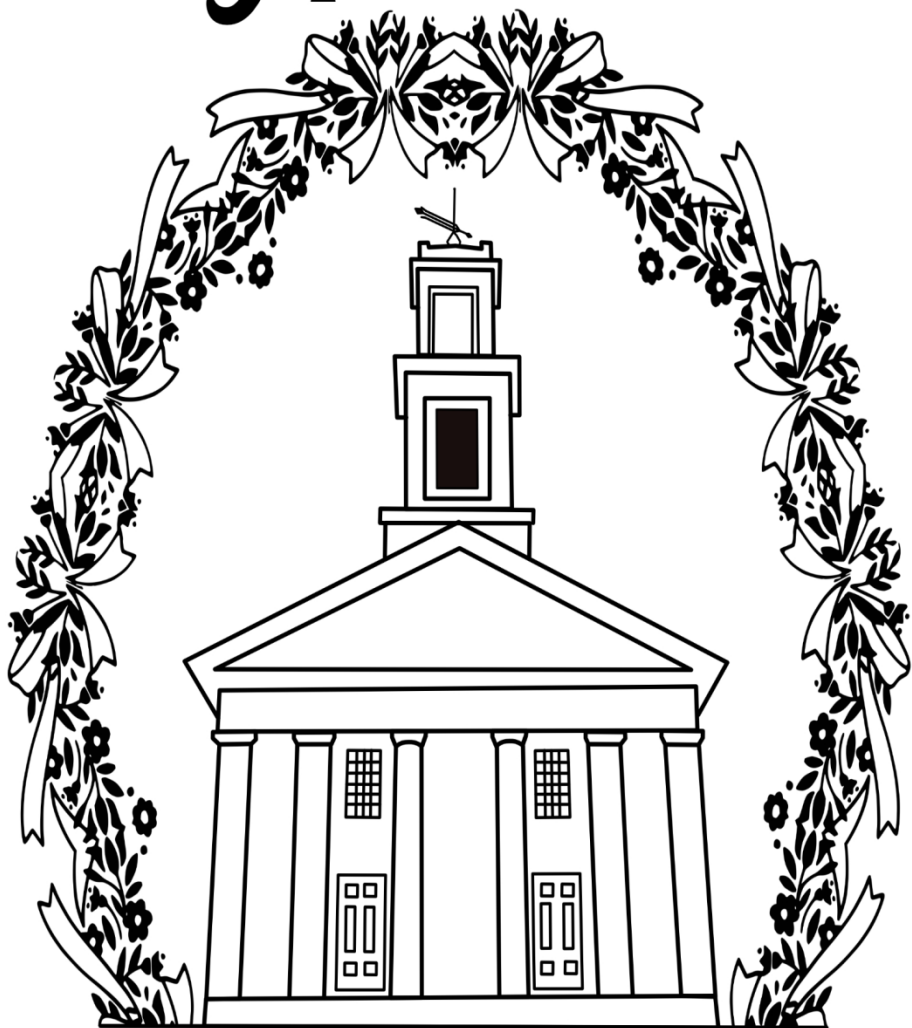


ADVENT



MIDDLEBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
MIDDLEBURYUCC.ORG

**Middlebury Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
December 8, 2024
Second 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

On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry arr. Charles Callahan

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

INTROIT (from "The Canticle of Zechariah") Adult Choir

In tender mercy, God will send the dayspring from on high,

Our rising sun, the light of life for those who sit and sigh.

God comes to guide our way to peace that death shall reign no more,

Sing praises to the Holy One! O worship and adore!

CALL TO WORSHIP (Luke 1:68-79)

Leader: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he has visited and redeemed his people,

People: And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

Leader: As he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, who have been since the world began:

People: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

Leader: To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

People: The oath which he swore to our father Abraham,

Leader: To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

People: In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

Leader: And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Highest:
for you shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare his
ways;

**People: To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the
remission of their sins,**

Leader: Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the
dayspring from on high has visited us,

**People: To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the
shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of
peace.**

***HYMN**

On Jordan's Bank, the Baptist's Cry Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #115

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 John 1:23)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (UNISON)

**Merciful God, you created us in your own image. Forgive us
when we have refused to see that divine image in others or
ourselves. You called forth light, forgive our preference for the
dark. You sent John to be a voice crying out to prepare the
way. Forgive us when we have been silent when we should have
cried out. We ask you to strengthen the winding ways of our
hearts and smooth the paths made rough by sin. Create in us
clean hearts, keep us watchful for your coming, and continue**

perfecting the good you have begun in us. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and drawing near. Amen. (Time for individual silent confession)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Based on Isaiah 40:1-2)

Hear the good news! Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem. Her sins are pardoned. The penalty is paid. Friends, hear and believe the good news of the gospel: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. 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

The Wells Family

Prayer (Unison)

Eternal God, you offer rest for our hearts and peace for our souls. Give us the grace to seek peace in our lives, peace in this community, and peace in the world. Through Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READINGS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 40:1-11

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 forever.

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.

Luke 1:5-25

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong

drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Zechariah said to the angel, “How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.” The angel replied, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.” Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, “This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.”

SERMON

The Rev. Katrina Manzi

Lives Turned Around

***HYMN**

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #104

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

Comfort Ye

Michael Barratt

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, you bless us with many gifts and visit us with surprising proclamations. We thank you for your steadfast love. Use our gifts to bring comfort and justice to those in need, reforming the ways of our world for the sake of new life. Amen.

***HYMN**

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #114

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

With grateful hearts, the past we own; the future all to us unknown,
The opening day your mercy shows; may mercy crown it till it
close. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates arr. Charles Callahan

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*

Sarah Kwashnak, *Office Assistant*