



Rockville United Church  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)/United Church of Christ  
2nd Sunday of Advent  
December 7, 2025 ~ Hybrid Worship

## PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

### PRELUDE

### CELEBRATING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

#### GATHERING MUSIC

***When God is a Child***  
(verse 2)

Chalice Hymnal, No. 132

Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,  
giving a promise of safety and worth.  
When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none shall be afraid.

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Family of faith, God is at work!

***God is healing and creating,***

redeeming and dreaming,

***calling and sending,***

listening and loving.

***Yes, indeed, God is at work!***

So may we worship God, who never gives up.

***May we worship God, whose love never ends.***

#### \*ADVENT SONG

***Sing Out With Great Joy***

Pattison/Poe/Reid

Sing out with great joy for Christmas now approaches.

Watch for his arrival, the little baby boy.

Your savior is coming; put out the advent wreath.

And light the candles two: He comes, He comes.

#### LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF PEACE

Johnathan Guest, Christine Hammell Guest,  
and Jane Guest

We light candles on the Advent wreath as a sign of the light of Christ always coming into the world. Last Sunday we lit the first candle—the candle of hope. Today we light the second candle—the candle of peace. In a world full of fear, where do you see glimmers of peace?

***We see glimmers of peace in the quiet of early morning, when people shake hands, when loved ones say they're sorry, and when the church sings together.***

You are right. Even in a fearful world, peace is all around us. We light the candle of peace as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, peace is present.

*(The second candle is lit)*

Let us pray:

***God of Peace, open us to the ways of peace you unfailingly offer us. Help us to restore a vision of peace, confront injustices, and make a way for peace to flourish. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, that we may walk in the light of Christ, and be bearers of peace in a troubled world. Amen.***

### **\*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

You are invited to greet your neighbors with these words:

***“The peace of Christ be with you. And also with you.”***

### **\*HYMN**

#### ***Comfort, Comfort You My People***

Chalice Hymnal, No. 122

Comfort, comfort you my people, tell of peace, thus says our God;  
comfort those who sit in darkness bowed beneath oppression's load.

Speak you to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;  
tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over.

For the herald's voice is calling in the desert far and near,  
bidding us to make 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.

Make you straight what long was crooked, make the rougher places plain;  
let your hearts be true and humble, as befits God's holy reign.

For the glory of our God now o'er earth is shed abroad;  
and all flesh shall see the token that God's word is never broken.

### **PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION (unison)**

***God, in this season suspended between hope and fulfillment, may we never forget what you have done. May we be overwhelmed by your mercy, which flows in wave after wave. May we be honest about the darkness within us, and perceptive of the light around us. May we be open to the transforming work of your Spirit moving deep within us and throughout the world. May we make straight the path for the Christ to enter, that together we may see your glory revealed. Amen.***

~ adapted, by Mark Pierson

## MOMENT OF SILENCE

### CHORAL RESPONSE

*Gloria, Gloria*

Taize

### SCRIPTURE

**Isaiah 43:19-21**

The Inclusive Bible

Look, I am doing something new!  
Now it springs forth—can't you see it?  
I'm making a road in the desert  
and setting rivers to flow in the wasteland.  
Wild beasts will honor me—the jackals and the ostriches—  
for I will put water in the desert and rivers in the wasteland  
for my chosen people to drink, these people whom I formed for myself  
so that they might declare my praise.

One: Listen to what the Spirit is teaching.

**All: *Thanks be to God.***

### WORD FOR CHILDREN

*Jose Feeds the World*

by David Unger, illustrated by Marta Alvarez Miguens

Children (ages 3 years old through 5th grade) are invited to attend a Sunday School faith formation class. Following the Word for Children, children will dismiss with their teachers to the classrooms on the lower level, through the front side door of the sanctuary. Parents/guardians, please pick up children in their classroom following the worship service. Parents/guardians are welcome to accompany their child(ren) if they choose. Visitors are welcome.

Nursery care for infants through age 3 is available in the nursery on the lower level.

Our nursery caregiver is Caitlin Vredenburg. Our nursery helper is Mariana Nolan.

### ANTHEM

*The Prince of Peace*

Billings

### SCRIPTURE

**Matthew 11:1-11**

When Jesus had finished instructing the Twelve, he left the area to teach and preach in the outlying towns of the region. While John was in prison, he heard about the works the Messiah was performing, and sent a message by way of his disciples to ask Jesus, "Are you 'The One who is to come' or do we look for another?" In reply, Jesus said to them, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: 'Those who are blind recover their sight; those who cannot walk are able to walk; those with leprosy are cured; those who are deaf hear; the dead are raised to life; and the anawim—the "have-nots"—have the Good News preached to them.' "Blessed is the one who finds no stumbling block in me." As the messengers set off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds

about John: “What did you go out to the wasteland to see—a reed swaying in the wind? Tell me, what did you go out to see—someone luxuriously dressed? No, those who dress luxuriously are to be found in royal palaces. So what did you go out to see—a prophet? Yes, a prophet—and more than a prophet! It is about John that scripture says, ‘I send my messenger ahead of you to prepare your way before you.’ “The truth is, history has not known a person born of woman who is greater than John the Baptizer. Yet the least born into the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

One: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

**All:** *Thanks be to God.*

**CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**    *This Little Light of Mine*    African-American

**SERMON**    “Signs of God Still at Work”    Rev. Jennifer Knutsen

**\*HYMN**    *O Day of Peace that Dimly Shines*    Chalice Hymnal, No. 711

O day of peace that dimly shines through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,  
guide us to justice, truth, and love, delivered from our selfish schemes.

