



First Reformed United Church of Christ

*Where People Discover...
The Love of God...
The Power to Love Others...
The Ability to Love Ourselves.*

The Worship of God

November 29, 2020
First Sunday of Advent

Gathering

"BOLD" indicates congregational response

Prelude	"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" [Hal Hopson]	Robert Wilson
Invitation to Worship		Rev. Elizabeth Horton
Hymn	"Prepare the Way of the Lord"	Ellen Peterson
Opening Prayer		Rev. Horton

Centering

Scripture Reading Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Lighting the Candle of HOPE

Special Music	O Come, O Come Emmanuel	Ellen Peterson
Prayer		Clifton Murphy

Gracious God,
We come to you right now, starting off by saying thank you. We know that everyone doesn't get a chance to say thank you, so while we have it, we're going to take it.

Thank you for our good days.
Thank you for our bad ones.
Thank you for our hard times.
Thank you for our pain.
Thank you for our joy.
Thank you for your strength.
Thank you for your peace.
Thank you for our families.
God, we thank you.

We come to you, Lord, asking that you go and see about the people who are poverty-stricken.

We pray for the bodies who must sleep outside in the cold,

God, convict us in our spirits to be your hands and feet,
To go to their aid, not just during this time of the year,
But year round, Lord.

Now God, we pray for those who wrestle with loss and depression this season.
For so many people,
This holiday season has been redefined by the absence of a loved
one,
God, you are a heart-fixer and a mind-regulator.
We pray you give us wisdom and the right words to say to those who
are in distress.
We pray you send your peace.

God in this holiday season people need to experience you.
We want the world to know the love we've come to know.
We want the world to feel the joy we've come to feel.
And we want the world to feel the hope that you give.
We pray that they draw near to you again.
And, for people who don't know you,
We pray that you reveal yourself to them.

God, for the individual things that your children stand in need of,
We ask you to meet them where they are...where we are.
You promised us you'd never leave us or forsake us, and
we choose to trust you.
We thank you for Jesus.
Thank you for the hope he brings,

And it's in the name of Jesus, we pray and ask it all. Amen.

Hymn	<i>"People Look East"</i>	Ellen Peterson
Advent Music	<i>"Drawing Nearer"</i>	Christopher Grundy

Proclaiming

Gospel Reading	Mark 13: 24-37	Rev. Horton
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'But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, 25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

26Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. 27Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

28 'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30Truly I tell you; this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

32 'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. 34It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

Sermon	A Minimalist Advent: Assess the Mess
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Sending

Benediction Postlude	<i>"Prepare the Royal Highway"</i> [David Paxton]	Robert Wilson
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Join our **Fellowship & Prayer Concerns** after worship from 12-12:30PM and catch up with your church friends!

Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#) (Meeting ID: 207 685 007 Passcode: 3n7IX8 Dial in: +1 301 715 8592)

NOVEMBER CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

30th ...Irvin Sink

DECEMBER CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

1st ...Ann Johnson Crandell

...Buddy Lohr

...Jerry Smith

2nd ...Beverly Sandifer

3rd ...Brandi McCarn Gerew

...Keri Lovell

OUR CHURCH AT PRAYER

OUR MEMBERS:

Susan Odom, Patti Lovell, Ellen Bouchard, Kelly Greathouse, Margot Everhart, Lisa Price, Deanna Michael

OUR MEMBERS AT HOME AND IN CARE FACILITIES:

Peggy Bates, Janelle Bunn, Marzell Crofts, Ruth Essick, Pattie Everhart, Vogen Everhart, Lib & Jimbo Hinkle, Marguerite Leonard, Bob Shaak, Lib Sink, Katherine Skipper, Carolyn Spivey, Adena Wall

Piedmont Crossing:

Mary Berrier, Doris Flynt (*receiving palliative care*)

OUR FRIENDS:

Wendi Greene (Bill Robbins' sister), Ashley Thomason Hutcheson (Ron & Heidi Hutcheson's daughter-in-law), Barbara Miller (Eddie Yates' mother), Angie Bouchard (Lee and Ellen Bouchard's youngest daughter)

**Indicates newly added. Names will remain on the list for 4 weeks. To add a name to the prayer list please call the church office (336-248-2617).*

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY - November 29: 1st Sunday of Advent

9:45AM Adult Sunday School: "Company's Coming" Week 1- "This Place Is a Mess"

[Isaiah 64:1-9](#) and [Mark 13:24-37](#)

Join the Zoom Meeting [HERE](#) (Meeting ID: 890 2652 8333 Passcode: 634119)

10:45AM Worship online via YouTube [HERE](#) or Facebook [HERE](#).

