



Leap of Faith

DECEMBER 2023



Christmas is all about peace, love, hope, and faith. As we light a new candle each week of Advent, we ponder anew each of these concepts. The candle in the middle is the Christ candle because Jesus embodies each of these.

As Emmanuel, or God with us, Jesus was both human and divine. Jesus came first, not to the religious leaders of His day, but to the shepherds working in the fields.

The wisemen were religious leaders that did seek Him, and they found Him. As the saying goes, "Wisemen still seek Him". We, too, will find Jesus this Christmas if we seek Him, and make room for Him in our busy lives this time of year. Practice peace, love, hope, and faith during this Christmas season.

Amen Rev. Laura

COME TO WORSHIP WITH US ON ZOOM!

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here at St. John's United Church of Christ.
Contact stjohnsuccofelkhart@gmail.com for service information.

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Reign of Christ

November 26, 2023

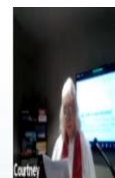
10:15 am

PRELUDE

"Let All Things Now Living"

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations! Rev. Laura Doty for her Ordination. Thank you to all that were able to come and celebrate this important event in Laura's life as well as in the life of our church.



CONSISTORY MEMBERS

Mary Ellen Harris (Pres)	Edward Quillin
Jean Quillin (VP)	Dennis Harris
George Adamson (Treas)	Wayne Knudson
Kelly Harris (Sec)	
Courtney Papa-Abell	

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Rev. Laura Doty for her Ordination. Thank you to all that were able to come and celebrate this important event in Laura's life as well as in the life of our church.

Happy New Year

GOD IS ALL YOU NEED

let spirituality
be your new years resolution
may God bless you
we wish you the happiest of years
God is all you need to succeed



DECEMBER WORSHIP LEADERS

- December 03 Laura Doty, Reverend
Liturgist – Kayden Harris
- 10 Laura Doty, Reverend
Liturgist – Courtney Papa-Abell
- 17 Jamelle Godlewski, Guest Speaker
Liturgist – Kelly Harris
- 24 Laura Doty, Reverend
Liturgist – Kolten Harris
- 31 Jamelle Godlewski, Guest Speaker
Liturgist – Mary Ellen Harris

Thank you to everyone for helping out!

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

What does the word "Advent" mean?

- ☐ 'Arrival or beginning ☐ 'Departure or ending
- ☐ Mystery or unknown ☐ None of the above

People from which of the following Church traditions celebrate Advent?

- ☐ 'Protestant ☐ Roman Catholic
- ☐ Orthodox ☐ All of the above

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 4

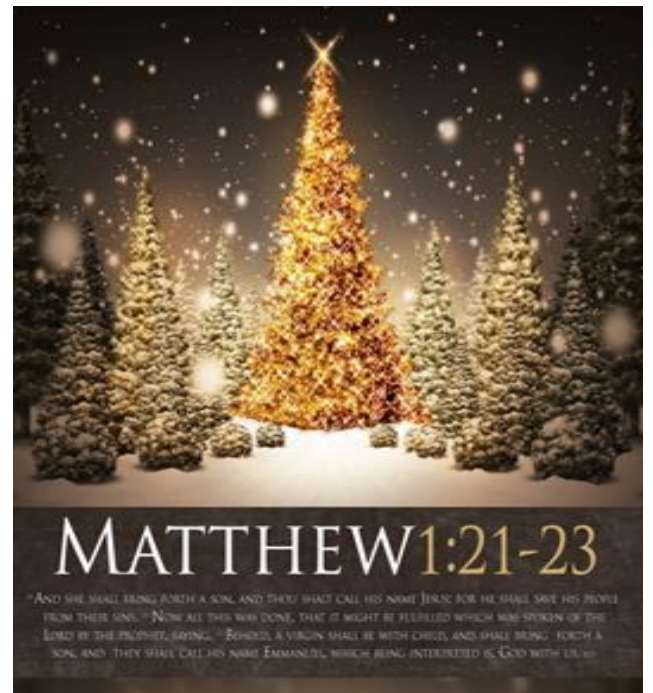
THANK YOU

Thank you to Rev. Laura Doty and Cindy Robinett for all the special Christmas music!



IMPORTANT DATES FOR DECEMBER

- 03 – First Sunday of Advent - **HOPE**
- 07 – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 10 – Second Sunday of Advent - **PEACE**
- 17 – Third Sunday of Advent - **JOY**
- 21 – Winter Begins
- 24 – Fourth Sunday of Advent - **LOVE**
- 24 – Christmas Eve – **CHRIST CANDLE**
- 25 – Christmas Day
- 31 – New Year's Eve



MATTHEW 1:21-23

"AND SHE SHALL BRING FORTH A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME JESUS FOR HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS." "NOW ALL THIS WAS DONE, THAT IT MIGHT BE FULFILLED WHICH WAS SPOKEN OF THE LORD BY THE PROPHET, SAYING, "BEHOLD, A VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND SHALL BRING FORTH A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME EMMANUEL, WHICH BEING INTERPRETED IS, GOD WITH US."

