



ASHEVILLE
First Congregational
United Church of Christ

Jesus • Justice • Prayer • Peace



First week of Advent
November 29, 2015 10:30 am

Jesus Justice Prayer Peace

** Indicates to rise in body or spirit*

Welcome

Yolanda Adams

Please pass the red friendship pads to sign in at this time. If this is your first time visiting, please legibly write your name and address so we may send you a letter of welcome and more information about our church.

Voluntary

“Comfort Ye”

GF Handel

*Lighting of the Advent Candle

Rev. Paul and Ellenor Frelick

One: This is the day we begin our journey to the Child, his Mother and the manger.

All: *May we kindle God’s light together as we journey on.*

One: It is a journey shrouded in a fading sun and a growing uncertainty as the world turns cold. And we journey anyway.

All: *May we kindle God’s light together as we journey on.*

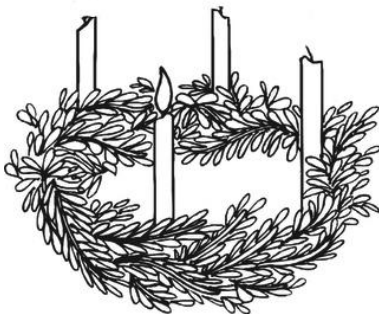
One: We journey because we are drawn to God’s light at the end: it is God’s promise, born into our lives.

All: *May we kindle God’s light together as we journey on.*

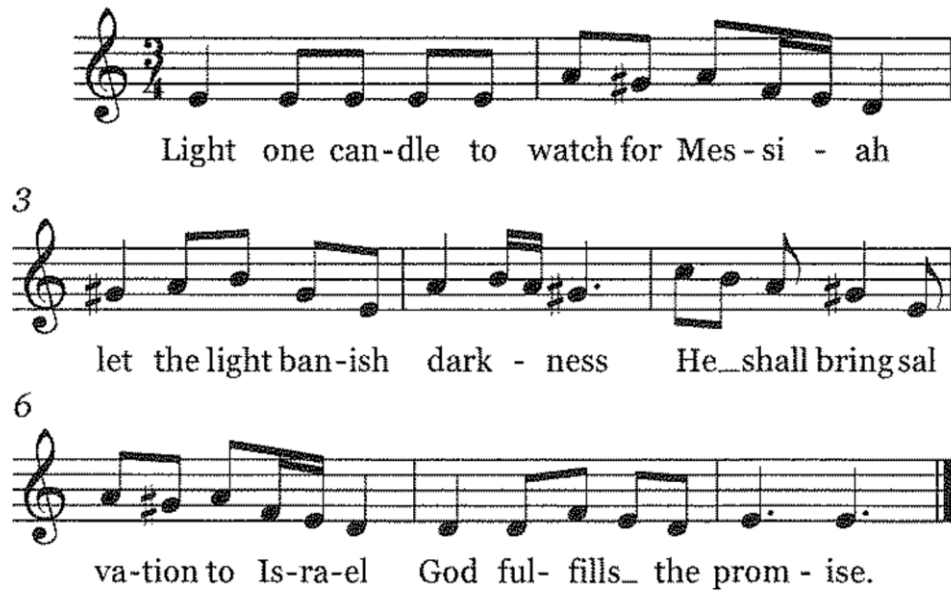
One: This is the day we begin our journey. May we kindle God’s light within us, together, as we journey on.

All: *Amen.*

One: We light this candle in HOPE. [The candle is lit.] We bring this light of hope with us, together, on this journey. Hope comes from the Child and our hope is dedicated to the Child lying in a manger. Seeking goodness only, for our neighbors and for ourselves, may we kindle God’s light of hope within us.



Sung Response “Light One Candle”



Light one can-dle to watch for Mes - si - ah

3
let the light ban-ish dark - ness He...shall bring sal

6
va-tion to Is-ra-el God ful- fills... the prom - ise.

One: Let us pray together.

All: Good and gracious God, God of darkness and light, God of hope and fear, help us take one step closer to you, toward the joy of unity with you. In this candle light, show us that the power of hope silences doubts and fears. Take this light, small but mighty, and magnify it within us until our hope chases away all shadows around our church, our community, our nation and our world. Amen

Hymn # 117 “Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates”

A Reading of Scripture

Jeremiah 33:14-16

One: For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Solo “The People that walk in Darkness” – GF Handel Gary Mitchell

Ps. 25: 1-10 (Read responsively p 635 of The New Century Hymnal)

A Time with Children

Gary Mitchell

After a Time with Children, children may follow Gary out of the sanctuary and into a classroom for a time of religious exploration and education, and will return to the sanctuary before the last hymn. Children are also welcome to remain in worship.

*Passing Peace

A Reading of Scripture

Luke 21:25-36

One: For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us

All: *Thanks be to God!*

Sermon

“Walking in the Dark.”

Rev. Jim Lowder

***Hymn #609** “Now is the Time Approaching” (tune: Lancashire)

We Offer Our Prayers

Sharing Joys and Concerns

The Lord’s Prayer (Maori Version)

*Earth Maker, Life-Giver, Pain-Bearer,
Source of all that is and all that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:*

*May the hallowing of your name
echo through the universe!
May your heavenly will be done
by all creatures great and small!*

*And may your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth!*

*With the bread we need this day, feed us.
For the hurt we inflict on one another, forgive us.
Through times of temptation, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.*

*From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is Love. Amen.*

Ministry Updates

Introduction of Matt Graham as a Deacon

Yolanda Adams

Yolanda and Judy Slater

We Offer Our Gifts

Call for Offering

Offertory

Prayer of Dedication

***Hymn # 110**

“Now Bless the God of Israel”

Blessing

Postlude



Rev. Jim Lowder is our guest preacher today. He is a Baptist minister currently serving as Director of Resource Development/ Communications for Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina.