12:00PM Fellowship & Prayer Concerns

Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#) (Meeting ID: 207 685 007 Passcode: 3n7IX8 Dial in: +1 301 715 8592)

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH MEAL GROUP: Walter & Ann Hoffman and Doris Sink

TUESDAY - December 1:

12:00PM 2CFAR: Crucial Conversations on Faith and Race via Zoom. Join the meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 873 4191 8684 & Password: 222495)

7:00PM Adult Book Study via Zoom: *Evangelicals*. Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 836 9173 5429 Passcode: 262712 Dial in: +13017158592)

WEDNESDAY - December 2:

5:30PM High School Youth Meeting via Zoom

Join the meeting [HERE](#). (Meeting ID: 988 9882 1207 Passcode: FRUCC)

7:00PM WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

Sign up [HERE](#) to save your spot or call the church office.

SATURDAY - December 5:

10-6:00 Salvation Army Bell Ringing at Lanier's

SUNDAY - December 6: 2nd Sunday of Advent...Holy Communion Sunday

- 9:45AM** Adult Sunday School: "Company's Coming" Week 2
"Clean-up Crew" (Smithie Parrish, facilitator)
[Isaiah 40:1-11](#) and [Mark 1:1-18](#)
Join the Zoom Meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 890 2652 8333 Passcode: 634119 Dial in: +1 929 205 6099 US)
- 10:45AM** Worship online via YouTube [HERE](#) or Facebook [HERE](#).
- 12:00PM** Fellowship & Prayer Concerns
Zoom Meeting [HERE](#) (Meeting ID: 207 685 007 Passcode: 3n7IX8 Dial in: +1 301 715 8592)
- 1:00PM** Consistory Meeting via Zoom
Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 851 5917 2530 Passcode: 805597 Dial in: +1 929 205 6099)
- 2:30PM** Children's Virtual Visit with SANTA via Zoom. Join [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 865 1339 4167 Passcode: SANTA Dial in: 1 312 626 6799)
- 4-5:00PM** Walk-thru Holy Communion in the Sanctuary

UPCOMING EVENTS

MONDAY, December 7:

- 12:00PM** Christmas Cards for members at home are due in the office
- 6:30PM** Children's Ministry Team meeting via Zoom. Join the meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 818 9546 5762 Passcode: 840364 Dial in: 1 929 205 6099)

TUESDAY, December 8:

- 10-6:00** Salvation Army Bell Ringing at Lanier's

WEDNESDAY, December 9:

- 5:30PM** Middle School Youth meeting. (TBD)

MONDAY, December 14:

- 6:30PM** Youth Ministry Team Meeting via Zoom. Join the meeting [HERE](#).
(Meeting ID: 841 4198 9464 Passcode: 836872 Dial in: 1 929 205 6099)

WEDNESDAY, December 16:

- 5:30PM** High School Youth meeting (Fellowship Hall)

SUNDAY, December 20:

- 10:45AM** Children and Youth Christmas Pageant during Sunday Worship

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY, December 23 & 24:

- 7-7:30PM** Candlelight Service in the Sanctuary
20 spaces available each night. Reserve your space [HERE](#) or contact the church office.

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FIRST REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

104 EAST CENTER STREET, LEXINGTON, NC 27292

PHONE: 336-248-2617 WEBSITE: www.frucc.org FACEBOOK: facebook.com/firstreformeducc

Ministers: The Congregation

Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Horton (elizabeth@frucc.org, cell/text #336-972-8895)

Minister of Pastoral Care: Rev. June Grubb (jgrubb3@triad.rr.com #336-248-5668)

Choir Director: Ellen Peterson (ellenrpeterson@gmail.com)

Organist: Robert Wilson (robert@frucc.org)

Admin. Asst.: Carolyn Robbins (carolyn@frucc.org) **Financial Secretary:** Paula Lopp (paula@frucc.org)

FIRST REFORMED UCC ANNOUNCEMENTS

LOOKING TOWARD SUNDAY: A MESSAGE FROM REV. HORTON

Dear Friends,

While Thanksgiving may look different for us this year –a smaller table or an empty chair – my prayer is that we may recognize and give thanks all the ways God is present in our lives.

