

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LACONIA  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
A JUST PEACE AND OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION  
DECEMBER 3, 2023 ~ 9:30 A.M.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**WELCOME AND GREETING**

Campbell Lovett,

Interim Pastor

- *Those with announcements may gather in first pews –*
- *Written prayers may be shared at the Online Greeter Table –*

**INTROIT**

*Choir: Longing for light, we wait in darkness. Longing for truth, we  
turn to you.*

*Make us your own, your holy people, Light for the world to see  
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your Church gathered to day.*

**RESPONSIVE READING – First Sunday – Hope for Those Who  
Wait**

L: Advent is a time for the human heart to wait - trusting God's  
eternal time.

***P: How long, O Lord, how long?***

L: For those waiting for answered prayer:

***P: Grant your steadfast patience.***

L: For those waiting in the face of uncertainty:

***P: Grant unshakable confidence in your sovereign provision.***

L: For those waiting for justice and mercy to reign:

***P: Grant a glimpse of your glory in our wounded world.***

L: For all of us waiting for God's kin-dom to come:

***P: Grant that we might have the peace as we speak.***

**CANDLE LIGHTING**

L: This morning we light the **first candle** which reminds us that  
throughout history, God's people have spent time waiting, wandering  
and wondering about the timing of God's eternal plan. Like the people  
of old, we long for God's presence to illuminate the areas of life where  
we are called to wait. This morning we echo the words of the Psalmist,

“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!” (*Psalms 27:14*)

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** – *singing together*

***Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.***

***Christ, be our light! Shine in your Church gathered today.***

**A PROPHECY**

Isaiah 40: 1 – 4 *The prophet announces the coming of God*

**CHORAL ANTHEM**

Hymn”

“Advent

*Martin Jean*

**READING OF THE GOSPEL**

Mark 13: 24 – 37 *The disciples are told they are to be on watch!*

**ADVENT MEDITATION**

The Highways of Advent

Campbell Lovett

**INVITATION TO OFFERING AND HOLY COMMUNION**

**COMMUNION ANTHEM**

“Living Bread”

*Gilbert*

*M. Martin*

**\*DOXOLOGY**

*To God all glorious heavenly Light, To Christ revealed in earthly night*

*To God the Spirit now we raise, Our joyful song of thankful praise.*

*Amen.*

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

***We offer to you these gifts which you have given us; this bread, this wine, this money. With them we offer ourselves, our lives, and our work, to become through your Holy Spirit a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice. So may we and all your people become channels of your love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.***

**PRAYERS AT TABLE**

**PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

**PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP**

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING** – *praying together*

*We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

**\*HYMN OF PARTING # 104** We Hail You God's Anointed

**BENEDICTION** - *seated*

**CHORAL RESPONSE** "Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear"

**POSTLUDE** "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying" *Bob Bengtson*

*Melody, Philipp Nicolai; Variation, Johann Gottfried Walther  
Chorale Harmonization, Johann Sebas*

Participants in this morning's service of worship: Organist, K. Robert Bengtson; Media Technician, Mike Marshall; Ushers, Don & Jean Clarke ; Online Greeter, Sue Smith; Coffee Hour Hosts, Worship & Music; Interim Pastor, Campbell Lovett

**TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS** are given in memory of Katharine Gauthier by John Gauthier & Family.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ADVENT EVENT** (*Soup Supper and Series*): **This coming Thursday, December 7, and then December 14, 5:30 pm. "You Can't Handel the**

**Truth.”** An exploration of Isaiah 40, Handel’s Messiah, and Current Events.

**LUNCH & LEARN** – The Inca Trail, Thursday, December 7, 12 p.m., Church Hall. Follow along with Jean and Mikayla Clarke.

**POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS** – It’s time to order Poinsettias to place on our advent/Christmas altar. Forms are available in church, at the church office and in the December Tower Tidings. A \$20 donation is suggested but give as you can.

**THE POWER CHORDS PRESENT AN AFTERNOON OF HOLIDAY HITS:** Sunday, December 3, 4 p.m., at Congregational Church of Laconia. Bring your family and friends to this time of lively music and fun! Audience participation will be part of the show. Christmas cookies will be enjoyed in Church Hall following the event.

**STEWARDSHIP CONTINUES** to receive Estimate of Financial Giving for 2024. Pledge cards are available by the exits. **Thank you** to everyone who has responded thus far. It takes a village – and what we are doing together makes a difference!

**CALL TO MEETING: Sunday, December 10.** The Executive Committee of the Church Council hereby notifies Members and Associate Members of a Special Meeting of the Congregation in the Church Sanctuary commencing at approximately 10:45 a.m. to act upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee to call our next Settler Pastor and Teacher of the Church. All Members and Associate Members shall be entitled to vote in person or by electronic means.

**SEARCH UPDATE** We are excited for all of you to speak to our candidate at the **Meet and Greet on December 9th from 3:00 - 4:30 pm** and to worship with them on December 10th. Watch your mailbox for a letter of introduction during the week of December 4<sup>th</sup>!

**CHRISTMAS EVE is on a Sunday!** We will host two services on that day. Sunday morning at 9:30, and Candlelit Christmas Eve at 4:00 p.m.

**FAITH FORMATION** – On December 10<sup>th</sup> we will be staying in the church sanctuary for the entire service to listen to and get to know the Ministerial Candidate who will be leading the service that day. The Prayground is available to use during any service for any child.

**MEN'S BREAKFAST** – Friday, December 8, 8 a.m., Water Street Café.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF CAMPERSHIPS** by being a part of the Church Christmas Card. More information at Pleasant Street Christmas Tree.