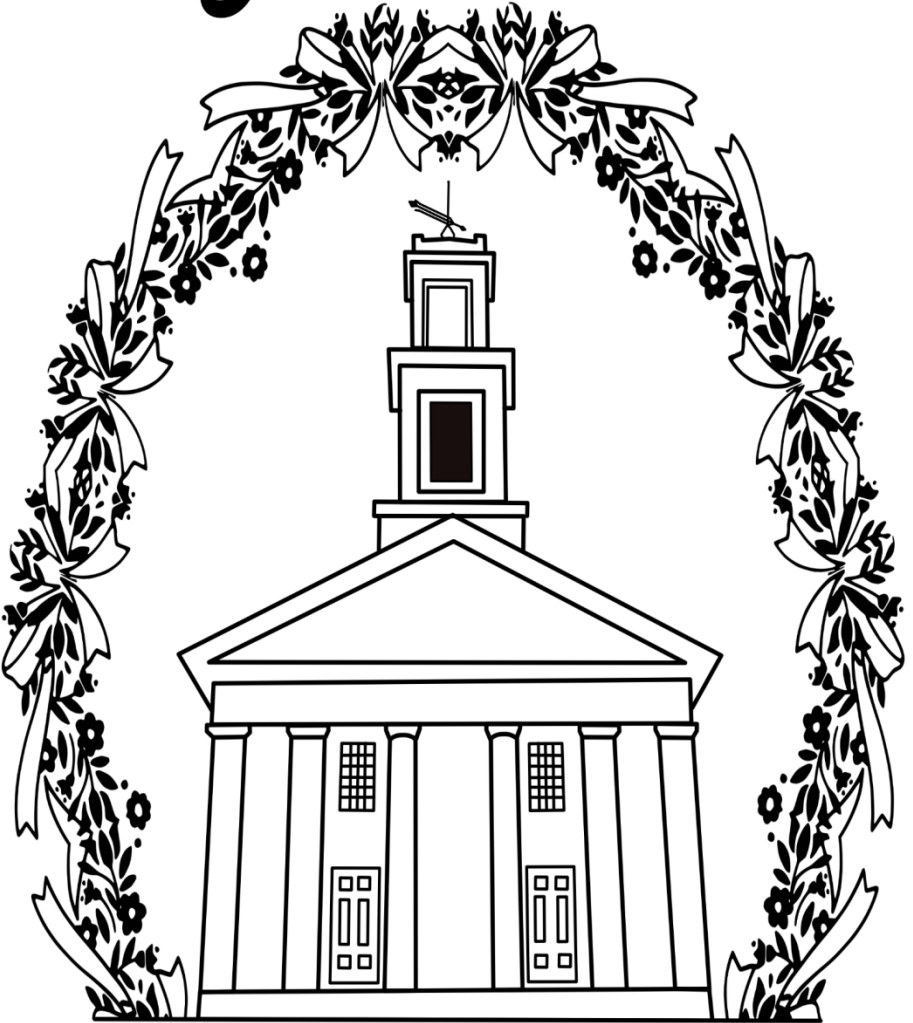


ADVENT



MIDDLEBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
MIDDLEBURYUCC.ORG

**Middlebury Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
December 22, 2024
Fourth Sunday of Advent**

*all those who are able please stand

Our worship begins with the Prelude.

Please be mindful of those who wish to spend this time in prayer

PRELUDE

Good Christian Men, Rejoice (In Dulci Jubilo) Dietrich Buxtehude

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Liturgist: Ellen Aronheim

INTROIT

Adult Choir

Grant us wisdom to perceive You,
Hearts awakened to receive You,
Minds alert to thoughts that grieve You,
God of mercy, hear us.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: My soul magnifies the Lord

People: My Spirit rejoices in God my savior

Leader: For the Mighty One has done great things

People: and holy is God's name

***HYMN**

Mary, Woman of the Promise New Century Hymnal (Black) #123

INVOCATION

THE LORD'S PRAYER (UNISON)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy
Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,**

as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. [We use “Father” and “trespasses,” but please use whatever words bring you closest to God.]

CALL TO CONFESSION (Based on Matthew 1:21)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (UNISON)

God our Savior, we ask for your mercy. We confess we seek security in pride, power, and possessions. We resist the costs of following you. We pass by those considered lowly in this world. We turn away from hungry people who still wait to be filled. Forgive us, we pray. Help us to work for the justice you intend. Make us messengers of the peace you bring. As we wait for you, turn our apathy into acts of love and service. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. Amen. (Time for individual silent confession)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Based on Zephaniah 3:14-18)

Hear the good news from scripture: Rejoice with all your heart! The Lord has taken away the judgements against you. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst. Do not fear. Do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord your God is in your midst. He will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love. Friends, hear and believe the good news of the gospel: in Jesus Christ, our God with us, we are forgiven and renewed. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI**

Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #513

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
World without end. Amen. Amen.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Prayer (Unison)

O God, we thank you for the amazing gift of your love, for sending us your Song out of love for the redemption of the world. As we remember your incredible gift, help us to love one another as you have loved us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READINGS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE

Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

Luke 1:39-55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His

mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

SERMON
Song of Faith

The Rev. Katrina Manzi

***HYMN**

My Soul Gives Glory to My God New Century Hymnal (Black) #119

JOYS, CONCERNS, & PASTORAL PRAYER

Prayer requests will be received from the congregation. Please be mindful worship is livestreamed, so we advise caution on using last names to preserve people's privacy.

OFFERTORY

Carol of the Advent (People, Look East) Carol, arr. Philip Dietterich
Adult Choir

***Doxology in Unison**

Sung to the tune O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
All praises to the Son who sets us free,
with Father, Spirit, through eternity. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)**

Holy God, your love is magnified in the gift of your Son, whom you so freely share with us. Bless these gifts that we offer to lift

up the lowly and fill the hungry in your coming reign of justice and peace; in Christ's name. Amen.

***HYMN**

Good Christian Men, Rejoice

Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #125

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save! Amen.

POSTLUDE

Good Christian Men, Rejoice (In Dulci Jubilo)

Friedrich Zachau

Please join us after worship for fellowship and refreshments.



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DOING GOD'S WORK

The Congregation, *Ministers in the World*
Church Officers & Members of our Boards & Committees

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The Rev. Katrina Manzi, *Minister*
Donna Obarowski, *Choir Director*
David Obarowski, *Organist*
Diane Barnard, *Bookkeeper/Asst. Treasurer*
Sara Hubbard, *Faith Formation Volunteer Coordinator*
Rebecca Trosan, *Nursery Attendant*
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