SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ST. JOHN

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

WELCOME!

FAITH

DECEMBER 8, 2023 | 10:30AM

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Assistive listening devices are available at the Welcome Table.
Nursery (Room 103) for children under 6 with parents/guardians only. No staff provided.
Offering plates are in the front and back of the Church.
Restrooms are through the single doors in the front.
The people rise in body or spirit at this sign:
The people's responses are in **bold print**.
Masks are optional.

Allen Fluent, preacher; Tim Smith, liturgist;
Brandon Stroup, director of music, piano; Jessica Beltran, piano; April Goetsch, piano.

GATHERING MUSIC AND LIGHTING THE CANDLES

Adeline Palm, acolyte

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus -arr. April Goetsch — April Goetsch, piano

WELCOME & CHURCH MATTERS

Allen Fluent

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here.
Jesus didn't reject people. Neither do we.

You are invited to visit the Welcome Table in the back by the red banner.
Please fill out the INFORMATION CARD on the back of the pew in front of you and place it in an offering plate at the front or back as you leave.

SILENCE IS KEPT

CALL TO WORSHIP

Allen Fluent

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who has looked favorably upon God's people and redeemed them. God has raised up a mighty savior for us, in the house of David, as God spoke through the mouth of the holy prophets from of old:
Thus God has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors and has remembered the holy covenant.
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

And give us knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of our sins. Because of the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

HYMN OF PRAISE, 122 — *Come, O Long-Expected Jesus -HYFRYDOL*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: THE CANDLE OF FAITH — Choir Members

ADVENT HYMN — *One Candle Is Lit -CRADLE SONG*

Come quickly, shalom, teach us how to prepare
for a gift that compels us with justice to care.
Our spirits are restless till sin and war cease.
One candle is lit for the reign of God's peace.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

(With a word, a smile, a handshake, an embrace, whatever is most comfortable for you, greet one another with the peace of Christ.)

ANTHEM — Chancel Choir

Mighty Great Joy! -arr. Patti Drennan — Jessica Beltran, piano

READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES: ISAIAH 40:1-11

(Page 667 – Old Testament section of the pew Bible) — Tim Smith

Here ends the reading inspired by God.
May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING: MARK 1:1-8

(Page 34 – New Testament section of the pew Bible) — Allen Fluent

Here ends the reading inspired by God.
May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON — "WHO INTRODUCED YOU?" — Allen Fluent

MINISTRY OF MUSIC — April and Katie Goetsch, vocals; April Goetsch, piano

O Come, All You Unfaithful -words and music by Lisa Clow and Bob Kauflin

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE — Allen Fluent

God of abundant grace, **hear our prayer**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Loving and beloved One, eternally present in our midst, may we know your sacred truth, and seek the goodness you desire for all the creatures of the earth.
We ask for what we need to sustain us each day, and we pray that we may learn to share the rest.
Teach us to forgive, so that we may learn to accept your forgiveness.
And let us not be tempted by the anxious days to come.
For the power of your love will rule our hearts forever. Amen

AN AFFIRMATION FOR PROPHETIC TIMES — Tim Smith

In this season of Advent, we celebrate our prophetic faith. Our souls magnify our God and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior. We believe that God will do great things for us, and we praise God's Holy Name. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill shall be laid low. And in the wilderness, we will build a highway for our God.

MISSION MOMENT — The Christmas Fund — Tim Smith

Theme: …The Glory of God shone Around them… *Luke 2:9*

The Christmas Fund offering will be received during the month of December.
Special envelopes are available on the Welcome Table and in the Accessible Lobby.

AN INVITATION TO THE OFFERING — Tim Smith

With our gifts, we share our common commitment to the way of Jesus, the life of the fellowship that is gathered in his name, and the work that is expressed in Christ's ministry to the world.

(Offering plates are in the front and back of the Sanctuary. QR code to give online.)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

May these gifts we share bring the world a little closer to the day of love's victory. Amen.

CLOSING SONG — *Christians All, Your Lord Is Coming -BEACH SPRING*

Christians all, your Lord is coming, drawing near in holy birth.
Ring the bells and sound the trumpets, let your music fill the earth.
Dance and move to show God's glory; kneel and pause to hear God's word.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Rise and let your songs be heard.

Christians all, your Lord is coming, calling you to serve in deed.
See the ones who hurt and suffer, hear their cry and act with speed.
Set all selfish ways behind you. Purge your hearts of sinful greed.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ in you will meet their need.

Christians all, your Lord is coming, he will rise up from the dead.
Lift the cup, of sin forgiven; bless the host and eat his bread.
Mend the ways where peace is broken, give yourselves to true Shalom.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Dwell as one in church and home.

Christians all, your Lord is coming, hope for peace is now at hand.
Let there be no hesitation, walk in faith where life demands.
Bear the word that God has given; share the birth that stirs your soul.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ will come and make you whole.

BENEDICTION — Allen Fluent

PARTING MUSIC — April Goetsch, piano

How Great Thou Art -arr. April Goetsch

Copyrights, Notes & Acknowledgments: All items are used with permission. All rights reserved. OneLicense.net #A-712481 and CCLI #21671608. **Call to Worship** from the Prophecy of Zechariah, father of John the Baptist found in Luke 1:68-79 adapted by Allen Fluent; **Advent Hymn** *One Candle Is Lit*; Words: ©1988, 1995 Chalice Press (Admin. by Christian Board of Publication) Music: Public Domain. From *Chalice Hymnal* p. 128; **Isaiah 40.1-11** and **Mark 1.1-8** from *New Revised Standard Version Bible* ©1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA; **Prayers of the People** from *Call to Worship Liturgy, Music, Preaching and the Arts* ©2014, Office of Theology and Worship Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) adapted by Allen Fluent; **An Affirmation for Prophetic Times**, **An Invitation to the Offering** and **Prayer of Dedication** by Allen Fluent; **Closing Song** *Christians All, Your Lord Is Coming* words by Jim Miller, 1993, *Chalice Hymnal*, ©1995 Chalice Press, (p. 136), Tune used: BEACH SPRING.

Stay Connected at St. John Church*!*

To meet with the Pastor call: 859.261.2066, email Pastor@StJohnChurch.net.
To submit a prayer request for the Prayer List, email PrayerList@StJohnChurch.net.
To reserve a room in the Church house, email BuildingUse@StJohnChurch.net.
To receive the newsletter, Prayer List, etc. email Office@StJohnChurch.net.
For more information go to: www.StJohnChurch.net.
No online connection? Call the office at 859.261.2066.
Typical office hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9:00am to 4:00pm.

520 Fairfield Avenue • Bellevue, KY 41073 • StJohnChurch.net • 859.261.2066