



**Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church PC(USA)**  
*Energizing downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace*

First Sunday of Advent  
Order of Worship

December 3, 2023  
10:00am

*\*= please rise, whether in body or in spirit*

***Thank you for being vaccinated. Wearing masks is strongly recommended.***

**PRELUDE**

“Conditor alme siderum”

R. G. TE VELDE

**WELCOME**

Becky Erbe

Leader: May the Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

*Children in grades Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> may leave for Sunday School and will return to their parents/guardians for Communion.*

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP-ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING♦**

Madeline and Nicholas Archer

Leader: O God, we light the first candle of Advent.

**All: We kindle it with hope. We long for you to come to our world, to break through and reign with compassion, justice, and peace.**

Leader: The prophet Isaiah also cried to God to tear open heaven and come down. He called God's people to do right. Isaiah called them to be refashioned like clay by God, the potter. This Advent, we call out to God.

**All: Mighty God, creator of the world, break through all that keeps us from you. We ask for your mercy and reform us in your image. This Advent, visit us with your justice, love, and peace.**

Leader: Today we light the first candle of Advent, the candle of Peace. (Light Candle) We put our hope in the one to come, the promised one who comes from God to bring good news of salvation.

We hope in the one who will lead us to walk in the light of the LORD. We hope he will not let us live in dark valleys, but on the high mountain of God. We light this candle in Peace.

**All: On this day, we remember the Lord of All who brings peace surpassing all understanding.**

**\*HYMN #87 vs, 1-3**

“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

GENEVAN

"Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!" So says our God. "Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow's load. To my people now proclaim that my pardon waits for them! Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare is now over."

For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near, calling us to true repentance, since the reign of God is here. O, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way. Let the valleys rise in meeting and the hills bow down in greeting.

Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain. Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits God's holy reign. For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad, and all flesh shall see the token that God's word is never broken.

**CALL FOR TRANSFORMATION♦**

## **PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE♦♦**

Leader: In a few weeks' time we will be celebrating the birth of Christ, so let us restore our souls, and refresh our spirits.

**All: Restore us, O God, let your face shine that we may be saved.**

Leader: Though we are complicit in the frenzy of consumerism, the unreality of expectations, the tension of gift giving, and the pressure to attend gatherings:

**All; Restore us, O God, let your face shine that we may be saved.**

Leader: Though we would like to be more Christ-centered in our daily lives, we know we can turn to God, and be restored. So, we ask:

**All: Restore us, O God, let your face shine that we may be saved.**

*One Minute of silent reflection*

## **WORDS OF GRACE**

### **\*THE PEACE**

Leader: Peace be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

### **\*SONG OF ADVENT**

**#92**

*Choir, then Choir and Congregation*

“While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come. Jesus, our Lord Emmanuel, while we are waiting come.”

## **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Darlene Riddle

## **ANTHEM**

“The Advent Road”  
Sanctuary Choir, Handbells

D. Wagner

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

Isaiah 64:109

Reader: The Word of God for the People of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## **SERMON**

“Consequences for Me and You”

Jim Ozee

### **\*HYMN #105 vs 1-3**

“People Look East”

**BESANCON**

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year. Make your house fair as you are able; trim the hearth and set the table. People look east and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim, shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together. People look east and sing today: Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth. Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming. People look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Becky Erbe

## INVITATION GREAT PRAYER

### THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Leader: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe...

...we join our voices in the song of the angels and saints, who forever sing to you, as we sing these words...

Organ: All:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you,  
God of pow - er and might; heav - en and earth are  
full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!  
Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

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### 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**

### BREAKING THE BREAD AND POURING THE WINE

#### SHARING THE FEAST

*An Open Table! When we celebrate Holy Communion, we are all guests at the table, and Jesus himself is our host. We have not earned a place at the table, rather we are invited because of the amazing grace of God. For that reason, this celebration of Holy Communion is open to all, including children, and not merely members of this congregation or denominations. This is a joyful feast for all the people of God. In order to extend hospitality to more of God's children, the cup is non-alcoholic and the bread is gluten free.*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

### INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Darlene Riddle

*There are many ways to give of yourself to the church: The obvious, money. You can mail in your offering or click the orange DONATE button top right at [secondfirst.org](http://secondfirst.org). Text to give is live! Text Give \$\_\_ to 815-335-9911 and follow the instructions. Please send your prayer requests to Pastor Becky: [becky.erbe@secondfirst.org](mailto:becky.erbe@secondfirst.org).*

### SONG OF OFFERING

“Comfort Comfort You My People”  
Sanctuary Choir, Handbells

K. L. BOURGEOIS/B. AUSTIN

### \*DOXOLOGY #606

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Darlene Riddle

### \*HYMN #134 vs 1-4

“Joy to the World”

ANTIOCH

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King! Let every heart prepare him room. And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground; He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curst is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of His righteousness and wonders of His love, and wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders of His love,

### \*BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

### POSTLUDE

“Savior of the Nations, Come”  
*please remain seated for the postlude*

P. MANZ

### ◆Worship Ways

◆◆written by Ann Siddall and posted on the *Stillpoint Spiritually Centre and Faith Community Website*

Handbell Players: Madeline, and Nicholas Archer. Sharon Cowman, and Andrea Akerman.

