

WHAT'S HAPPENING

- * **Tonight 6:30pm—ONE PERFORMANCE ONLY—Dude, You Hear What I Hear? -** Everyone is welcome to attend. A HUGE THANK YOU to the parents, children and coordinators for working so hard to make this musical happen.
- * **Christmas Offering**—Our December mission offering will go to the FUMC Preschool, FUMC Agape Fund, and Pregnancy Life Center's Langdyn House. Envelopes may be found in the pew holders or in the Krout attendance pads.
- * **Christmas Eve— Join us next Sunday for our regular morning service and special services to celebrate the birth of our Savior:**
 - 10:15am—Morning Service
 - 5:30pm—Family Service
 - 6:30-7:15pm—Communion served in Krout Memorial
 - 10:00pm—Candlelight Service
 - 9:15-9:45pm—Communion served in Krout Memorial
- * **December is Baking Mix Month for the Food Pantry** - donations of cake, brownie, and cookie mixes may be brought in and placed in the food pantry baskets at the church entrances.
- * **Year-end Giving Important Dates for Donations to be on your 2023 Statement :**
 - Friday, Dec. 22**—Last day for eGiving online and paying by credit card. Credit cards take anywhere from 3-5 days to process.
 - Thursday, Dec. 28** - Last day for cash and check offerings to be turned into the church office.
- * **Preparation for 2024:**
 - 2024 Altar Flower Calendar** is available on the media board. We are blessed to have beautiful flowers in honor or memory of someone each and every Sunday. Sign up today or call the church office.
 - 2024 Offering Envelopes** have arrived and are available for pickup across from the office. If you don't see your name and would like to receive envelopes, please contact the church office.
 - 2024 Pledge Cards** may be placed in the offering plate or returned to the church office by Friday, December 29th.

Church office—419-238-0631 ext. 302 or firstchurch@vanwertfirst.net

FIRST united methodist CHURCH

113 West Central Avenue | Van Wert, Ohio 45891 | 419-238-0631 | vanwertfirst.net



December 17, 2023

Third Sunday of Advent

Our Vision Statement:

Enlarging the circle of disciples through Jesus

Thanks for joining us today! If you have any questions while you are here this morning, you can find an answer at the Welcome table, which is inside the doors off Jefferson Street. Whatever your circumstances, and no matter where you've been, you matter to God, and you matter to us. We are glad you are here! If you are a first time guest with us this morning, ***Welcome!*** Please stop by the welcome table and pick up a welcome packet.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Nehemiah 8:10 NIV

**indicates please stand if you are able
Please fill out the attendance pad and pass it to your neighbor*

Welcome Jeremy Laukhuf

Prelude: *Love Came Down at Christmas with Of the Father's Love Begotten*
arr. Cynthia Dobrinske
Handbell Choir with Gloria Wendel, Director and Michelle Amstutz, Flutist

Announcements: Susan Burchfield

***Call to Worship:** Susan Burchfield

Leader: Have you noticed? Are you paying attention? God is doing a new thing.

People: We watch and wait in the fierce joy of the coming Messiah.

Leader: You know the captives? God is bringing freedom. You know the brokenhearted? God is bringing healing.

People: We watch and wait in the fierce joy of the coming Messiah.

Leader: Beloved, listen. God is calling you. To be freed and to free your neighbors. To be healed and to heal your community. To testify to the Light among us.

People: We watch and wait in the fierce joy of the coming Messiah.

Leader: So, let us join our voices and our hearts as we proclaim the story of the one whose coming we anticipate and yet is already as close as our own breath.

People: We come to watch, wait, and worship in the fierce joy of Jesus Christ, the coming Messiah. Amen.

***Song:** *Hark The Herald Angels Sing/Blessed Is He Who Comes*

***Opening Prayer:** Jeremy Laukhuf

Holy God of Joy, we rejoice in the reality of who you are. We live within the joy of your love for us. Our contentment comes and goes. Our happiness ebbs and flows. Our feelings depend upon our circumstances, our physical health, our brain chemistry. But our joy is deeply rooted in our identity as your beloved children. And we give you thanks, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candles: Sydney Dowler & Mandy Burenga

Hymn Chorus: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

Children's Musical Presentation *from Dude, You Hear What I Hear?*
Join us Tonight at 6:30pm

Blessing of the Angel Tree Gifts
Children dismissed to AWE

Life in the Church: Susan Burchfield

***Scripture:** Isaiah 1:1-4, 8-11

Anthem: *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus* arr. Robert Hobby Chancel Choir
Gloria Wendel, accompanist

Series: **Our Spirit Awaits**
Message: "Our Fierce Joy" Pastor Christian Taylor

***Hymn:** *Angels We Have Heard on High* #238

Prayers of the People
The Lord's Prayer

Giving of Tithes & Offerings:
Offertory: *Grown Up Christmas List* arr. Mark Hayes
***Doxology:** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* see insert
(Tune: Greensleeves)
***Prayer of Gratitude**

***Spoken Benediction:**

Postlude: *The Birthday of a King* arr. Glenda Austin

You are invited to be seated and enjoy the Postlude or leave quietly in peace. Thank you for worshiping with us this morning. We hope to see you again soon!

KID'S MINISTRY AWE

Children preschool through 5th grade have an opportunity to build their relationship with Jesus through uplifting songs and impactful Bible lessons by attending our Alternate Worship Experience. Children will be released to AWE after praise and worship time. AWE will not meet Communion Sundays which is the first Sunday of the month.

Leaders in Today's Worship

Pastor: Christian Taylor	Projectionist: Jill Smelser
Director of Music: Scott Turner	Sound Technician: Kent Smelser
Worship Leader: Jeremy Laukhuf	Videographer: Dave Thompson
Announcer: Susan Burchfield	Screen Creators: Cheri Oechsle, Melody Taylor
Acolyte: Dillon Staas	Usher Coordinators: Dave Lichtle, Neil Shaffer