I give thanks for my colleagues in ministry at First Reformed:

For Carolyn and Paula in the office, their gifts of organization, attention to detail, and their generous portion of patience they have with me,

For June, and her gift of pastoral care and presence, and for her artistic skills in worship,

For Ellen and her tremendous gift of voice and her well-honed skills in video editing,

For Robert and his gift of playing beautiful, worshipful music on the organ and piano,

For Eddie, and his gift of calm and steady leadership of the Consistory,

For the Deacons and Elders, the spirit of cooperation and faithfulness in making difficult decisions this year.

I give thanks to all who have participated and helped in worship:

For those who reached out to the sick, homebound, and alone,

For the leaders of the Bible Studies, who helped us dig deeper into Scripture,

For the leaders of the Book Studies, who called us into thinking theologically about matters of justice in this world,

For the Crucial Conversations on Faith and Race, for helping me form unexpected friendships and build bridges in this community,

For the youth and children's ministry, for the ways they bring hope and joy into the world!

I am grateful for you First Reformed, in the multitude of ways you show the inclusive, overflowing love of Christ in the world and for the grace you continue to show me.

With much gratitude in my heart, I wish each of you a joyful Thanksgiving!

Seeking to serve faithfully with you,
Elizabeth

ATTENTION CURRENT COLLEGE STUDENTS

It is time to apply for the Hinkle, Sink, Swing Scholarship. Applications are available in the church office or can be emailed by contacting paula@frucc.org. Application should be completed and back in the office by December 31, 2020.

CHILDREN'S VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Any children and youth interested in taking part in our **VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT** this year, please contact the church office **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**.

CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

There will be two separate candlelight services in the sanctuary this year. The services are 30 minutes each and will be limited to 20 people. You can reserve your spot [HERE](#) or contact the church office by email (carolyn@frucc.org) or phone (336-248-2617).

BELL RINGERS NEEDED FOR SALVATION ARMY RED KETTLES

Shifts are still available to ring the kettle bell for Salvation Army during the Christmas season. Dates for our church are **Saturday, December 5th, and Tuesday, December 8th with shifts from 10:00AM-6:00PM**. Please contact Jerry Lovell at either 336-746-6493 (H) or 336-590-5074 (C) for more information or to sign up.

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR OUR MEMBERS AT HOME

Save a Stamp! Again, this year the church office will collect and deliver Christmas cards for our 19 members at home. If you include a special message in your card, make sure to add their name on the envelope. After the cards are all collected, they will be delivered by a member of the Board of Evangelism or mailed to each person below. **Your cards need to be in the church office by MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020.**

Our members at home: J.W. BATES.....PEGGY BATES.....MARY BERRIER.....ELLEN BOUCHARD.....JANELLE BUNN
.....MARZELL CROTTIS.....RUTH ESSICK.....MARGOT EVERHART.....PATTIE EVERHART.....VOGEN EVERHART.....
DORIS FLYNT.....LIB & JIMBO HINKLE.....GERRI HILL.....MARGUERTIE LEONARD.....BOB SHAAK.....ELIZABETH SINK.....
KATHERINE SKIPPER.....CAROLYN SPIVEY.....ADENA WALL

ADVENT - CHRISTMASTIDE DEVOTIONALS: DRAW NEAR

Social distancing is our new way of life. What a strange and alienating reality. Humans are wired for connection, and we do better -- mentally and physically -- with touch. So, what is a human to do when drawing near is both what we most need, and in an age of pandemic, what might end us? Find connection, find nearness, find God in all things this Advent (through Christmastide) with the Still Speaking Writers' Group and contributors in **Draw Near**. From the writers of the popular online [Daily Devotional Draw Near](#) includes a biblical text, reflection, and prayer for each day of Advent through Epiphany. **We have a limited number available. Please contact Church Office to claim one.**

OUR ANGEL TREE

Purchase an Angel Tree in honor or in memory of someone, and it will be placed on the tree in the Education Building breezeway. Funds will benefit our benevolences. To purchase, please contact the church office or click [HERE](#).

