**Welcome to OUR SAVIOUR’S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

343 Scott Street, Ripon Wisconsin *(920) 748-2544*

[*www.OurSavioursUCCRipon.com*](http://www.OurSavioursUCCRipon.com)

Advent Four Dec. 20, 2020

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*\* All who are able please stand L: Leader; P: People*

Prelude Accompanist: Craig Bowden

Words of Welcome and Good News

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

L: O Holy One, we light this fourth candle, and marvel at your desire to be one with us. Let its flame summon hearts grown cold into the warmth of a people living in the Light of Love. Fill our lives with Love, making room there for friends and strangers, all who desire to know you, God with us, as we work for justice and peace in the service of Hope.

**P: God be with us in this Light of Love.**

ADVENT VISUAL REFLECTION: “Love” by BlueFish TV

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Sing out, my soul! Sing of the holiness of God:
**P: Who has delighted in humanity; lifted up the poor, satisfied the hungry, given voice to the silent, and grounded the oppressor.**

L: God has blessed the full-bellied with emptiness, and given the gift of tears to those who have never wept;
**P: God has desired the darkness of the womb, and inhabited our flesh—**

L: Sing of the longing of God:
**P: Sing out, my soul!**

\*HYMN: “Come, thou Long Expected Jesus” R79/Projected

\*INVOCATION

**ALL: O Wondrous God, send your Messenger to us today with a word of grace if we are fearful, move us to Confidence. If we are weary, offer us Rest. If we are empty, fill us with Hope. We have been searching for you far away; let us find you at home in our midst, changing hearts and minds urging us to join your work of Love. We pray in the name of the One who is coming, Jesus, the Christ. Amen.**

RESPONSE & INVITATION: “Spirit of the Living God”

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me; Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

WITNESS OF FAITH: 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16

WITNESS OF FAITH: Psalm 89:1-4,19-26

CALL TO CONFESSION

L: The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary offering her a chance to repentance, to prepare them for the coming of God’s reign. Let us, too, repent, that we may be ready for God who comes to us.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Do not be afraid, said Gabriel, surprising Mary and confronting her with the decision of her life.
**P: Do not be afraid, God is with you.**L: The year 2020 has confronted many of us with life-changing circumstances and decisions.
**P: We know fear from the inside out.**

L: In this moment, ponder that fear. Name it, if you can, at least to yourself.

**(Silence for Reflection)**L: Continue to ponder, and if you can, try to name where you may hear God calling:
**ALL: Do not be afraid.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

L: Our God, who has been with the people since the beginning, is with us now offering grace and mercy that is more than we can ask or imagine. God’s love frees us from the past. In the name of Jesus, your sins are forgiven. Jesus’ love for us helps us move forward into a new future. Let us thank God-with-Us, Emmanuel, for faithful love.

**P: Thanks be to God!**

Passing of the Peace [Due to safety issues, Rev. Mundell will give a blessing]

WITNESS OF FAITH: Romans 16:25-27

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 1:26-38

LEARNING WITH OUR CHILDREN

 2019 Lights of Love: “We Three Camels”

\*STATEMENT OF FAITH: United Church of Christ Projected

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

**Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place**

**I can feel God’s mighty power and God’s Grace**

 **I can hear the brush of angel’s wings**

 **I see glory on each face**

**Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place**

VISUAL REFLECTION: “The God That Is Coming” from The Work of the People

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

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, for ever. Amen.**

HYMN: “The Thrill of Hope” by Christy Nockels Projected

MEDITATION: “According to Your Word” Rev. Kevin Mundell

HYMN: “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” R87/Projected

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

[Offering plates are located near the sanctuary entrances.]

L: In struggle and in joy, God is faithful to us. We bring forth our offerings – our tithes, our treasures, our least coins – to demonstrate our faithfulness to God.

OFFERTORY

\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, you heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**ALL: O Faithful One, accept these gifts of our hearts and hands. May they be multiplied and magnified as the living presence of Christ in the world. Amen.**

\*BENEDICTION: “Go Now In Peace”

**Go now in peace. Never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of every day. Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true. Know he will guide you in all you do. Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others so all the world can see. God will be there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.**

\*Postlude

**WELCOME TO OUR SERVICE TODAY!**

We welcome all visitors and guests, and we are glad you can join us for our services.

