

Mt. Zion United Church of Christ

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Rev. Amy E. Northridge, Associate Pastor

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Administrator

Ms. Donna Gross, Custodian

First Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM & 10:30 AM

Close to Home

Homesick

This morning, as we worship our God, we also celebrate the Lord's Supper. Here at Mt. Zion UCC, all are invited to the table of grace.

If you are a guest, thank you for worshiping with us today. We invite you to take a moment to complete a visitor's card located in the back of the pew in front of you and place it in the offering plate at the back of the church. We also invite you to sign your name in our guest book located in the back entrance of the sanctuary.

We welcome infants and children and all their wiggles & voices in our worship! For your comfort, we also have a children's corner in the back narthex where your child can relax and play and you can still participate in the worship experience. We also have nursery care downstairs during our 10:30 AM worship service.

Additionally, after the children's message during the 10:30 AM service, children from 3 years old—6th grade are invited to participate in Sunday school in our classroom downstairs. They can choose to attend Sunday school or return to their seats to sit with their parents. Please see a member of the welcoming team for assistance!

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS JOYS & CONCERNS

PRELUDE *From the Squalor of a Lonely Stable* by Townend

POEM *Homesick* by Rev. Sarah Speed

CALL TO WORSHIP¹

L: Can one be homesick for something you've never known?

P: We are homesick for a just world, for peace like rivers, for the end of suffering.

L: Yes, we are homesick—

P: for joy that is contagious, for nations that feel like neighbors, and for hospitals that run empty.

L: We are homesick for the world God promises.

P: We are homesick, but we are on our way.

L: God is here. God is still creating.

P: Let us worship Holy God.

CANDLELIGHTING¹

L: We hope for a world where all are fed.

P: We hope for a world with more bridges than walls.

L: We hope for a world with wide open doors.

P: We hope for a world with contagious laughter.

L: We hope for a world where trees grow tall and creeks run clean.

P: We hope for a world where all people feel at home—in their bodies, in the church, in their physical homes.

L: We hope for that world.

P: We long for that world.

L: We are homesick for that world.

P: So today we light the candle of hope, because hope keeps our hearts alive as we wait.

L: May this light be a reminder that the wait is always worth it.

P: We are close to home. May we carry hope with us. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN NO. 116 BH** (see pp. 5-6 of bulletin, vs. 1, 2, 6, & 7)

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

***TIME OF CONFESSION**

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION¹

Gracious God, We find ourselves with two options every day— to stay homesick for the world you had in mind, or to allow cynicism to win. Do we hope against hope, or do we throw in the towel? Do we insist on a

better world, or do we assume it's impossible? Forgive us for the days when cynicism wins. Forgive us for numbing our homesick hurt instead of using it to fuel a better world. Kindle in us a hope that won't let go. Gratefully we pray, Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: Family of faith, even when we throw in the towel, even when we give up on hope, God does not give up on us. We are loved. We are claimed. We are invited closer to God's home. So hear and trust this good news:

P: There is room for us in God's house, and nothing can separate us from that love. We are claimed. We are forgiven. We are welcomed home. Thanks be to God! Amen.

ACT OF PRAISE NO. 106 NCH (see p. 7 of bulletin, v. 1)

My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise

ALL SING: My heart sings out with joyful praise to God who raises me, Who came to me when I was low and changed my destiny. The Holy One, the Living God, is always full of grace to those who seek their Maker's will in every time and place.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 21:25-36

1 Thessalonians 3: 9-13

(10:30 AM) **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

(10:30 AM) **WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM**

A Prayer for Advent William, Nolan

MESSAGE

HYMN (see p. 8)

See Fig Leaves Now Sprouting

PASTORAL PRAYER

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION²

PREFACE (*sung to the tune of "Good Christian Friends Rejoice"*)

L: Oh, may the good Lord be with you.

P: And may the Lord be with you too.

L: Lift your hearts to Him in praise.

P: To the Lord our hearts we raise.

L: Let us offer praises true.

P: It is fitting so to do: Gratefully we sing to the Lord, our King!
PROPER PREFACE

THE SANCTUS *(sung to the tune of “As With Gladness Those of Old”)*

ALL: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts, by all adored: Heav’n and earth cannot contain all the glory of Your name! With the heav’nly host we sing highest praises to our King.

Hail! Hosanna! Endless fame be to Him who, in God’s name, Now draws nigh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel! Hail! Hosanna! Praises be to the Lord eternally!

TELLING OF THE STORY

CONSECRATION OF THE ELEMENTS & THE LORD’S PRAYER

(sung to the tune of Away in a Manger)

ALL: Our Father in heaven, all praise to Your name! Your kingdom among us, your will done the same By mortals and angels, Come, Lord, reign alone; Oh hear us and bless us from heaven’s high throne.

The bread that we yearn for provide us each day; As we forgive others, our sins take away; In times of temptation, to lead us be near; From evil deliver Your children most dear.

