



## Welcome

**Prelude/Candle-Lighting** “Schuber, Piano in E flat Major” Oxana Khramova  
(Franz Schuber)

## Ringing of the Bell

**Call to Worship/Lighting the Advent Candle** Marlann and Liam Patterson

Reader 1: When God’s people were surrounded by hardship, suffering, and grief, Isaiah proclaimed:  
“The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; God has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor—

**All: We, too, are surrounded by suffering and grief. And yet, the Spirit hovers among us—**

Reader 2: Tending and anointing, inspiring freedom where there is captivity, declaring blessing in places the world has cursed, and igniting fierce joy where mourning and heartache prevail.

**All: Even in the midst of hardship and pain, we experience a persistent joy that sustains our life as God’s people. We light these candles as signs of shocking hope, just peace, and fierce joy.**

Reader 1: May our lives shine with the fierce, tenacious joy of the One who lives in our hearts, as we wait and work for the coming of God’s kin-dom among us.

## Opening Prayer (in unison)

Gracious God, your messenger came to Mary in a time fraught with trouble and told her she would bear within her the salvation of the world. Again and again, you have invited ordinary people to bear your light, your promise, your healing, your justice into troubled times and places. In Advent, you call us to watch, to wait, to serve, and to join you in the building of your Kin-dom. In our consent, may we discover the fierce joy of your transforming love. Amen.

**\*Opening Hymn** “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came” Hymnal #16

## Commissioning of Pastoral Search Committee

Leader: There are different gifts.

**All: But it is the same Spirit who gives them.**

Leader: Each one is given a gift by the Spirit.

**All: To be used for the common good.**

## **Pledge**

**We pledge, as a gathered community of faith, to be patient with you and to respect your need to be confidential in your task. We recognize that the work of our Pastoral Search Committee is a difficult assignment and will take much effort. We will pray for you and offer our support and words of encouragement throughout this time. These things we promise in the hope and belief that you will be open to the guidance of the Spirit as you seek a new pastor to minister with us.**

## **Prayer**

### **Readings**

Isaiah 61:1-4

Luke 1:26-38

from "The Pause Before 'Yes'" by Debie Thomas

Kim Blomquist

### **Special Music**

"Etude for Cornet"  
(Hippolyte-Jean Duhe)

Carly Witucki

### **Sermon**

*Let it Be*

Rev. Kathleen Remund

### **Transitional Music**

"Be Thou My Vision"  
(Carol Tornquist)

Oxana Khramova

## **Prayers of the People**

### **Offertory**

"The Canvas by an Old Master"  
(M. Taraiverdiev)

Oxana Khramova

### **\*Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;**

**Praise God all creatures here below;**

**Praise God above ye heavenly host;**

**Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

### **Prayer of Dedication** (in unison)

**God our Source and Sustainer, receive these gifts as an expression of our faith that scarcity and despair are not the final word. May these gifts ignite warm fires of fierce joy, hope, and compassion. Amen.**

### **\*Closing Hymn**

"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

Hymnal #15

### **\*Benediction**

Leader: Beloved friends, as you leave this place, remember that contentment comes and goes. Happiness ebbs and flows. Our feelings depend upon our circumstances, our physical health, our brain chemistry. But our *joy* is deeply rooted in our identity in God. May you go forth rooted in God your Source, transformed in Christ your Redeemer, and empowered by the Spirit that embrace us all.

**All: Amen.**

### **\*Sung Benediction**

God be with you till we meet again;  
By their counsels guide, uphold you;  
With their sheep securely fold you;  
God be with you till we meet again.

