



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

December 6, 2020
Second Sunday of Advent
Holy Communion Sunday

Gathering

"BOLD" indicates congregational response

Prelude	"Wachet Auf, Ruft Die Stimme" [Johann Gottfried Walther]	Robert Wilson
Welcome to Worship		Rev. Elizabeth Horton
Call to Worship	"Prepare the Way of the Lord"	Ellen Peterson

Centering

Old Testament Reading	Isaiah 40:1-11	Carolyn Robbins
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Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?'
All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the
people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever.
Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not
fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!' See, the Lord God comes with
might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Hymn	"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"	Ellen Peterson
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The Advent Wreath	Sunday of Peace	Rev. Horton
A Time of Peace	<i>When has the Church been a source of peace for you?</i>	Edgar Miller

May God use us all to bring true peace and justice to a hurting world.

Lighting the Candle of Peace		
Response	"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"	Ellen Peterson
Prayer	<i>Preparing the Way</i>	Dave Fulton

Where there seems to be no way
to end the conflict and violence in our time,
we pray that you would teach us, O Christ,
to prepare the way;

Where we can see no way
to provide for the needs of all people,
we pray that you would show us, O Christ,
how to prepare the way;

Where can find no way
to work together for justice,
we pray that you would change us, O Christ,
until we prepare the way;

Where we are unable to believe in a way
to live simply, responsibly and mindfully,
we pray that you would inspire us, O Christ,
to faith that prepares the way;

In a world where we are tempted
to see so many of our challenges as dead-ends,
we pray for a new vision, a new heart and a new commitment
to prepare the way for your reign,
your grace,
your shalom
and for the liberation, justice and peace that you bring. Amen.

Hymn

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

Ellen Peterson

Proclaiming

Scripture Reading

Mark 1:1-8

Rev. Horton

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,"'

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

Sermon

A Minimalist Advent: Remove the Clutter

Invitation to the Table
Sharing Holy Communion Together
Prayer of Thanksgiving

Rev. Horton

Sending

Benediction
Postlude

"In Dulci Jubilo"
[J. S. Bach]

Robert Wilson

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)

DECEMBER CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

7th ...Ruth Essick

12th ...Donna Coe

ANNIVERSARIES

12th ...Susan Morris & Charyl Clark

OUR CHURCH AT PRAYER

We extend Sympathy to and share Christian Hope with the family of Doris Flynt. Doris was a long-time member of First Reformed United Church of Christ who passed away early Thanksgiving morning.

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

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 - 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

MONDAY - December 7:

- 12:00PM** CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR OUR MEMBERS AT HOME DUE IN THE OFFICE
- 6:30PM** Children's Ministry Team Meeting via Zoom. You may 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
- 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 9:

- 5:30PM** Middle School Youth Meeting via Zoom
- 7:00PM** WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

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

SATURDAY - December 12:

FRUIT BASKET DELIVERY FOR OUR MEMBERS AT HOME

SUNDAY - December 13: 3rd Sunday of Advent

- 9:45AM Adult Sunday School: "Company's Coming" Week 3
Week 3: Deck the Halls ([Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11](#) & [John 1:6-8, 19-28](#)) (Facilitator: Eddie Yates)
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)

UPCOMING EVENTS

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



Over this past year, we have spent much time discussing what is essential and what is not; wrestling with the question, "If life cannot be the way it was, what then, is essential?" This Advent, we take our cues from the "Minimalist Lifestyle" approach, as we attempt to discover what we really need as we wait for Christ to dwell among us.

As we "Assessed the Mess" last week, this 2nd Sunday of Advent, we make a commitment to "Remove the Clutter." How can you get rid of that which prevents you from experiencing Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love? How can we, as a people of God, remove the obstacles in the way for others? This Sunday, the prophet Isaiah and John the Baptist give us the call to prepare the way of the Lord.

