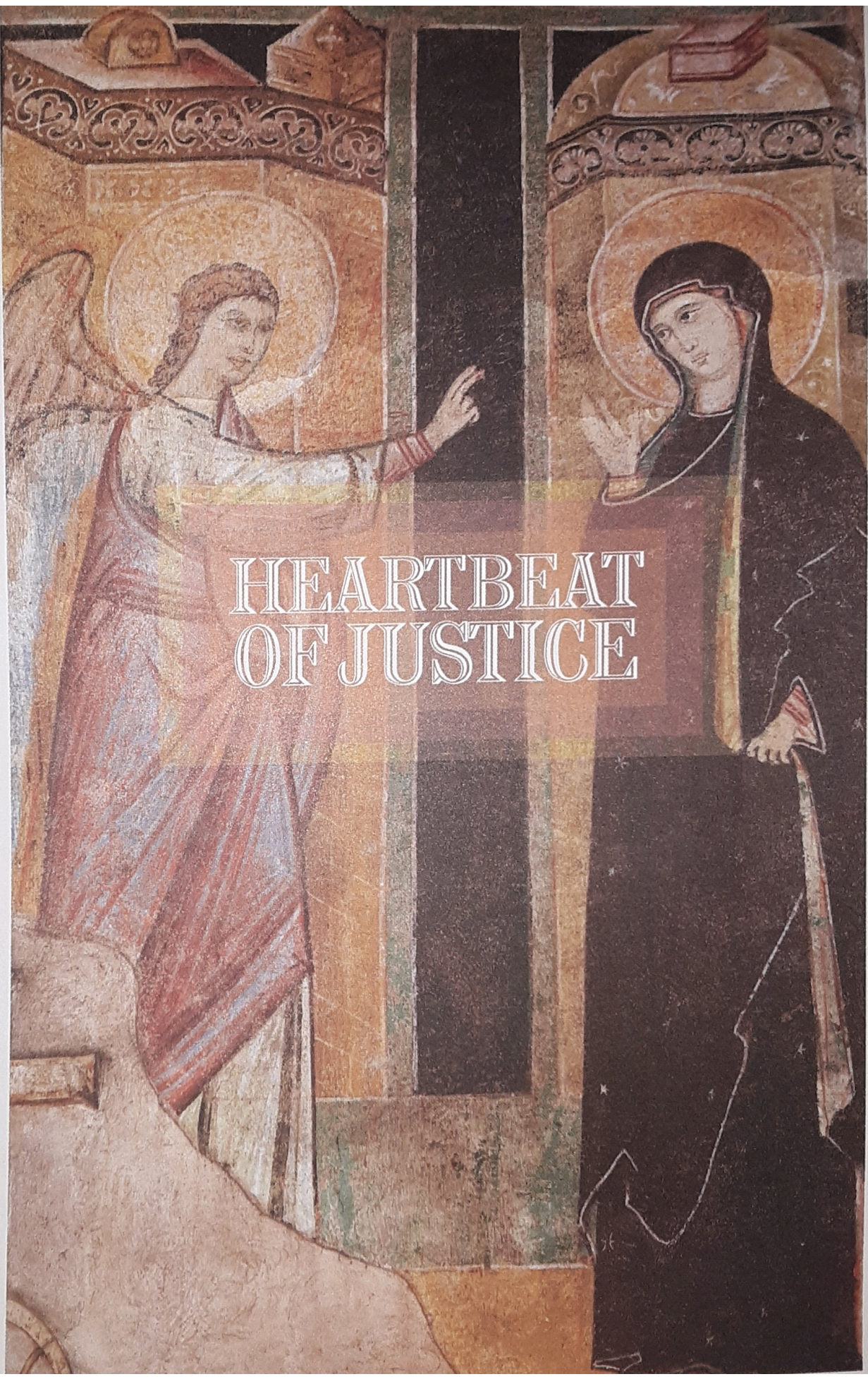




Rev. Neil H. Wilson, Senior Pastor
Rev. Paula B. Gile, Associate Pastor
K. Robert Bengtson, Director of Music
Church office: (603) 524-0668

The Congregational Church of Laconia
United Church of Christ
18 Veterans Square
Laconia, NH 03246-3425



HEARTBEAT OF JUSTICE

Gathering for Worship

December 15, 2019

www.laconiaucc.org

Third Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m.