### **Postlude**

“Be Thou My Vision”  
(Carol Tornquist)

Oxana Khramova

*Today's flowers are in celebration of Jacq Collins' 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 27 from his wife, Lyn, and his family. Happy birthday, Jacq!*

### **Credits**

- The Call to Worship/Advent Candle-Lighting and the Prayer of Dedication were adapted from pieces written by Dr. Lisa Hancock for Discipleship Ministries and posted at <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/our-spirit-waits/>.
- The Prayers of the People are adapted in part from “O Antiphons,” by Nadia Bolz-Weber
- The Benediction was adapted from one written by Joanna Harader and posted on her website, *Spacious Faith*, <https://spaciousfaith.com/2013/12/17/advent-3-worship-pieces/>. It was re-posted on <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2015/12/call-to-worship-prayer-for-advent.html>.
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### **This Week**

**Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>:** 4:00pm Kids' Club, Room 2  
5:30pm Choir rehearsal, Sanctuary  
6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, Music Room

### **Mission Statement of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Menomonie, WI**

We are called together:

To celebrate God's presence.  
To help each person to grow in his or her relationship with God;  
To Create a welcoming and supportive community of all God's people;  
The diversity of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, and identity, social and economic status, and the differently abled;  
To observe and share life's passages and our faith traditions;  
To reach out in love seeking justice and peace;  
And to tell the old story of Jesus and His love.

### **Land Acknowledgement**

Here we congregate on Ojibwe, Dakota, Menominee, Potawatomi, and Ho Chunk land. Generations of Indigenous people occupied and provided careful stewardship of this land long before Europeans arrived on these shores. The traumatic dispossession of this land by European immigrants and the displacement of countless individuals produced collective suffering that has repercussions for our Indigenous neighbors today. The original inhabitants of this land—known to some Indigenous peoples as Turtle Island—took seriously the Creator's call to be stewards of air, land, water, and creatures. With gratitude, we acknowledge the lessons we continue to learn from our Indigenous neighbors as we seek to be good stewards and pray for guidance in learning how to make reparations.

## **Announcements**

### ***Worship Volunteers***

January slots for Readers, Coffee Hour Servers and flower contributors are waiting to be filled. The sign-up sheets are on the clipboards in the west entryway. Please share your gifts of time and talent!

### ***Snow Days Reminder***

It's that time of year when snow and ice storms can begin to interfere with activities. In case of inclement weather, please check the Menomonie Area School District's website to find out their plans. If schools are closed or are cancelling after-school activities, we will do the same here at church.

### ***Christmas Worship Schedule***

Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>: No 8:15 am worship, 10:00 am worship and 5:30 pm Christmas eve worship.

### ***Thursday's Table***

Community take-out meal each Thursday from 5-6:00 pm.

### ***Community Care***

AA Meetings, Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays 6:30am, Fellowship Hall

Al-Anon Meetings, Mondays, 6:00pm, Parlor

NA Meetings, Fridays, 7:00pm, lower-level Room 5

# The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came 16

GABRIEL'S MESSAGE 10.10.12.10

Para. Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

Basque carol  
Arr. by Edgar Pettman and John Wickham

1. The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came, His  
 2. "For know a bless - ed moth - er you shall be, All  
 3. Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly bowed her head, "To  
 4. Of her, Em-man - u - el, the Christ, was born In

wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame; "All  
 gen - er - a - tions praise con - tin - ual - ly, Your  
 me be as it pleas - es God," she said, "My  
 Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn, And

hail," said he, "O low - ly maid - en Ma - ry,"  
 Son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told." Most  
 soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."  
 Chris - tian folk through-out the world will ev - er say:

high - ly fa - vored la - dy, Glo - ri - a!

## 15

## Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers

LLANGLOFFAN 7.6.7.6 D

Laurentius Laurenti, 1700  
 Trans. Sarah Borthwick Findlater, 1854  
 Alt. *The Hymnal* 1982

Welsh folk melody  
 Evans' *Hymnau a Thonau*, 1865  
 As in *English Hymnal*, 1906

1. Re - joice! Re - joice, be - liev - ers, And let your lights ap - pear;  
 2. See that your lamps are burn - ing, Re - plen-ish them with oil;  
 3. Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

The eve-ning is ad - vanc - ing And dark-er night is near.  
 Look now for your sal - va - tion, The end of sin and toil.  
 A - rise, Thou sun so longed for, A - bove this sha-dowed sphere!

The Bride-groom is a - ris - ing And soon He will draw nigh;  
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing, The gates wide o - pen stand;  
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, We plead, O Lord, to see

Up, watch with ex - pec - ta - tion, At mid - night comes the cry.  
 A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry, The Bride-groom is at hand!  
 The day of earth's re - demp - tion, And ev - er be with Thee!