**Large print bulletins and regular bulletins are available in the vestibule and online, if you would like one mailed to you, please let us know. Weekly hymns are being printed and some are available in the vestibule by the bulletins.**

9:00 am Worship: Podcasted and video at [www.oursavioursuccripon.com](http://www.oursavioursuccripon.com/) & airs at 11:00 am on 1600 WRPN. Also available on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

**Pastor** Rev. Dr. Kevin Mundell revdrmundell@me.com 920-385-8990

**Parish Nurse** Jessica Geisthardt Jessica.geisthardt@ssmhealth.com 920 904-2583

**Admin. Assistant** To be Determined osuccripon1@gmail.com 920-748-2544

**Custodian** Rick Stracy rlstracy@gmail.com 920-229-1367

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:**  The office hours are: Mon-Thurs. 10-noon. If you need to get into church at an unopen time, please call the church office and leave a message.

**PARISH NURSE HOURS:** Nurse Jess is able to see members by appointment on Tuesdays & Thursdays in the church office. Call 920-904-2583 to leave a message for an appointment time.

**Sunday Worship Team 9:00 am**

**Audio Operator:** Bob Meyer **Liturgist:** Kelly Mundell

**Acolyte:**  **Organist:** Craig Bowden

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**CONTRIBUTIONS & ATTENDANCE FOR LAST WEEK**: Attendance: Thurs: 16 Sunday: 25

General Fund: $ 2,145 Capital Improvements: $42.00 OCWM: $44.00

Thank you so much for your continued support of mailed in and online contributions. It means so much to us during this time.

**JAN. MESSENGER:** The deadline was Dec. 18th.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** If any of your contact information changes, please let the office know as soon as possible. Thank you.

***Birthday Greetings to our Young at Heart (age 50+)***

***December 20, 2020 - December 26, 2020***

***Donald Ammeter,*** *Dec.22* ***Carol Ann Cate,****Dec. 23* ***Peggy Buelow,*** *Dec. 26*

**GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**ALTAR & ORGAN FLOWERS; RADIO BROADCAST; BULLETIN SIGN-UP:** 2020 & 2021 Sign-up is available on the stand outside of the office! This sign-up is for ALL SPONSORSHIPS! Altar flowers are $25 and Organ flowers are $16 each. Radio Broadcasts are $50 per sponsor & $25 per sponsor per bulletin. You can also send a letter with payment into the office or call the office to sign up. Please remember to send payment in for your signed-up slots.

**NOTE:** Due to the pandemic, we will not have poinsettias available to purchase for Christmas, however their will be a few poinsettias placed on or by the altar for Christmas Eve.

**MISSIONS COMMITTEE NOTES:** Russell Manor Bake Sale cancelled due to COVID-19. Smoke Alarm Install. – rescheduled for hopefully next spring. Due to COVID, we will not be doing Operation Christmas Child this year. Please watch bulletins and messengers to stay up to date. Thank you.

**NURSE JESS NOTE:** **Paul Harvey, The Man and the Birds**

The man to whom I’m going to introduce you was not a scrooge, he was a kind decent, mostly good man. Generous to his family, upright in his dealings with other men. But he just didn’t believe all that incarnation stuff which the churches proclaim at Christmas Time. It just didn’t make sense, and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just couldn’t swallow the Jesus Story, about God coming to Earth as a man.

“I’m truly sorry to distress you,” he told his wife, “but I’m not going with you to church this Christmas Eve.” He said he’d feel like a hypocrite. That he’d much rather just stay at home, but that he would wait up for them. And so he stayed and they went to the midnight service.

Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier and then went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound…Then another, and then another. Sort of a thump or a thud…At first he thought someone must be throwing snowballs against his living room window. But when he went to the front door to investigate, he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They’d been caught in the storm and, in a desperate search for shelter, had tried to fly through his large landscape window.

Well, he couldn’t let the poor creatures lie there and freeze, so he remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter, if he could direct the birds to it.

