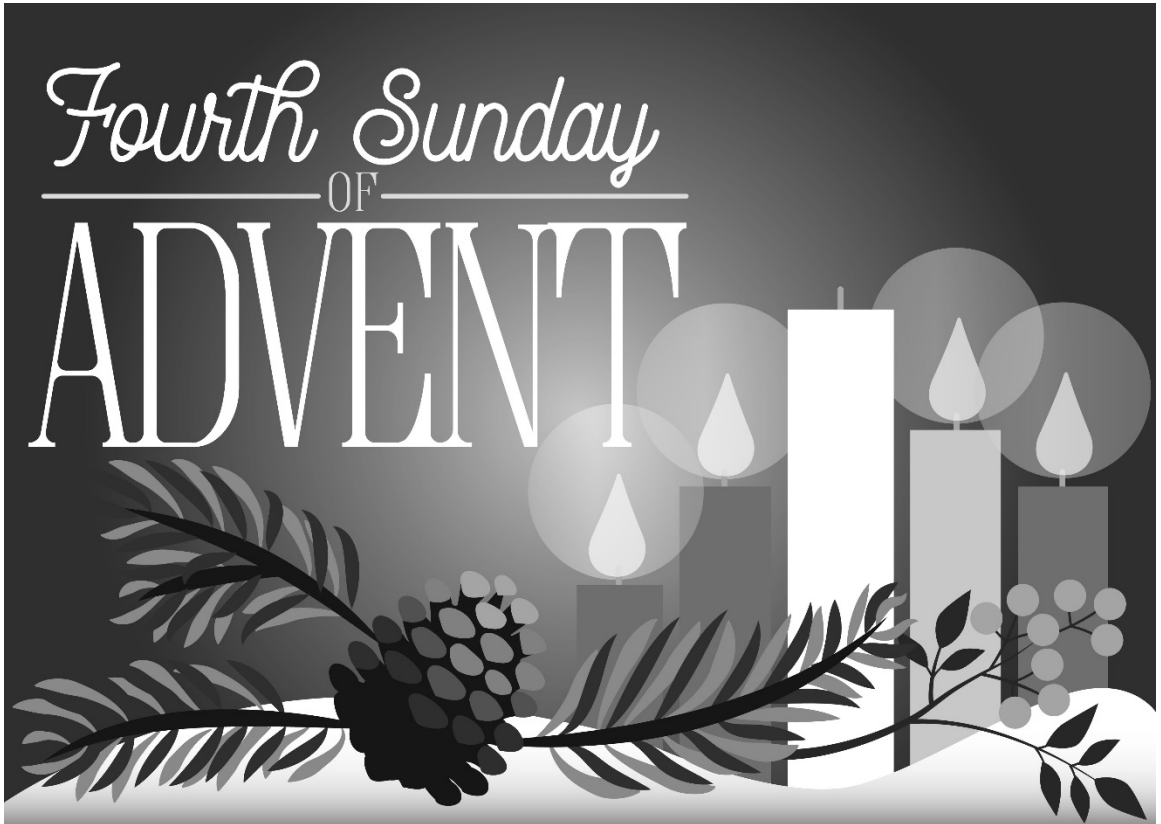


First Congregational United Church of Christ

*Empowered by the Holy Spirit and with the help of God,
we open our doors and hearts to all,
in service and love as modeled by Jesus Christ.*



Fourth Sunday of Advent
*A Season of Hope, Peace, Joy, and **Love***

The Lord's Day
Fourth Sunday of Advent
A Season of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love
Magnifying God
Seven-thirty and Ten O'clock in the Morning

The Worship of God

Gathering Music

The Greeting

The Spirit of the still-speaking God be with you.

And also with you.

The Call to Worship and Welcome

The Music for Piano

The Collect (Opening Prayer)

The Concerns of the Church

The Opening Hymn, No. 155 *Angels We Have Heard on High*

GLORIA

The Gathering

Before the majesty of God's holiness, we are warmly greeted in this sacred setting! In joyous expectation, come one and all to hear once more the promises of old!

Before God's strength and power, we bow before the Holy in worship, anticipating all that God has in store for us!

Gather in this our spiritual home, where our lives are redirected! Surely God will show us new ways to live.

Before the mercy of God, we lift our hearts! In humble imagination, we welcome a new visitation of the holy, rejoicing in God's presence with us!

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Hymn, No. 128 *One Candle Is Lit* (verse four)

CRADLE SONG

The Litany of ***Love!***

We light the candle of *Love!*

It's bright flame magnifying God's salvation upon all people.

May God's *Love* fill this holy house from generation to generation.

For nothing is impossible with God! Let it be according to God's word!

The Witness from the Hebrew Bible

MICAH 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

The Hymn, No. 130 *My Soul Gives Glory to My God*

MORNING SONG

The Witness from the Gospels

LUKE 1:39-45

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promise to her!"

The Sermon *Beyond the Myth!*

Timothy W. Shirley

The Pastoral Prayer and 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 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.

The Hymn, No. 149 *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

REGENT SQUARE

The Carrying Out the Light

The Invitation to the Offering of Gifts

The Benediction

The Closing Song *Let There Be Peace on Earth*

WORLD PEACE

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

With every step I take, let this be my joyous creed.