WHAT IS ADVENT

Advent is a four-week season in the Church calendar dedicated to anticipating the arrival, or "advent," of Jesus of Nazareth, the long-awaited [Messiah](#) and King. Christians from many backgrounds celebrate this time with reflections on hope, peace, love, and joy. And while their practices may look different, all focus on the hope-filled arrival of Jesus.

What Does Advent Mean?

Advent means "arrival" and signifies the start of an event or the arrival of a person. In Christian communities around the world, Advent refers to a four-week season of remembering and celebrating the arrival of Jesus on Earth. It's a time to reflect on the unexpected nature of Jesus' humble birth and join in the anticipation of when he will come again to reunite Heaven and Earth once and for all.

Who Celebrates Advent?

People from Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and other Christian traditions celebrate Advent, though the specific practices may vary from community to community. Additionally, some people celebrate Advent without the focus on Jesus' arrival, seeing the tradition as a fun way to countdown to Christmas.

How Is Advent Typically Celebrated?

In some traditions, followers of Jesus devote the first two weeks of Advent to remembering Jesus' promise to return and renew [Heaven and Earth](#). Then, during the last two weeks of Advent, these communities focus on the birth of Jesus. In other traditions, people reflect on the concepts of [hope](#), [peace](#), [love](#), and [joy](#)—one for each week leading up to Christmas. People may light Advent candles, prepare unique wreaths, hold special church services, or read specific Scriptures each day to reflect on the arrival of Jesus on Earth.

What Parts of the Bible Inform Our Understanding of Advent?

From the first story to the last, the Bible is full of narratives, poetry, prophecy, biographies, and personal letters that inform our understanding of Advent. When the Bible talks about humans waiting for the promised anointed King who would deliver them, it can help us connect with their anticipation ([Amos 9:11-13](#)). When we read about people choosing joy and hope in God's promises despite their circumstances, the meaning of Advent can take on a deeper meaning ([Isa. 9:6-7, 11:1-5; Luke 1:26-2:20](#)). And when the New Testament talks about a second advent, the return of Jesus, we can join in that time of waiting, shared by Christians throughout history ([Rev. 21:1-5](#)).

Advent Year B	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
<u>First Sunday of Advent</u>				
December 3, 2023 <u>ART</u> -- <u>PRAYER</u>	<u>Isaiah 64:1-9</u>	<u>Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19</u>	<u>1 Corinthians 1:3- 9</u>	<u>Mark 13:24- 37</u>
<u>Second Sunday of Advent</u>				
December 10, 2023 <u>ART</u> -- <u>PRAYER</u>	<u>Isaiah 40:1-11</u>	<u>Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13</u>	<u>2 Peter 3:8-15a</u>	<u>Mark 1:1-8</u>
<u>Third Sunday of Advent</u>				
December 17, 2023 <u>ART</u> -- <u>PRAYER</u>	<u>Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11</u>	<u>Psalm 126</u> or <u>Luke 1:46b- 55</u>	<u>1 Thessalonians 5:16-24</u>	<u>John 1:6-8, 19-28</u>
<u>Fourth Sunday of Advent</u>				
December 24, 2023 <u>ART</u> -- <u>PRAYER</u>	<u>2 Samuel 7:1- 11, 16</u>	<u>Luke 1:46b- 55</u> or <u>Psalm 89:1- 4, 19-26</u>	<u>Romans 16:25-27</u>	<u>Luke 1:26- 38</u>

ANSWERS TO TESTING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

What does the word "advent" mean? -- ARRIVAL OR BEGINNING While the title "Advent" refers to the four-week Church celebration leading up to Christmas, the term itself means the arrival or beginning of something or someone.

People from which of the following Church traditions celebrate Advent? -- ALL OF THE ABOVE. Not all people from Christian traditions celebrate Advent, and the specific rituals and practices vary from community to community. **But people from each of these communities celebrate Advent.**

Christmas Year B	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
<u>Nativity of the Lord - Proper I</u>				
December 24 & 25, 2023 <i>Christmas Eve, Morn, or Mid-Day</i> <u>ART</u> -- <u>PRAYER</u>	<u>Isaiah 9:2-7</u>	<u>Psalm 96</u>	<u>Titus 2:11-14</u>	<u>Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)</u>
<u>Nativity of the Lord - Proper II</u>				
December 24 & 25, 2023 <i>Christmas Eve, Morn, or Mid-Day</i> <u>ART</u> -- <u>PRAYER</u>	<u>Isaiah 62:6- 12</u>	<u>Psalm 97</u>	<u>Titus 3:4-7</u>	<u>Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20</u>
<u>Nativity of the Lord - Proper III</u>				
December 24 & 25, 2023 <i>Christmas Eve, Morn, or Mid-Day</i> <u>ART</u> -- <u>PRAYER</u>	<u>Isaiah 52:7- 10</u>	<u>Psalm 98</u>	<u>Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)</u>	<u>John 1:1-14</u>
<u>First Sunday after Christmas Day</u>				
December 31, 2023 <u>ART</u> -- <u>PRAYER</u>	<u>Isaiah 61:10- 62:3</u>	<u>Psalm 148</u>	<u>Galatians 4:4-7</u>	<u>Luke 2:22-40</u>



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Northwest Association IKC - www.nwaikcucc.org

Indiana-Kentucky Conference - www.ikc.org

United Church of Christ – www.ucc.org