May swords of hate fall from our hands, our hearts from envy find release,  
till by God’s grace our warring world shall see Christ’s promised reign of peace.

Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, nor shall the fierce devour the small;  
as beasts and cattle calmly graze, a little child shall lead them all.

Then enemies shall learn to love, all creatures find their true accord;  
the hope of peace shall be fulfilled, for all the earth shall know the Lord.

## **PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND GIFTS**

As we share our gifts, we remember that in serving one another, we serve the Christ among us.

## **Offertory**

*Please use the prayer card to write your prayer requests,  
and place the card in the offering plate.*

*Online, please write your prayer requests in the chat.*

*We will share your prayers during the Prayers of the Congregation.*

**\*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.

## SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

### The Invitation

Come all who give thanks for the gift of life. Come all who long for a just and joyful world. Come all who seek peace and pursue it; and together we will work transforming pain into hope, fear into love, crying into laughter.

***Here in this place, the communion table is open to people of all races, creeds, gender identities, sexual orientations, economic circumstances, ages: adults, teens, and children.***

This is Christ's table; all are invited to share the feast.

## GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God be with you.

***And also with you.***

Lift up your hearts.

***We lift them to God.***

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

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

Let us continue in prayer.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### PRAYER OF BLESSING

I invite you to raise your hands over the food you share  
in an ancient sign of blessing as we pray:

***Loving God, pour out your Spirit upon us***

***and on these gifts we share***

***that we may be one with Christ***

***in whom you came to be one with us. Amen.***

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Come now and receive God's welcome.

## SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

*You are invited to come forward to receive the bread and take a cup of juice.*

*A gluten-free option is available at the table.*

*If you prefer to stay seated, please raise your hand,  
notifying one of the ushers or communion servers.*

Servers: Elizabeth Cooper-Martin and Scott Vossler

## PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION

### PRAYER OF COMMITMENT (unison)

*God of grace, we give thanks for your presence newly kindled within us through the gifts we share and the hope we receive in communion with you and one another. Nourished by your love, may we go forth to proclaim the good news that your light shines even when and where we least expect it. May we follow the light of Christ to walk in paths of righteousness, and to love one another in word and action. May we be led out with hope, filled with your grace to shine our light of love wherever we go. Amen.*

### \*HYMN

***We Hail You God's Anointed*** The New Century Hymnal, No. 104  
(verses 1 & 2)

We hail you God's anointed, the long awaited One!  
Hail in the time appointed, your reign on earth begun!  
You come to break oppression, to set the captive free;  
to take away transgression, and rule in equity.

You shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;  
and joy and hope, like flowers, spring in your path to birth.  
Before you on the mountains, shall peace, the herald, go,  
and righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.

### \*BENEDICTION

In a fearful world, may you look for God's spirit.  
May you reach for each other's hands.  
May you choose courage whenever you can.  
And in all things, may you remember  
that good news is louder than fear.  
In the name of the one who calls,  
the one who sends,  
and the one who journeys with us,  
go in peace and be not afraid.

### BENEDICTION RESPONSE

### POSTLUDE

## Thanks to our worship helpers today!

Liturgist: Scott Vossler  
Digital Host: Lori Merrill  
Greeters: Stephen and Anja Sugg  
Welcome Table: Frances Hockensmith

## Welcome to Rockville United Church!

*We are glad you have joined us for worship this morning. We trust that you will find RUC to be a welcoming and engaging place to explore the life of faith within a community that honors each person's spiritual journey. We encourage you to ask questions, visit our website, and share your contact information at the welcome table near the front doors.*

*I hope to greet you personally following worship, and invite you to contact me.*

*Blessings,*  
Rev. Jennifer Knutsen  
[jennifer@rockvilleunitedchurch.org](mailto:jennifer@rockvilleunitedchurch.org)

Our complimentary Wi-Fi network is **RUC Mesh**. The password is **heavenly**.



Please Scan Me To Give To RUC.



## Rockville United Church

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)/United Church of Christ  
355 Linthicum Street, Rockville, Maryland 20851  
301-424-6733 ~ [www.RockvilleUnitedChurch.org](http://www.RockvilleUnitedChurch.org)  
(Office Hours: Wed, Fri—10am to 3pm or by appointment)  
Ecumenical † Just Peace † Open & Affirming † More Light