

The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



PRELUDE

WELCOME

✘ **HYMN #82** “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

(✘ *The congregation may rise, in body or in spirit.*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS | JOYS AND CONCERNS | SILENT PRAYER

ADVENT WREATH: THE CANDLE OF HOPE

Pat Palmer, Rich Tietjen

Reader 1: In the days of exile and uncertainty, the prophet Isaiah cried out:

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence. As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you. (Isaiah 64:1-3)

Reader 2: In the midst of our own encounters with uncertainty and upheaval and our longing for deliverance, Jesus calls to us, *Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come.* (Mark 13:35)

ALL: We wait as people surprised again and again by God who shakes us out of our complacency and wakes us up to the work of the kin-dom all around us.

Reader 1: We light this candle as a sign of our shocking hope. May we stay awake to God’s activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another. Amen.

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Kindle a Flame”

The image shows a musical score for the song "Kindle a Flame". It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the bass line is in the bass staff. The lyrics are written below the treble staff: "Kin-dle a flame to light - en the dark and take all fear a - way." The music ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

TEXT: The Iona Community 1987

MUSIC: The Iona Community 1987

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CALL TO RECONCILIATION

In this season of hope, joy and peace - how often do people receive these gifts from us? As we begin our journey through Advent, let us put down those failures and foolish behaviors which keep us from getting very far. Join me as we pray, saying,

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ONE: Holy God of Advent, you come near to us, yet we continue to seal our hearts with indifference to a suffering world.

**ALL: Tear open our hearts,
and make us more compassionate.**

You approach us with bundles of mercy to kindle our hope, but we continue to build our lives with the bricks of bitterness.

Tear open our anger, so we might become more forgiving.

You draw near, longing to embrace us, but we fold our arms, closing ourselves off from those all around us.

Tear open our souls, so we might become children of Advent.

God, shaper-of-our-lives:

have mercy;

Jesus, Word-which-does-not-pass-away:

fill us with your grace;

Holy Spirit, Giver-of-the-Light-of-peace:

Shine through our lives.

(We pray in silence)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Even now, God approaches us, mercy transcending anger, hope overcoming despair, life triumphing over death. This is good news, my friends; this is news of great joy for each of us.

Enriched in every grace, blessed with joy and hope, transformed by love, we will live as people of Advent. Thanks be to God. Amen.

RESPONSE IN SONG

“Kindle a Flame”

RESPONSIVE PSALTER: Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19

ONE: Give ear, O Shepherd of the people,

ALL: You Who lead the divided people like a single flock!

You Who are enthroned above all creation,

Shine forth, before the scattered tribes.

Awaken Your might, and come to save us!

Restore us, O God, to Your goodwill;

let Your face shine upon us,

that we may live.

O Holy One, God Almighty, how long will You fume
against Your people's prayers?

**You have fed them with the bread of sorrow,
and given them bitter tears to drink.**

You make us a source of discord to our neighbors;

our enemies deride us.

Restore us, O God Almighty;

Let Your face shine upon us,

that we may live.

Let Your hand rest upon the one at Your side,
the one You nurtured for Yourself.

We will never turn back from You;

revive us that we may continue to appeal to You,
in Your constancy.

Restore us, O God Almighty;

let Your face shine upon us,

that we may live.

A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*debts/debtors*)

Hymnal, p. 35

✕ HYMN #92

“While We Are Waiting, Come”

OFFERTORY

THE LIGHT OF SERVICE

*Offerings not specifically designated for the Church (including any checks with “Light of Service” or “LOS” in the memo line) will be given to an organization doing compassionate work that complements our church’s mission. This week, we share our gifts with the **Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross.***

ONE: God has poured gifts into our lives; we now return our tithes and offerings.

**ALL: Let us gather our gifts with grateful praise,
and offer them to God’s purposes.**

RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

Our church welcomes every size gift, and thanks you for your generosity.

ANTHEM

“Behold a Star from Jacob Shining”

Felix Mendelssohn

*Behold a star from Jacob shining,
And a scepter from Israel rising,
To reign in glory over the nations.*

*Break forth, O Light!
We, our joyful hearts uplifting with
thanksgiving,*

*Like some bright morning star is he,
The promise of the coming day,
Beyond the night of sorrow.*

Hail the brightness of Thy rising.

Words: based on Numbers 24:17

✕ DOXOLOGY

OLD 100TH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit ever more;
One God of grace, whom we adore! Amen.**

✕ UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Everything we have belongs to you, God of hope; we are your caretakers. We bring before you our tithes and offerings, knowing that, when blessed by you, our gifts can actually shine forth Advent light and dispel gloom. So bless these and bless us, to carry your hope wherever we go. Amen.