Quickly he put on a coat, galoshes, tramped through the deepening snow to the barn. He opened the doors wide and turned on a light, but the birds did not come in. He figured food would entice them

 in. So he hurried back to the house, fetched bread crumbs, sprinkled them on the snow, making a trail to the yellow-lighted wide open doorway of the stable. But to his dismay, the birds ignored the bread crumbs, and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow. He tried catching them…He tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them waving his arms…Instead, they scattered in every direction, except into the warm, lighted barn.

And then, he realized that they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature. If only I could think of some way to let them know that they can trust me…That I am not trying to hurt them, but to help them. But how? Because any move he made tended to frighten them, confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him.

“If only I could be a bird,” he thought to himself, “and mingle with them and speak their language. Then I could tell them not to be afraid. Then I could show them the way to safety, warm…to the safe warm barn. But I would have to be one of them so they could see, and hear and understand.”

At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sounds of the wind. And he stood there listening to the bells – Adeste Fidelis – listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas.

And he sank to his knees in the snow.

**SPECIAL MUSIC:** If you are interested in contributing to worship with some form of special music, please talk to Craig Bowen or David Thompson. We can even record the piece in the sanctuary and insert the recording into our services for safety if need be.

**PARISH NURSE ANNOUNCEMENT:** Nurse Jess will be ending her time with us on Dec 31, 2020.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:** Volunteers will be filling-in at the church office, until we hire a replacement for the position. The Council has placed an advertisement in local shoppers and newspapers to find a new person for the position. If you are interested in volunteering to help out, please let any of our church council members know. Thank you.

**2020 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL:** Booklets have been created by the Ripon Area Ministerial Association (RAMA) and printed at no cost to RAMA, through a grant from the Webster Foundation. Please feel free to pick up a copy in the Scott street vestibule entry, or in the church office.

**PRAYER CHAIN MINISTRY:** Feel free to use our prayer chain ministry by contacting Caroline Retzlaff at 920-748-2367.

**IN OUR PRAYERS:** Barb Schultz, Billi Kaufman, Ed Vande Brink, Bill Waltenberry, Roger Fenner, Lorraine Fischer, Len Quinn, Kay Quinn, Robert Chikowski, Steve McSorley, Bob Schouten, Caroline Sowersby, Christine Krueger, 12 unspoken, and all others.

**THIS WEEK’S COMING EVENTS**

**Sun. Dec. 20 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary - 4th Sunday of Advent**

 **10:15 am Sunday School (No Adult Ed)**

**Mon. Dec. 21 Office open 10-Noon.**

 **6:30 pm Council**

**Tues.**  **Dec. 22 Office open 10-Noon.**

**Wed. Dec. 23 Office open 10-Noon.**

 **No Confirmation**

**Thurs. Dec. 24 Office closed. Christmas Eve**

 **6:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship in Sanctuary & Communion**

 **10:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship in Sanctuary & Communion**

**Friday Dec. 25 Office Closed. Christmas Day**

**Sun. Dec. 27 9:00 am Worship in Sanctuary**

 **No Adult Ed or Sunday School**

**FUTURE COMING EVENTS**

**Thurs. Dec 31 6:30 pm New Year’s Eve Worship & Communion**

**LOOSE COIN UPDATE:** We are still using the loose coins in the offering plate for special projects. You can still give by specifying on the envelope that it is for Stewardship loose coin offering. Thanks to all for your continued support.

**DRIVE THRU COMMUNION:** First Sunday of each month from 10:30 am- 11:00 am. The next drive-thru communion will take place this Sunday January 3rd. December we had 29 participants.

**WORSHIP & COMMUNION:** We will continue with 2-worship services/week and offer communion both in the “sanctuary” and via “drive-thru”. Through January for sure and longer, if helpful.

**STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE REMINDER:** Please bring to worship or send in your pledge card to the church office. Thank you for your continued support of Our Saviour’s UCC.

**2021 ENVELOPE BOXES READY FOR PICK-UP:** “Contribution Envelope Boxes” are located in the East Narthex, near the carport entry door. You can access them safely, without interacting with another person, anytime the church office is open. Also, you can pick-up your box if you come to a worship service. The boxes are in alphabetical order by last name. NOTE: Envelope Numbers have all been changed to allow reducing the number of boxes we need to order. Revising numbers will save cost of 120 boxes next year.