As we light the Candle of Peace, we will hear Edgar Miller respond to the question: *How has the church been a source of peace for you?*

The Sanctuary is prepared and ready for us to celebrate Communion this Sunday. Both **virtually** in the online service and **In-Person** in the Sanctuary between 4 - :005PM. The volunteers from the Communion Team have created a way for you to receive Communion that is safe, distanced, and clean. Both local wine and pre-packaged grape juice will be served.

I am so excited to say that **Santa** is coming to visit this Sunday -- Virtually, of Course! Details below. All ages are invited to join in the Zoom call.

Peace,
Elizabeth

ADVENT 2020: ONLY THE ESSENTIALS – HOPE PEACE LOVE JOY

12/6 - Remove the Clutter [Isaiah 40:1-11](#) & [Mark 1:1-18](#)

12/13 - Decide: Foundation or Furniture? [Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11](#) & [John 1:6-8, 19-28](#)

12/20 - Create a Home for Everything [2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16](#) & [Luke 1:26-38](#)

12/27 - Enjoy the Company [Isaiah 61:10-62:3](#) & [Luke 2:22-40](#)

CHILDREN'S VIRTUAL VISIT WITH SANTA

Come to visit with Santa on Sunday, December 6 at 2:30PM. You won't be able to sit on his lap, but you WILL be able to talk with him and make sure he knows what you want for Christmas! Join in via Zoom [HERE](#).

(Meeting ID: 865 1339 4167 Passcode: SANTA Dial in: 1 312 626 6799)

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. Applications 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 FOR SALVATION ARMY RED KETTLES

Saturday, December 5th:

10-11:00 Buddy Lohr
11-12:00 Steve Ketner
12-1:00 Susie Smith
1-2:00 Maria Cruz
2-4:00 John & Vicky Gray
4-5:00 Steve Smith
5-6:00 Nicole, Elliott & Emory Smith

Tuesday, December 8th:

10-11:00 Harriette & Clifton Murphy
11-12:00 Mike & Bonita Hooper
12-1:00 Eddie Yates
1-2:00 Frank Leonard
2-4:00 James & Alice Gray
4-5:00 Stacy Sosebee-West
5-6:00 ----OPEN SLOT---

(any volunteers may contact Jerry at 336-746-6493
or plovell53@yahoo.com)

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 must 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

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.](#)

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.**

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)

December 6...Week 2: Clean-Up Crew (Smithie Parrish, facilitator)

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

December 13...Week 3: Deck the Halls (Eddie Yates, facilitator)

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

December 20...Week 4: Waiting on the Threshold (Eulene Shepherd, facilitator)

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

December 27...Week 5: Enjoying the Company (Rev. June Grubb, facilitator)

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

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

[Ephesians 1:3-14](#)

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.**

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		

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.



Rev. Cathy Barker

My father, a UCC minister, died of cancer at age 54, just after Thanksgiving. I was fourteen; my brother and sister were grown and had to go back to their homes. Mom and I were lonely, confused about the future, and our financial picture was very shaky. Further, we faced a bleak Christmas . . . we didn't even want to think about that.

"Then came a check from the Christmas Fund. We were both deeply touched that our national Church somehow knew that we were in need and gave us this gift. It didn't solve all our troubles, but it made it possible for us to have Christmas. We felt the love behind the gift, and that was transformative.

"Throughout my mother's long life, she gave faithfully and gratefully to the Christmas Fund, and I have done the same through the churches I have served as pastor. I've often told our story, because I want people to know how important it is to reach out in this way.

"When the pandemic caused such upheaval, and an appeal came from the Pension Boards telling about the increased need for emergency funds, I sat right down and wrote a check. My husband and I are glad we could help."

In 2019, gifts to the Christmas Fund enabled:

- Monthly pension supplementation for 350 retired clergy and lay employees (\$1,347,419)
- Health premium supplementation for 144 retired clergy and lay employees (\$374,577)
- Emergency grants for 69 individuals and families (\$123,727)
- Christmas "Thank You" gift checks to 521 retired clergy and lay employees (\$260,500)

THE CHRISTMAS FUND

For the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund

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/>