

Trinity United Church of Christ Worship Bulletin

Letting God's light shine since 1901

We worship God and seek to share His Word with everyone through faith in Jesus Christ

December 7, 2025

Advent 1 & 2

www.trinityuccwestville.org

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at Trinity!

Gathering and Preparing to Worship

**Denotes to please stand in body or in spirit*

Gathering Music

Sounding of the Bells

Throughout the centuries, bells have rung to call people to worship or bring them news. Throughout the Advent season, we will begin our services with the sounding of bells to remind us of the good news that is coming in Jesus Christ.

Welcome

One: Welcome to worship today at Trinity United Church of Christ in Westville Illinois. If you are worshipping with us on line, you can download a bulletin from our church's website www.trinityuccwestville.org. They are located in the events section under today's date,

Opening with Prayer

By Nancy Townley

One: Let us pray...

Many: **O Lord, our lives are so filled with chaos and tribulation. Help us be ready to receive your message and gift of love, that we might grow into faithful disciples, serving you by serving others with hope and compassion. In Christ's Name, we pray. Amen.**

Magic Penny

Announcements

Lighting the First and Second Advent Candle

First and Second Sunday of Advent

From Philo Presbyterian Church

One: Jesus says: I am coming soon

Many: **Amen. Come Lord Jesus**

One: We light this candle of HOPE as a sign of the coming light

As the Lord had promised, in days to come the nations shall beat their swords into plows, and their spears into pruning hooks.

Many: **No more will nation fight nation; neither shall they learn war anymore.**

The first candle, the candle of hope is lit

One: We light this candle of PEACE as a sign of the coming of Christ.

The Lord has promised, the wolf will romp with the lamb, the leopard sleep with the kid.

Many: The calf and lion will eat from the same trough, and a little child shall lead them.

The second candle, the candle of peace is lit.

One: Let us walk in the light of the Lord

Many: Amen.

The Hanging of the Greens

The Meaning of the Service

Today we mark the beginning of a new year in the Christian calendar as we prepare to enter the season of Advent. It is a time for both self-reflection and for joy, as we prepare ourselves to receive God's promised Messiah. As someone once said, "Advent makes innkeepers of us all." And when the knock comes, we want there to be room in our hearts for the Christ Child to be born in us anew.

Our service today will help us take a fresh look at some of our cherished traditions, so that we might see the deeper meaning behind them. We begin our service with candles, symbolizing the True Light that is even now coming into the world. The light shines not only for us within the walls of this sanctuary, but also shines out into the world beyond.

Call to Worship

One: In the days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hill; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say:

Many: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob; that God may teach us
God's ways and that we may walk in God's paths."

***Hymn** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

1 O come, o come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the son of God appears
Rejoice! rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, o Israel.

2 O come, thou day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, o Israel.

3 Oh, come, our Wisdom from on high,
Who ordered all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!

**4 Oh, come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Oh, bid our sad divisions cease,
And be yourself our King of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!**

The Colors of Advent

In the light of God's love for us, ordinary colors take on particular significance. One color associated with Advent is purple, which signifies the sacred and a season of reflection. Here at Trinity, you will see that color is in the Advent wreath.

Some other churches use blue instead, for hope and anticipation.

If you look closely, you may notice that there is one pick candle in the Advent wreath. It is always lit on the third Sunday of Advent—a Sunday known as Joy Sunday. It tells us that our time of waiting is nearing its end.

The Christ Candle—the large white candle in the center of the wreath—is white, the color of holiness and purity. Here at Trinity, we use this same candle on the communion table the rest of the year. However, while the Light of Christ always shines, we do not light the Christ Candle in Advent until the night we celebrate Christ's birth.

The Evergreens of Christmas

The color green reminds us of renewal, new life, freshness, and rebirth. Evergreens never change—they are always green, always living. In ancient Rome, evergreens were symbols of peace, joy and victory. Early Christians adopted their use, placing boughs in their windows as a symbol of Christ, a reminder of the everlasting life that is ours through him. Here at Trinity, our wreaths are emblems of eternity as well, since the circle has no beginning and no end, like God's love for us and for all God's creation.

While the Christmas tree likely has its beginnings in a number of countries with traditions of decorating trees with fruit, flowers, or small ornaments, legend says that Martin Luther was the first to place lights on an evergreen. Walking home through the woods one evening, he was struck by the beauty of the forest with the stars shining in the sky above. So he cut an evergreen with snowy boughs and brought it home to his wife and children. They placed small candles on the branches to represent the heavens above. The custom gradually spread throughout Europe and then on to America.

One of our own traditions at Trinity is to adorn our tree not only with lights but also with red bows. The red symbolizes the sacrificial love of our Lord and Savior, which calls us into a community of faith and a family within the family of God.

Decorating the Tree

As the music plays, you are invited to come forward and place a red bow on the tree.

***Hymn For the Beauty of the Earth**

**1 For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,**

for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies.

Refrain:

Christ, our Lord, to you we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.

2 For the wonder of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower,
sun and moon and stars of light, [Refrain]

3 For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
for all gentle thoughts and mild, [Refrain]

4 For yourself, best gift divine,
to the world so freely given,
agent of God's grand design:
peace on earth and joy in heaven. [Refrain]

A Time for the Young and Young at Heart

The Legend of the Poinsettia

Poinsettias will be added at the conclusion of the story.