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The Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, is a welcoming Christian community with a scriptural foundation seeking Justice and peace for all.

Preparing

Organ Prelude

K. Robert Bengtson

Meditative Thought *"The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord"* - Henri Nouwen

Welcome & Announcements

Introit

"Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old"

Chancel Choir

Praising

Gathering Worship

*Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of God righteousness and wonders of God's love,
and wonders of God's love and wonders, wonders of God's love.*

"Prepare Him Room: Unabashed Joy" An Advent Drama

Advent Prayer Response (Congregation and Choir)

Christ be our Light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.

Christ be our light! Shine in your church gathered today

Lighting of the Advent Candles Joy and Love

Opening Prayer (Responsively)

Holy God, you provide the source of our joy.

It runs deep and wide underneath all of life.

When we are tempted to depend on other for happiness, draw us back to you,
for you are the Light that shines for us always.

Help us to shine that light from within us through our own Unabashed Joy.

Let us make your blessings known in our hearts this day.

Let us make your blessings known in our church this day.

Let us make your blessings known in the world this day...

In the name of joy. Amen.

Let us rise for our opening hymn!

***Opening Hymn** *"Lo, How a Rose E'r Blooming"* # 127
A Moment with Our Children Rev. Paula Gile

***Passing of the Peace & the Gloria**
*Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Halle,
Halle, Halle-lu-jah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah*

Musical Offering *"Sanctus Bells"* Chancel Choir

Reflecting & Praying

Scripture Reading Luke 1:46b - 55 Pew Bible p. 932

Sermon *"# Blessed"* Rev. Neil Wilson

Meditative Moment

Prayer Preparation *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (v. 6)*
*O Come, O Day-spring, come and cheer Our spirits by your advent here;
Love stir within the womb of night, and death's own shadows putto flight.
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel Shall come to thee O Israel!*

Pastoral Prayer (Yellow prayer cards may be placed in the offering plate. Also you may go to the Church's website click on Prayer Wall and post your requests. www.laconiaucc.org)

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.

Prayer Response *"Amen"* Chancel Choir

Committing

Invitation to Stewardship

Offertory *"A Carol For Advent"* Chancel Choir

Doxology

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below:
Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.*

***Prayer of Consecration/Dedication (Unison)**

With these gifts, dear God, accept the praise and thanksgiving of our hearts, which rejoice in your goodness and love. Let these gifts point to your presence in the world, and further your hope for the world through Jesus, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Amen.

Going to Serve

*Closing Hymn

"What Child is This"

148

Pastoral Benediction

Benediction Response

"Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear"

Chancel Choir

Organ Postlude

***You may stand as able.**

This Week's Committee Meetings and Gatherings

Today Dec 15- 9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship
10:30 a.m.	Channel 25 Worship Broadcast
11:45 a.m.	Hand-Bell Practice
4:00 p.m.	Channel 25 Worship Broadcast
4:00 p.m.	Christmas Pageant
Tuesday Dec 17- 10:15	Communion Service at Taylor Home
6:30 p.m.	Worship/Music Mtg
7:00 p.m.	Stitches of Love
Wednesday Dec 18- 6:30 p.m.	Council Mtg
Thursday Dec 19- 5:30 p.m.	Advent Soup & Study
7:00 p.m.	Choir Practice
Next Sunday Dec 22- 9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship

Some Announcements

Advent Soup and Study

Tuesday Dec. 19 at 5:30 p.m. Join Pastor Paula and Pastoral Intern Derek Waldron as we explore the season of Advent and the meaning of the birth of Jesus. Deacons will provide yummy soups, bread, drinks and dessert. Take the time to pause this Christmas season to explore and fellowship.

Communion Service at the Taylor Home this Tues. 10:15 a.m.