MODERN TESTIMONY	“For the New Year, 1981”	<i>Denise Levertov</i>
ANCIENT TESTIMONY	Mark 13:24-37	<i>New Testament, p.</i>
SERMON	“Wait ’til the Midnight Hour”	Pastor John A. Nelson

The Sacrament of Communion

INVITATION

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

One: God be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to our God.

It is good and right to give God our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, God of peace and promise.

Through the words of your prophets

and the faith of your followers

you prepare the way of our redemption

and bring hope to birth.

And though we often grow weary of waiting,

your signs call us to keep watch for that day

when all things shall be made new.

In assurance of this hope,

we join with all the company of heaven and earth

to give you praise:

**Holy, holy, holy God of life and light,
heaven and earth are full of your glory!**

Hosanna in the highest!

**Blessed is the One for whom we wait,
who bears the name Emmanuel.**

Hosanna in the highest!

REMEMBERING JESUS AT TABLE

PRAYERS ✕ THE LORD'S PRAYER (*debts*)

PRAYER OF SELF-GIVING

God of majesty,

with reverent hearts we name you also God of self-giving love.

We give thanks, blessing above blessing,

for Jesus Christ, son of Mary, Word of life.

The bread we now break and the cup we take are a sharing
in the life of Christ.

**As we take this cup of blessing and as we share this bread of life we
proclaim his death with wonder and celebrate his resurrection with
joy. Glory to you, O God!**

SHARING THE MEAL

*We celebrate an open communion, and invite everyone to this holy meal. We share the
bread and the cup in Jesus' name as a reenactment of an ancient vision of God's feast for
all people. You need not be a member of our church, or any church, to participate with us
in this feast of grace: all that is needed is that you desire God's sustenance.*

We serve gluten-free bread and grape juice, as we seek to welcome all to the table.

HYMN #527

“Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup”

EAT THIS BREAD

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

God of new beginnings,

you draw near to us in word and sacrament

to strengthen and renew us.

Kindle in us the fire of your Spirit.

May your light so shine through us

that all may know we are living in the light of your promise.

We ask this in the name of the long-expected Jesus, Prince of Peace;

Amen.

✕ **HYMN #105**

“People Look East”

BESANÇON

BENEDICTION and **SUNG AMEN**

POSTLUDE

In Mediae Horae



Welcome to Church!

Gathered in 1744, the Congregational Church of Salisbury is an Open and Affirming member of the United Church of Christ. It is also a welcoming home to people from a great variety of church backgrounds and life experiences. Your presence is a gift to us! We hope you will feel God's Spirit here today through our worship and fellowship.

*We seek to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds and love our neighbors as ourselves. This Church is **Open** to all for participation, membership, leadership and employment regardless of race, ancestry, class, gender identity, physical and mental ability or sexual orientation. We **Affirm** each individual as a child of God, celebrating the total identity of each person.*

*As an **Open and Affirming** Congregation, we commit to work toward ending ignorance, fear, hatred, prejudice, and discrimination against any person.*

*Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

If you are visiting us, Welcome! Please sign our guest book and introduce yourself to our Pastor or to one of the Deacons. Fill out a welcome card in the pew to join our email list. Assistive Listening Devices are available; please ask an usher for assistance.

Kindly set phones to silent (unless you're expecting a call from Jesus).

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus 82



1 Come, thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

With its opening "Come," this hymn sounds the note of entreaty and invitation that characterizes the Advent season (from the Latin *adventus* = "coming"). Its blending of memory and hope helps us to give voice to our present faith as we stand between the past and the future.

TEXT: Charles Wesley, 1744

MUSIC: Rowland Hugh Richard, 1830; harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

HYFRYDOL

8.7.8.7.D

(alternate tune: STUTTIGART, 83)

92 While We Are Waiting, Come

1 While we are wait - ing, come;
 2 With power and glo - ry, come;
 3 Come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come;

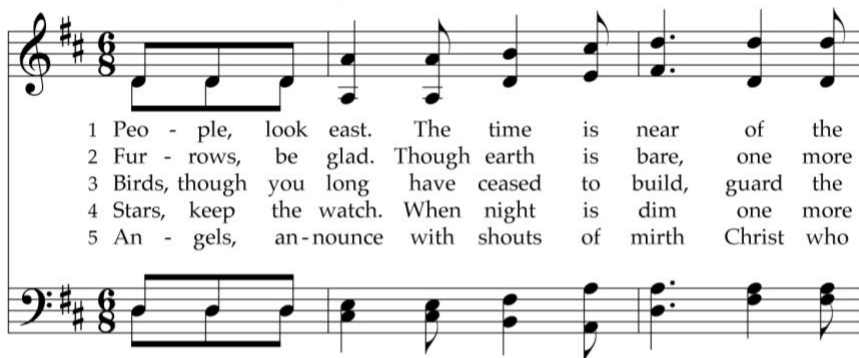
while we are wait - ing, come.
 with power and glo - ry, come.
 come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come.

Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el,

while we are wait - ing, come.

This simple and meditative Advent hymn is so uncomplicated in both text and tune that it can be learned quickly and sung without reference to a book, which might make it effective as a prayer response. It would also lend itself to improvised stanzas on appropriate occasions.

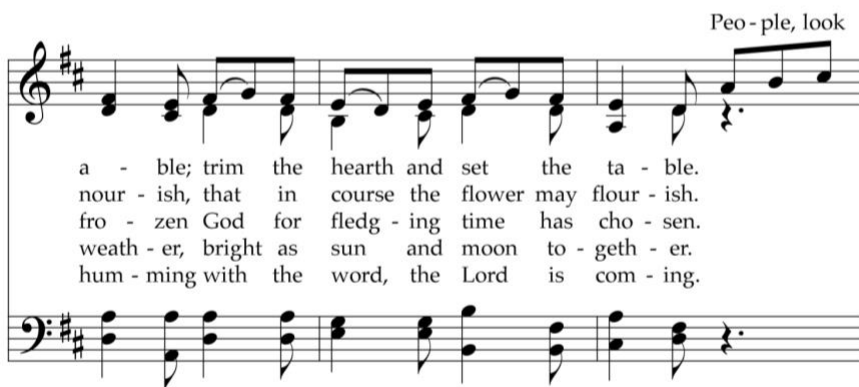
People, Look East



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more
 3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the
 4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more
 5 An - gels, an - nounce with shouts of mirth Christ who



crown - ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are
 seed is plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to
 nest that must be filled. E - ven the hour when wings are
 light the bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y
 brings new life to earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley



Peo - ple, look
 a - ble; trim the hearth and set the ta - ble.
 nour - ish, that in course the flower may flour - ish.
 fro - zen God for fledg - ing time has cho - sen.
 weath - er, bright as sun and moon to - geth - er.
 hum - ming with the word, the Lord is com - ing.

This text was written to provide a new Advent text for an existing carol tune, here named for the city in eastern France where it originated. The author has imaginatively expressed the cosmic implications of Christ's coming by addressing each stanza to a part of creation.

east and sing to - day:

Peo-ple, look east: Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 Love, the Bird, is on the way.
 Love, the Star, is on the way.
 Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Peo-ple, look east: (Love is on the way.)

Today's Worship Leaders

Usher: Deborah Moore

Reader: Ron Collins • **Deacons:** John Estabrook & Don Mayland

Fellowship time hosts: Sarah and Ron Collins

Today's liturgy is adapted and reprinted from *Lectionary Liturgies* by the Rev. Thom Shuman © 2023 (lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com); used by permission.

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy by Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

Psalm adapted from *The Psalms in Worship*, Mary Susan Gast, © 2002; used by permission.

Our Ministry Team

Ministers: All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

Worship & Music

Music Director: David Baranowski
Bell Choir Director: Mary Davidson
Cantor: Jennifer Oberto

Faith Formation

Sunday School Coordinator: Holly Tierney
Youth Group Leader: Sarah Lesch
Youth Group Assistant: Dan Baker

Holding the Parts Together

Administrative Assistant: Loriann Chevremont
Sexton: Richard Tietjen
Stewardship & Database Mgr: Kelly Rybczyk

Church Officers:
 Betsy Beck, *moderator*;
 Janet Offensend, *treasurer*; Jennifer Oberto, *clerk*

Pastor and Teacher: The Rev. Dr. John A. Nelson

This Week at Salisbury UCC

SUNDAY, 3 DECEMBER

- 10AM **Worship**, followed by fellowship & refreshments in the Parish Hall
- 3PM "Joyful Noises":
2023 Christmas Concert

MONDAY, 4 DECEMBER

- 9:15AM Centering Prayer (via Zoom)
- 11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club

TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER

- 4PM Board of Christian Action meeting

- 5:15PM Handbell Choir rehearsal

WEDNESDAY, 6 DECEMBER

- 12:30PM Staff Meeting
- 4PM Women's Bible Study

THURSDAY, 7 DECEMBER

- 5:30PM Choir Rehearsal

FRIDAY, 8 DECEMBER

- 8:45AM Men's Bible Study



The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Meeting in Grace • Transformed by Love • Serving with Joy

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Office Hours: 8:30am – 1:30pm, Monday-Thursday