The Nativity

The Nativity brings us to the side of that humble manger so long ago. With Mary and Joseph, with the shepherds and sages, we bend low to see this newborn King. Why God would choose to come to us in this Child born into humble circumstances is a mystery beyond our understanding. But this we know: in Jesus, God's love comes to each and every one of us, no matter our circumstances. We cannot buy it or sell it, steal it or earn it. It is God's unimaginable gift to us, this indescribable gift of love.

The Nativity figures are placed while we sing Away in a Manger.

Hymn

Away in a Manger

1 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;
the stars in the heavens looked down where He lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

2 The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with Thee there.

Prayer for Illumination

One: Let us pray...

Many: Holy One, giver of all gifts, as your Word is read and proclaimed through song and action, let your light shine into our hearts and minds that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives may reflect your glory. Amen.

Scripture Reading Isaiah 11:1-10 The Branch From Jesse

11 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—

the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,

the Spirit of counsel and of might,

the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD— ³and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears;

⁴but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

⁵Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

⁶The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat,

the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

⁷The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together,

and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

⁸The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

⁹They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,

for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples;

the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

A Brief Reflection on our Scripture

Hymn

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

2 Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

3 Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

4 By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Prayers of the People

Please drop off any prayer requests in the basket located in the narthex.
Please only first names, and keep your prayers appropriate to our worship.
If you are worshipping via Facebook Livestream
Please type in and post in the comments section and share any prayer requests.
We will try and get to every prayer posted during worship.
If we don't get to your request, we will lift up your requests after worship.
After Pastor David reads the petition, he will say "Lord in Your mercy,"
and the congregation will respond with **"Hear our prayer..."**

The Prayer of Our Savior

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen**

Giving Our Gifts

Gift-giving has been part of Christmas from the very start. God's gift to us is Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. When they heard about his birth, the shepherds gave of themselves, coming to see what the angels had told them about, and the wise men gave of their treasures as they fell down and worshipped him. In joy and gratitude for all God has done for us, let us also worship by giving of ourselves and our treasure.

Gifts will be placed under the tree as the offering is collected.

Offertory Our Morning Offering will now be Received

*Hymn of Response

**"Emmanuel"
Em-man-u-el, Em-man-u-el,
His name is called Em-man-u-el;
God with us, re-vealed in us;
His name is called Em-man-u-el;**

Prayer of Dedication

One: Let us pray

Many: Thank you, God.

Thank you for the wake-up call, reminding us to be ready.
Thank you for not giving up on your vision of peace.
Thank you for the opportunity to gather each week in your house,
that we might encourage one another to stay on your path.
And thank you for the opportunity to give these gifts for your
ministry, that together we might help the world be ready to receive the
Prince of Peace, in whose name we pray. Amen

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

One: Christ invites us here. This meal is what connects us to each other and to believers all over the world. No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are invited to Christ's table of extravagant welcome

Many: **O let us taste and see the goodness of the God who calls us to the table and meets us in every feast!**

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: May the Advent God give you hope.

Many: May God grant you peace.

One: Let us lift our hearts to God who offers righteousness to all.

Many: We open our hearts to the One who loves justice.

One: Children of God, rejoice in the One who call us to live in harmony with everyone.

Many: Amen and Amen! We give our thanks to God!

One: As we inch closer to Bethlehem,
as we wait for the kingdom to draw near,
we sing of that mystery which comes as faith:

Many: This is the One who died, blessing those who feared him;
this is the One who was raised, the Spirit of resurrection resting on him;
this is the One who will come, to give justice to everyone.

Words of Institution

One: On the night on which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat. This bread is my body, given for you. Do this remembering me."

And in the same manner, he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood, given for the forgiveness of sin. Drink from it, all of you. Do this remembering me."

The Communion of the People

One: Christ, our host, offers us the bread of life and the cup of salvation. Come, all has been prepared.

(Please take what you are using for the bread of life and hold it up)

The body of Christ, broken for you, take and eat.

(Please take what you are using for the cup of salvation and hold it up)

The cup of Salvation, poured out for you, take and drink.

Prayer After Communion

One: Let us Pray...

Many: Spirit of the Living God, renew us with this bread and this cup which have been set aside for sacred us, even as you refresh our hearts. Fill us with all the goodness of the kingdom, that we may do good for Christ as we serve others. Amen.

*Hymn Go Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain

Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere.
Go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.

1 While shepherds kept their watching
over silent flocks by night,
behold throughout the heavens,
there shone a holy light.

Refrain

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Saviour's birth.

Refrain

3 Down in a lowly manger
our humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation,
that blessed Christmas morn.

Refrain

***Charge and Benediction**

One: As you leave the house of the Lord, open your eyes to the signs of God's presence all around you.
Stay spiritually awake, aware, and be constantly ready to welcome the Prince of Peace.
So thankfully, go out into the world peacefully, to prepare the way of the Lord.
Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, And with all your strength;
and love your neighbor as yourself.

Many: We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

One: Go forth, knowing that the God who created you, the Christ who redeems you and the Spirit who empowers you is with you today and for ever more. Knowing this, may laughter and joy go with you every step of your journey.

Many: Amen!

***Congregational Response**

Sing "Amen!"

*Thank you for worshipping with us today! Remember, no matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at Trinity UCC*