Val Blair, organist, pianist, director of music

Richard Stiltner, choir director

Steve Muntz, Wes Hegge, sound, video

John Maynard, van driver

### Prayer Requests

- **We offer prayers, sympathy, and support for friends and family of Judy Diehl, who passed away Friday, November, 24.**
- Continue prayers **Jayne Pheiffer**, for Gabriel Phillip Wills, Lenore Lund, Sharon Ockerlander, Bethany Stiltner, Linda Miller, Kathy Moton, Ann Stites, Katy Paterson, Peter Joachim, Sally Baker, Stephanie Cooper, Beckett Krieg, Philip, and Shirley Davidson.
- And we pray for all those at home and in long-term care facilities, who may not be in worship regularly, but who remain part of our family of faith: Betty Klingensmith, Shirley Anderson, Jeanne Page, Marsha Martin, Billye Vernam, Nancy Gallegos, Willene Ziebell, Jan Elliott, Wally Gayle, Charles Rosche, Carol Eggleston, and Ruby Beckman.

**Birthday Card Party for Jayne Pheiffer, Long time member Jayne is turning 103 on Tues. Dec. 18**

Even if you are not familiar with Jayne, let us send her as many birthday cards as possible and make it a great birthday for her!

Please send cards to: Jayne Pheiffer St. Anne's Place 4444 Brendenwood Rd. Rockford, Illinois 61107

**Join Us For The Festival of Lights, Friday, December 8, 6:00 PM**

Come see the Festival of Lights at Sinnissippi Park. Ride the bus or follow in your car, than come back to our church for hot chocolate.

**Annual Budget Meeting Announcement**

Join together at 11:15 am Sunday, December 10, for the Annual Budget Meeting. Budget packets will be available December 3. Zoom Link to follow.

**Our Christmas Bell Concert will be Saturday Afternoon, December 16, at 3:00 PM.**

Invite your friends! All four bell choirs will present music, and there will even be some bell tree pieces. Don't miss a great opportunity to enjoy Christmas music played by the bells of SecondFirst Church. A free will offering will support the bell program.

**Christmas Pageant Sunday, December 17, During Worship**

This year the children will perform a short musical called the "The Birthday Party" Cookies and cocoa will be served on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor children's space following the pageant.

**Poinsettia Sunday is December 17**

We will be taking Poinsettias orders now through Monday, December 11. The cost this year is \$14.50. You can send or drop off your check to the office. Let us know if you want the poinsettia in Memory or in Honor of your loved ones. There are order form envelopes in the friendship pads and on the usher table.

**Sunday, December 17, Christmas Cookies and Wassail**

Join the Deacons-Fellowship Team for Christmas cookies and Wassail in the gym after Church.

**Special Christmas Offerings Sunday, December 24**

Presbyterians and United Congregationalists have special Christmas offerings for expressing thanks to retired and active pastors and lay church workers. The PCUSA *Christmas Joy Offering* and the UCC *Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross* offer assistance to families facing financial need, providing direct assistance to supplement pensions, help with the cost of medical insurance and other emergency needs. It provides a way to say 'thank you' for their years of dedication to our two faith traditions.

**Join us for Christmas Eve! Sunday, December 24, 4:30 pm. in the Sanctuary and Facebook Live**

Come and join us as we proclaim Christ is born through word and song. This is a family worship with music from our Sanctuary Choir and guest musicians and strings. There will be a Children's Early Word. In the winter's deepest night let us welcome the light of the Christ child, the light and long promised King who will bring peace and justice to our world.

## Calendar at a Glance December 3,-December 10, 2023

<p><b>Sunday, Dec. 3 Communion Jim Ozee</b>              8:30 AM – Adult Ed              10:00 AM –Worship Service              10:20 AM – Sunday School              11:00 AM – Fair Trade Store</p> <p><b>Monday, Dec. 4</b>              11:30 AM - Serious Soup              No Hospitality Team</p> <p><b>Tuesday, Dec. 5</b>              7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast              9:00 AM – Thrift Shop              12:00 PM - Bible Study</p>	<p><b>Wednesday, Dec. 6</b>              10:00 AM – Staff Meeting              6:00 PM – Martin Ringers</p> <p><b>Thursday, Dec. 7</b>              9:30 AM – Carillons              5:30 pm – Governing Council              6:00 PM – Bellcantos              7:00 PM – Choir</p> <p><b>Friday, Dec. 8</b>              6:00 PM – Festival of Lights</p>	<p><b>Saturday, Dec. 9</b>              9:00 AM – Bridge Clinic              1:00 PM – Carl Dickow Memorial</p> <p><b>Sunday, Dec. 10</b>              8:30 AM – Adult Ed              10:00 AM –Worship Service              10:20 AM – Sunday School              11:00 AM – Fair Trade Store              11:15 AM – Budget Meeting</p>
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**Ministers:** All Members

**Moderator:** Darlene Riddle [moderator@secondfirst.org](mailto:moderator@secondfirst.org)

**Acting Senior Pastor:** Becky Erbe [becky.erbe@secondfirst.org](mailto:becky.erbe@secondfirst.org)

**Children and Family Coordinator:** Aubrey Barnett [aubrey.barnett@secondfirst.org](mailto:aubrey.barnett@secondfirst.org)

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**Choir Director:** Richard Stiltner [rlstiltner@aol.com](mailto:rlstiltner@aol.com)

**Director, Peanut Bells:** Sarah Hallberg [sarah.hallberg@secondfirst.org](mailto:sarah.hallberg@secondfirst.org)

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**Housekeeper:** Maria Mandujano

**Gatekeepers:** Todd Wilson, Christoffer Banks

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