To take each moment and

live each moment in peace, eternally!

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

The Music for Piano

Welcome to Worship First Congregational United Church of Christ

Please continue to mask and practice social distancing in pews, and before and after worship, especially for those who are wearing masks. *Thank you for continuing to respect each other's comfort!*

Offering plates are located near the rear entrance to the sanctuary. Loose change placed in the offering plates is donated to the Melody of Compassion fund.

The lovely chancel flowers are sponsored by Barbara Flaherty in celebration of Christmas.

We have received 62 pledges totaling \$140,654 for our 2022 pledged goal of \$155,000. Pledge cards are available on the pledge box if you have misplaced yours.

2022 offering envelopes are available in the church office. Stop by and pick up your designated number.

Our December giving, beyond the pledge, has always been dedicated to the Christmas Fund Offering. In earlier years the offering was known as Veterans of the Cross. The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees. Eagle River UCC has a long history of contributions to this fund. A reminder: the fund is not included in the 2021 budget and depends upon separate donations. Thank you.

Christmas Eve, A Festival of Lessons and Carols Celebrating the Nativity with Carols, Communion, and Candles will be held at 7 PM on Friday, December 24th. There will be no in-person Christmas Day Worship on the 25th. A recording of the Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship will be available by 10 AM on December 25th. A new tradition will be started on the 26th, the first Sunday following Christmas. Instead of a traditional service, Pastor Tim will lead us in the reading of the Christmas story followed by the singing of Christmas carols. This service will not be published online.

A 4 week advent study & prayer group will meet at church **from 6:00 to 7:30** at the church and via Zoom. For more information contact Bill Marshall at bmarsh68@gmail.com.

Print copies of the service will be sent out to members who request them early next week. Please note that for the next few weeks, as we transition to a new pastor coming, print copies of weekly services will be sent out on the Monday after the service instead of the Thursday before. If you would like to receive a print copy of the service by mail each week, and have not been getting one, please contact Nan Pophal at [715-802-8501](tel:715-802-8501).

First Congregational United Church of Christ in Eagle River's Advent – Christmas Cantata, "Let Us Have Music for Christmas", has taken a unique approach in its presentation this year. Due to the uncertainty of Covid-19 cases this fall, more restrictive gathering protocols, and in the spirit of keeping singers and audience members safe it will be presented online.

The diverse performances include a virtual choir, a recorded in- person choir, a piano duet, and readings that will take you on a journey of yearning for God's promised one through the joy of the Savior's birth and culminates with our modern-day celebration of Christmas Day.

The music and readings were compiled and directed by Lori Hunter with the skillful technical contributions of Alex Fluegel. Norma Yaeger is the principal accompanist and Linda Brainard joins her at the piano for a delightful piano duet. Dale Bishop joins the choir on flute for A Celtic Advent Carol, and Barb Helmick and Doug Malinsky are the featured narrators.

If you are unable to attend worship, remember you can experience the service after about noon on Sunday [HERE](#). A pdf of the sermon will also be available on Monday. Print copies of the service will be sent out to members who request them early next week. Please note that for the next few weeks, as we transition to a new pastor coming, print copies of weekly services will be sent out on the Monday after the service instead of the Thursday before. If you would like to receive a print copy of the service by mail each week, and have not been getting one, please contact Nan Pophal at [715-802-8501](tel:715-802-8501).

Scripture readers, ushers, and camcorder operators are always needed, as well as announcement readers. You can sign up by visiting our website! <https://eagleriverucc.org/signups/> Or contact Joy Turpin at: joyfaithchapinturpin@gmail.com or [\(715\) 479-6560](tel:715-479-6560).

Building access to the church has been changed as part of our Security Team's upgrades. If you have an old church key, it doesn't work anymore! New key cards are available to be issued, to those needed access. For events, please let Alex know so that he can schedule the doors to be automatically unlocked for you. Please contact Alex to learn more at alex@eagleriverucc.org.

Prayer requests can be sent to the prayer group through Tobi Johannsen ([920-450-1402](tel:920-450-1402)).

Because of "Substantial" Covid infection rates in Vilas County, an uncertainty in variants, and the arrival of Flu Season, masks are strongly recommended in worship, whether you are vaccinated or unvaccinated.

- Please sit in pews with at least 3 feet between family groups.
- Please wear a mask when singing
- If you are unable to wear a mask, you are still welcome in worship, but the more who wear them, the safer we will be.
- We have marked rooms in the building with appropriate capacity for use with seating spaced 6 feet apart. If you use the church for a group meeting, please observe these room capacities for everyone's safety.

First Congregational United Church of Christ

105 North First Street ~ PO Box 1385

Eagle River, Wisconsin 54521

Church Office: 715-802-8501, office@eagleriverucc.org,

Timothy W. Shirley: pastortim@eagleriverucc.org

Website: www.eagleriverucc.org



First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

Musicians: Linda Brainard, 7:30; Lori Hunter, 10:00

Scripture Readers: Marilyn Preisler, 7:30

Ursula Charaf, 10:00