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL: Company's Coming

Who doesn't like Advent? It is a season of excitement and anticipation and joy. Lots and lots of joy. Even when we acknowledge that we aren't ready for what is coming, for the realm that is promised, for the kin-dom we hope for. We admit we have fallen short; we confess that we are wrapped up in ourselves and in things that don't last; we admit that our watchful waiting has fallen by the wayside. And yet, in this season, there is joy. And we have a sense that we can start all over again, because "Company Is Coming." Join the Zoom meetings [HERE](#).

(Meeting ID: 890 2652 8333 Passcode: 634119 Dial in: +1 929 205 6099 US)

Week 1 – This Place Is a Mess! (Rev. June Grubb, facilitator)

[Isaiah 64:1-9](#) & [Mark 13:24-37](#)

Week 2: Clean-Up Crew (Smithie Parrish, facilitator)

[Isaiah 40:1-11](#) and [Mark 1:1-18](#)

Week 3: Deck the Halls (Eddie Yates, facilitator)

[Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11](#) and [John 1:6-8, 19-28](#)

Week 4: Waiting on the Threshold (Eulene Shepherd, facilitator)

[2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16](#) and [Luke 1:26-38](#)

Week 5: Enjoying the Company (Rev. June Grubb, facilitator)

[Isaiah 61:10-62:3](#) and [Luke 2:22-40](#)

Week 6: Living the Celebration (Smithie Parrish, facilitator)

[Ephesians 1:3-14](#)

WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICES IN THE SANCTUARY

The 7:00PM Wednesday Worship services will resume in December. Each service is 30 minutes and is limited to 20 people. **You may reserve your space [HERE](#) or contact the church office if you are interested in attending. There is also a sign-up sheet outside the office.**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you would like to **participate in the online worship services**, please let us know. If you're interested, please contact Rev. Horton or the church office. **Please click [HERE](#) to sign up.**

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT!

If you happen to miss a week of our worship services and other events that are shared on our Facebook and YouTube pages, they will remain on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)'s history, so you may go back to watch any time.

ALTERNATIVE GIFTS

The holiday season is quickly approaching. Have you thought about what to buy for family and friends? Why not give to a local charity in their honor or in memory of a loved one? For an alternative gift, donate to any of the church benevolences and the church office will give you a special "alternative gift" card to send to your honoree.

To purchase, complete the form below and return it to the church office with your donation, call the church office, or click [HERE](#) to donate. This is such a meaningful way to honor someone on your gift list, benefit those in need, and help our church meet its benevolences for the year.

FIRST REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Alternative Gift Giving

Name: _____ **Phone #** _____

IF YOU WISH TO MAKE A DONATION TO ASSIST WITH BENEVOLENCES BUT HAVE NO PREFERENCE WHICH ORGANIZATION IT BENEFITS, PLEASE PUT THE DOLLAR AMOUNT UNDER UNDESIGNATED BENEVOLENT DONATION.

	Donation	# Cards
Undesignated Benevolent Donation		
Southern Conference		
Blowing Rock Conference Center		
Elon Homes for Children		
Johns River Valley Camp		
Lancaster Seminary (WNCA Scholarship Fund)		
Nazareth Children's Home		
Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)		
UCC Retirement Home (Trust Fund - Piedmont Crossing)		
Local		
Communities in Schools		
Community Garden		
Community Outreach (Charles England, Etc.)		
Crisis Ministries		
Davidson Medical Ministries		
Davidson Prison Ministry		
Family Services of Davidson County		
Girl Scout Troup #2160		
GLAMA - Crisis Fund		
Habitat for Humanity		
Hospice of Davidson County		
Lexington Housing CDC		
Pastor's Discretionary Fund		
Pastor's Pantry		
Pathway of Hope		
Salvation Army		
***TOTAL DUE		

STAY CONNECTED WITH THE NEWS OF THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE

[Click here for the news of the of the Western Association and Southern Conference of the UCC:](https://wnca-soc.org/enews/)

<https://wnca-soc.org/enews/>