Any and all of our Taylor Community residents are welcome and invited. There will be a time of refreshments before the service.

Hallelujah Toffee Time!

The biggest fund raiser of the year for OneLife Africa is selling Hallelujah Toffee. This is only available once a year. The proceeds enable the kids to continue their studies in search for a better life. The toffee is available to purchase after church services at Fellowship Time in December. One pound is priced at \$20 and ½ pound is \$12.50.

Welcome & Information

Welcome to our service of worship! Please introduce yourself to those sitting near you & use a pew rack card to inform us of requests.

Wireless hearing assistance devices, back cushions, large print bulletins and children's activity bags are available; please ask an usher.

Nursery & Child Care Children younger than 1st grade are welcome in the Nursery before the service begins or following the Moment with our Children. Please escort your child to the Nursery room across The Bridge and pick them up after the service. Visitors are always welcome!

Faith Formation The concept of "the beloved community" is seen throughout the Bible and in literature from around the world. The African term "Ubuntu" refers to this and is translated from a longer phrase to mean "I am because you are". As you consider this phrase, also consider donating your spare coins this year to the Faith Formation offering. It will be given to our local family homeless shelter, Belknap House. Take one of our small plastic containers (distributed at Coffee Hour) and be a part of our Faith Formation community!

Our Service is video recorded and published. Please speak to one of our ushers if you have any concerns.

Our Greeters today Ila Mattila, John Gill

Today's Ushers are Kay and Ray Vercoe, Janet Janke, Martha Crane

The Altar flowers are *"In loving memory of Woodrow and Claudine Coward"* given by Hollis and Greg Thompson;

Also, *"In loving memory of Chris Clarke"* given by Connie Clarke and Graczen;

Also, from Elizabeth Howard in celebration of Rev. Paula Gile's Birthday, *"And as a way to say thank you for the love, caring and concern that has been extended to the Howard and Millar families."*

Join us for a time of fellowship downstairs following the service for refreshments served by the . Fair Trade coffee is served in biodegradable cups.

TODAY at 4:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant - snow date **December 22** Bring your neighbors and friends to enjoy our annual Christmas tradition.

Did you know? Your CL21 team wants you to know that CAT results show that we need to focus on flexibility. Try something- -without complaint- -for a time-limited period. *Then* send feedback.

December 15, 2019

Luke 1:46b-55

Heartbeat of Justice

Look around the room. Everyone's circumstances were unique, but every person you see has at least one thing in common – every person here was born. And before they were born, they were carried in a womb.

Look around the world. Everyone's circumstances were unique but every person you see has this in common – every person on this planet we call home was born. And before they were born, every person was carried in a womb.

However you were born, the first sounds you heard were the muffled but persistent sound of the mother's heartbeat. The heartbeat of the woman's body that carries the baby is the first sound that the child can hear. Every language records it differently, but in most every language, the word we use for that first sound is as rhythmic and beautiful as a two-word poem. Lub dub, lub dub, those who speak English say. Around the world, mothers' hearts beat, saying *duru duru* (Bengali), *deg deg* (Indonesian), *pam pam* (Albanian), *tuks tuks* (Estonian), *peng peng* (Chinese), *bum bum* (Spanish), *ratama ratama* (Arabic), *doki doki* (Japanese).

After its mother's heart, the second sound a fetus can hear is the sound of their mother's voice. Like the heartbeat, to every baby in the world, this voice sounds the same. Individual words are not distinguished – just the musical cadence of the sound of her voice.

Now look at Jesus. His story is unique, but he is like us in this way. He was born. And before he was born, he was carried in a womb. Like us, he heard a heartbeat. Like us, he heard the cadence of his mother's voice. What did it mean for Jesus to have the first words he heard be this song - a longing of a justice?

Third Sunday of Advent - Prayer for Joy

O come, O come Emmanuel!

This is grief and sorrow
in our hearts and in our world.

Save us, we pray, from our sadness.

Remind us that you are lifegiving water,
an endless spring of joy.

Help us to create the joy that comes from justice,
here and now and always. Amen.



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST