

Welcome to the United Church of Craftsbury.

If you're visiting or new to our congregation, please sign our guest book. The greeters can supply a hearing device or magnifier to assist you during our service. *We would love to keep in touch; please leave us your contact on a form in the pew rack.*

Participants today:

Alan Parker, Pastor; Sandalyn Chadwick, Accompanist; Debbie Hill, Liturgist.

For Next Sunday:

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16, Luke 1:46-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26, Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38.

If you would like to place flowers in the sanctuary

in memory of a family member or loved one, contact Roberta Alexander (586-7730).

Bulletin news due at church via e-mail, phone message, or note by Friday morning. You may also contact Michelle Warren at 586-9632 or email unitedchurchcraftsbury@gmail.com.

Upcoming Weekly Church Calendar:						
Sun. 12/14	Mon. 12/15	Tues. 12/16	Wed. 12/17	Thurs. 12/18	Fri. 12/19	Sat. 12/20
Service: 10 AM Christmas Workshop: 1 PM	Zumba: 6 PM	Yoga: 4:30 & 6 PM AA: 6 PM	Community Dinner: 6 PM Book Discussion: 6:30 PM	Zumba: 4:30 PM Al-Anon: 6 PM		

Committee Contacts:

- **Church Clerk:** Anne Wilson (586-2825)
- **Church Council:** Andy Moffatt (586-2248)
- **Community Supper:** Barb Strong (586-2516)
- **Deacons:** Andy Moffatt (586-2248)
- **Horse & Buggy Club:** Paula Massé (586-2857)
- **Ladies Union:** Lois Charron (586-9674)
- **Memorial Committee:** Mary Ann Merrill (730-4754)
- **Prayer Circle:** Fay Waterhouse (586-2520)
- **Religious Education:** Barb Strong (586-2516)
- **Trustees:** Cheryl Bailey (586-9675)

United Church of Craftsbury

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Website & Online Calendar: www.unitedchurchofcraftsbury.com

Pastor: Rev. Alan Parker · Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Arnold Brown · Ministers: The Entire Congregation

United Church of Craftsbury

December 14, 2014

Third Sunday of Advent – Year B

WE GATHER TO BE PRESENT WITH GOD



PRELUDE

GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

(The first spoken words of our worship time are

“The peace of Christ be with you.”

The congregation is invited to respond, saying,

“And also with you.”)

INTROIT

GATHERING MUSIC, PRAYER,

INVOCATION & MEDITATION

HYMN # 130

Joy to the World

(Alternating with reading from Psalm 126.

During Advent, we sing “The Lord WILL come.”)

WE LIGHT THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE – The Joy Candle

Left: Joy is a mysterious gift from God; we can never buy it.

Right: Joy is a gift we give to the world; and it can be shared from a completely empty pocket.

Left: Joy has a mind of its own. We cannot force it to happen. Joy comes only when we know how great God's gifts are.

Right: But we can search our hearts for places of joy. We can nourish those places by passing the gift of joy on to those around us.

Left: We can light a candle of joy. *(Light candle)*

Right: In this moment, let this tiny flame of joyfulness help us light a path to joy for all of God's children. The path of joy is the path to joy. Let us pray together.

ALL: Dear and wondrous God, you have made a creation that is joyous at its heart.

Help us, we pray, to seek the justice that certifies joy, to love patiently those who are lost, and to sow joy where sorrow reigns. AMEN

SING Candle light, sacred light. Mystery flames, burning bright. We are waiting for Jesus' new birth. Shine his joy over all of the earth. Thanks for the gift of joy, thanks for the gift of joy. *(Melody – Silent Night)*

CALL TO PRAYER OF CONFESSION, HEALING AND FORGIVENESS

UNISON PRAYER FOR HEALING OF BROKENNESS

Gracious God, we often call our own successes the source of our joy, and we wonder why joy eludes us when our lives are troubled. We look at the joy of others with envy, and we close our eyes to the evils that steal true joy from us and from our sisters and brothers. We forget that life itself is a gift, given by you in equal measure to all children and all creatures – to the very stones and skies of your blessed Earth. Teach us now that joy is not found in possessions or comfort, or in being right at the expense of others, but is found deep in our hearts and souls when we embrace your promise of triumph over all the evils that infect your joyous creation.

SILENT PRAYER

RESPONSIVE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: This is the good news, dear friends: God does wonders for us - forgiving us, refreshing us with love, singing joyful songs of salvation for us.

All: We lift up God's name, the God who is our strength, our salvation, our hope, and our joy. Thanks be to God for the grace of forgiveness. AMEN

CHORUS OF ASSURANCE

(SING) It is well with my soul. It is well with my soul. It is well; it is well with my soul.

WE LISTEN TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (Unison)

O God, may our reading, hearing, and understanding of your Word, and our own spoken words, be acceptable in your sight. For you are our rock and our redeemer. AMEN

SCRIPTURE

- Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
- Luke 1:46-55

*(At the conclusion of Gospel reading, the congregation responds, saying,
"Thanks be to God, who brings light and truth.")*

REFLECTION

"The Garments of Salvation"

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S HOLY INVITATION

***HYMN # 103**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION

PASTORAL PRAYER, PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION & 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE TO PRAYER

(SING) *Hear our prayer, O God; hear our prayer, O God.*

Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

WE OFFER GIFTS OF OURSELVES AND DEPART IN PEACE

CALL TO GIVING AND RECEIPT OF OFFERING

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

***CLOSING HYMN**

Congregation's Choice

***BENEDICTION**

RESPONSE # 590 *Threefold Amen*

POSTLUDE

*** *We rise, either in body or in spirit***

CALL TO PRAYER OF CONFESSION, HEALING AND FORGIVENESS

Can we confess with joy? Can we acknowledge that leaving our sin and brokenness behind is not about unworthiness and punishment, but is, finally, about new life? We attempt such a spirit of confession, as we pray together...

Scripture for December 14, 2014

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners.

To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn.

To provide for those who mourn in Zion —
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said:

"My soul magnifies the Lord,] and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

End of reading: "This is the word of God; the story of Jesus Christ, who brings light and truth to the world."

Opening Reading, December 14, 2014

Psalm 126

When the God restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
"God has done great things for them."
God has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.

Restore our fortunes, O God,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.
May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.
Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.