For This Week's Service

Greeter/Usher: Michael Hutzler

Lighting the Advent Candles: Reverend Paul & Ellenor Frelick

Deacon of the Month: Randall Bowman

Alternate Deacon of the Month: Judy Slater (at the Handicap Door)

Nursery/Childcare: Marcella Gonzalez

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Activities

- **2nd Annual Church Christmas Party! Friday, December 4th at 6:00 pm in the Friendship Hall.** Join us for a festive and fun Christmas Party for all of the families of the congregation. There will be entertainment, finger foods and fun! We are asking everyone to bring a simple dish of "pick-up" foods and the church will provide the beverages, such as holiday punch, mulled hot cider, and soft drinks. Holiday attire (including ugly sweaters) suggested.
- **ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET December 6:** We have an impressive group of artists and non-profits participating in the event. Please stop by after worship! Invite your friends! Gifts from Heifer International, Rise Up Studios (a ministry of Beloved House) and many talented artists and craftspeople from our congregation and beyond will be selling gifts, art, and all kinds of wonderful treasures. 11:30 am -3:00 pm in our Friendship Hall.

Announcements

- **Annual Congregational Meeting** Please do your best to join us for our Annual Congregational Meeting on December 13th after worship. We will be electing new board members as well as voting on next year's budget. Anyone is welcome to attend and anyone who has joined First Congregational as a member is able to vote on these issues.
- **Nominating Committee Update:** A slate of 2 nominees will soon be presented for confirmation at the December 13 Annual Congregational Meeting. Church bylaws do allow for other nominations to be made at this Annual Meeting. If there are other nominations these are to be shared with the Nominating Committee prior to the meeting and should have the approval and biographical information of any additional persons nominated. Contact Alice Martin-Adkins (alicem_a@juno.com or 828-670-9614) if you have questions or nominations.
- **Community High School** gifts must be wrapped and turned in by December 13th. Contact Yolanda if you have any questions!

Classes & Workshops

Sundays at 9:15 am: Join Rev. Brenda Lewis for a drop-in style Bible Study on the topic of 1 Corinthians. Anyone is welcome to attend as often as they like. In E-101.

Mondays at 5:45-8pm: Creative Contemplative Group. Join us in some meditative art-making! No art experience or supplies needed. Drop-ins welcome. Please arrive on time. In E-107

Advent and Christmas

- **Crèche Service:** Sunday, December 13th at 10:30 am. A Sunday advent lessons and carols service that incorporates the placing of the Nativity figures on the communion table.
- **Longest Night Service:** Sunday, December 20th at 5:30 pm. Not everyone finds Christmas to be filled with joy and laughter, and it's a hard time not to be happy when everyone and everything around us says we should be! This service is designed as a time of prayer, lament, scripture and music to help us remember that the Light came into the world and the darkness has not overcome it.
- **Christmas Eve Service:** Thursday, December 24th at 6:00 pm. Join us for our traditional Christmas Eve service that incorporates many beloved carols and ends with a candlelight singing of Silent Night. Children are welcome and communion will be served.

Calendar

Monday, November 30, 2015

Creative Contemplative Group class w/Mandy E-105 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

Staff meeting - Yolanda's office 11:00 AM

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Stir the Soul Cafe - Library 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Bell choir E-101 5:30 PM

Church Choir Rehearsal 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Friday, December 4, 2015

FCUCC Holiday party -Friendship Hall 6:00 PM - 9:30 PM

Saturday, December 5, 2015

Alternative gift market set-up – Yolanda 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Sunday, December 6, 2015

Bible Study with Brenda Lewis E-107 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM

Worship 10:30am

Alternative gift market - Friendship Hall 11:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Lea Kibler & Dan Weiser concert in Sanctuary 2:00 PM

FCUCC Youth group tower Room 2 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Monday, December 7, 2015

Creative Contemplative Group class w/Mandy E-105 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Transition Asheville E-205 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

FCUCC Game Night w/ Mary & Dennis E-1057:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Stir The Soul Cafe - Library 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Bell choir E-101 5:30 PM

Church Choir Rehearsal 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Sunday, December 13, 2015

Bible Study with Brenda Lewis E-107 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM

Worship 10:30am 10:30 AM

Annual Congregational Meeting 11:30

FCUCC Youth group tower Room 2 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Faith & Flicks in the Library 5:45 PM - 8:00 PM

Welcome! WE ARE...

*AN LGBT OPEN and AFFIRMING Congregation of the United Church of Christ
and a Just Peace Church.*

We are a progressive, risk-taking Christian faith community.

We follow the way of Jesus as the Christ and are welcome, open, and affirming to all.

We believe God is vibrant, alive, and still speaking to us!

We believe that God encourages us to engage the world through acts of mercy, peace, and justice.



Phoebe Wahl

**First Congregational UCC is located at 20 Oak Street in
downtown Asheville.** Please send all mail to PO Box 3211 Asheville, NC 28802.

www.uccasheville.org 828-252-8729