For Yours is the kingdom; o’er all things Your reign. And Yours is the power; all things You maintain. To You be the glory, resounding again from all of creation, forever! Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF ELEMENTS

THANKSGIVING *(sung to the tune of “Angels from the Realms of Glory”)*

ALL: Thank the Lord, His praises voicing for His promised faithfulness! All who seek the Lord, rejoicing tell His love, His name confess, For He leads us, with thanksgiving in the paths of righteousness.

At Your Word, Lord, let your servant go in peace, for with my eyes I have seen Your bright salvation, Israel’s Light, begins to rise. As the Glory of the nations, leading us to paradise.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN NO. 122 BH (see p. 9)

Come O Long Expected Jesus

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Emmanuel

by McGee

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

arr. Thomas Helmore

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano

1. O come, O come Em - man - u - el, and
 2. O come, O Wis - dom from on high, and
 3. O come, O come, O A - do - nai, who
 4. O come, O shoot of Jes - se, free your
 5. O come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and
 6. O come, O Day - spring, come and cheer our

Piano

7. O come, De - sire of Na - tions, bind all

5

ran - som cap - tive Is - ra - el that
 or - der all things far and nigh; To
 came to all on Si - nai high, and
 own from Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny, From
 o - pen wide your heaven - ly home; Make
 spir - its by your ad - vent here; Love

peo - ples in one heart - and mind; Make

mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here, un -
 us the path of knowl - edge show, and
 from its peak a sin - gle law pro -
 depths of hell your peo - ple save, and
 safe the path to end - less day, to
 stir with - in the womb of night, and

en - vy, strife, and quar - els cease; fill

11

Refrain

- til the Child of God ap - pear. Re - joice! Re -
 help us in that way to go.
 - claimed in maj - es - ty and awe.
 give them vic - tory o'er the grave.
 hell's de - struc - tion close the way.
 death's own shad - ows put to flight.

the whole world with heav - en's peace. Re - joice! Re -

15

- joice! E - man - u - el shall come to you, O

- joice! E - man - u - el shall come to you, O

19

Is - ra - el!

Is - ra - el!

My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise

Ruth Duck

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano 

1. My heart sings out with joy - ful praise to God who rais - es
2. The arm of God is strong and just to scat - ter all the
3. The prom - ise made in a - ges past at last has come to

5

Pno. 

me, Who came to me when I was low and
proud. The ty - rants tum - ble from their thrones and
be, for God has come in power to save, to

8

Pno. 

changed my des - ti - ny, The Ho - ly One, the
van - ish like a cloud. The hun - gry all are
set all peo - ple free. Re - mem - bering those who

11

Pno. 

Liv - ing God, is al - ways full of grace To those who seek their
sat - is - fied; the rich are sent a - way. The poor of earth who
wait to see sal - va - tion's dawning day, Our Sav - ior comes to

15

Pno. 

Mak - er's will in ev - ery time and place.
suf - fer long will wel - come God's new day.
all who weep to wipe their tears a - way.

See Fig Leaves Now Sprouting

Anna Strickland, 2021

Geisliche Kirchengsang, 1599

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano 

1. See fig tree leaves now sprout-ing soon sum-mer
2. Sun, moon, and stars a - bove us speak of God's

5

Pno. 

comes a - gain. Cre - a - tion groans in la - bor
pro - mised day to make space for our new home

9

Pno. 

for God's reign to be - gin We wait with ba - ted
this world must pass a - way. When we are filled with

13

Pno. 

breath home - sick for God's true kin - dom age with-out
dread the words of Christ up - hold us: "A - rise and

17

Pno. 

hate or death.
raise your head."

Come O Long Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

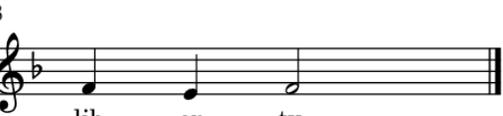
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Piano 

1. Come, O long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set all
2. Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope to all the
3. Born all peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, you
4. By your own e - ter - nal Spir - it, come to claim us

Pno. 

peo - ple free; From our fears and sins re - lease us; grant us your true
earth im - part; Dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, en - ter ev - ery
came to reign! Born to rule on earth for - ev - er, come, be known to
as your own; By your all suf - fi - cient mer - it, let us share your

Pno. 

lib - er - ty.
long - ing heart.
us a - gain.
cross and crown.

References

¹Our non-communion liturgy pieces are written by: Rev. Sarah Speed and used with permission as part of the Sanctified Arts: Close to Home worship materials.

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Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped in decorating the church for Advent/Christmas and to Dave Strine for picking up the Christmas tree. Also, thank you to Lee & Patsy Brown for donating the Christmas tree and the wreaths.

Thank you John & Connie Wolfe, Carrah & Harlan Wagaman, and Faye Heal for serving on the welcome teams. Thank you to Norma Hull, Charlie Hull, Melissa Shindler, Cindy Hogentogler, Lana Fritz, Denny Daugherty, & Pastor Amy for planning today's worship. Thank you to Cindy Hogentogler and Deb Herlocker for reading the poem during the service. Thank you to Joe Vacante, George DeMers, & Ron Miles for serving on the tech team. Thank you to the Worship choir for providing an anthem and leading the hymns in worship today.

NOTES