yates and Dennis Bratcher.



WELCOME TO LONGSWAMP UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST!

This is our Weekly Beacon- December 1st-7th, 2024

Thank you for joining us on this First Sunday of Advent as we beautify our Sanctuary and decorate for the Christmas season! Special thank you to Glenn Fisher for playing the flute during the preludes and during the time of decoration.

Join us next week for our second Sunday in Advent and Holy Communion. We will hear special music from the Loft Choir.

Sharing Our Faith

Christmas presents for our Senior Saints - Please help us brighten the holiday season for our 13 Senior Saints by volunteering to deliver a Christmas gift bag from our congregation to one of them! The Christmas presents for these special LUCC members are available today. Please sign your name on the sheet on the clipboard on the table behind the name of the Senior Saint to whom you're going to deliver the Christmas present. Make sure that you check the back of the gift tag for the name, address, and telephone number of the specific Senior Saint you signed up for. Please deliver the bag before December 21st. Thank you!

This Wednesday, December 4th, is our second and final Christmas Craft Night! Join us any time from 6:30-8pm in Fegely hall for Christmas crafts, snacks, and fellowship. We will be working on more props for the Christmas play, making cinnamon ornaments, and creating mini bibles out of chocolate!

Teaching What We Believe

Children's Church still has a few more dates for the 2024 year. Though there is no Children's Church today so that families can stay together in worship, next week, December 8th, there will be a special lesson about Mary. The Christmas play is on December 15th so there will be no Sunday school that day and Jesus' Birthday Party is on December 22nd.

LUCC's Birthday Party for Jesus is on Sunday, December 22nd in Fegely Hall during the worship service. All children are welcome to join the fun as we hear the story of the first Christmas, play games, make a craft, sing songs, and have snacks. We will proceed to Fegely Hall as a group after the announcements at the beginning of the service. If you have any questions about our **Birthday Party for Jesus**, please contact Jill or Vern Shade. Hope to see you there!

Advent Calendars are available beginning this week. Each family (whether you have children at home or not) is welcome to take one home to help focus on the scriptures this time of year. Additionally, Pastor Kim contributed to an **Advent Devotional** that will be available on our website. If you are interested in a print copy, please contact the church office.

Acting on Jesus' Teachings

Our December 2024 Internal Mission is the LUCC Christmas List! You may remember this mission from last year, when we had ALL of our "gifts" provided! We have a wide variety of

things on our list this year, from oil payments, to Christmas play props, to paper supplies. These are items that keep the church office, church services, and daycare running smoothly. Please consider giving a donation by taking a slip from the board and placing it in an envelope with your offering. Be sure to either use your mission offering or mark "LUCC Christmas List" on the envelope. We are so appreciative of the dedication and generosity of our community here at LUCC!

A **HUGE "THANK YOU"** to our LUCC members and friends who supported our November mission by sharing the joy of the Christmas season with presents given to 15 local underprivileged children and 20 residents of Phoebe Home in Allentown. All presents are to be returned to the church by **today**. If you still need to bring the present, please see Jill Shade today. All Christmas presents for the 15 local underprivileged children will be delivered this week to Friend, Inc. Community Services and to Phoebe Home by next Monday.

Support

We are placing a final brick order of the year for our **275th Anniversary Brick Walkway!** If you would like to order a brick please contact Maggie in the church office. We plan to install all new bricks in the Spring of 2025.

Last call for poinsettias! Orders are due by Wednesday, December 4th. Each plant is \$10 and will be delivered to the church before December 22 to decorate our sanctuary for the holiday season. Plants can be picked up after the 11pm service on Christmas Eve. Please fill out the form in your bulletin and return to the church office ASAP. Thank you!

Longswamp UCC Business

Hard copies of our newsletter can be found on the left side table in the narthex by the front door when leaving the sanctuary. Online copies are available on our website or, if you'd like to join the email list, just email the church office.