
AN ORDER OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

November 29, 2020 | First Sunday of Advent

First United Methodist Church

601 North Cedar, Abilene, Kansas 67410 | 785-263-2623 | www.AbileneFirstUMC.org

A Church of Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors.

GATHERING

Gathering of the Congregation

Greeting and Announcements

Prelude and Lighting of the Advent and Altar Candles

CALL TO WORSHIP

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

The risen Christ is with us.

Praise the Lord.

Opening Prayer

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Introduction to Isaiah 64:1-12: The grieving prophet Isaiah longs for God to return and rescue Israel.

Scripture Reading — Isaiah 64.1-9 (NRSV)

¹ O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—

² as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—

to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

³ When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

⁴ From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,

who works for those who wait for him.
⁵You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
⁶We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
⁷There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

HYMN* — *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*, UMH-196

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. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.
2. Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King, born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

— Words: Charles Wesley, 1744.

Children's Message

Special Music — *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

Introduction to 1 Corinthians 1:3-9: The apostle Paul assures the church in Corinth that Jesus will strengthen them for the difficulties they will inevitably encounter as they wait for Christ's return.

Scripture Reading — 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 (NRSV)

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

HYMN* — *In the Bleak Midwinter*, UMH-221

1. In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
2. Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign. In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.
3. Angels and archangels may have gathered there, cherubim and seraphim thronged the air; but his mother only, in her maiden bliss, worshiped the beloved with a kiss.
4. What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart. — Words: Christina G. Rossetti, 1872 (Luke 2:8-14)

Introduction to Mark 13:32-37: In Chapter 13, Jesus warns his followers to stay alert for both the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in their lifetimes and the eventual, final inbreaking of the Kingdom of God. He can only tell them to keep awake, because not even he knows the day or the hour.

Scripture Reading — Mark 13:32-37 (NRSV)

³²“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Sermon

A STATEMENT OF FAITH OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA (UMH 883)

We are not alone, we live in God’s world.

We believe in God:

**who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

We are called to be the church:

**to celebrate God’s presence,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

RESPONSE* — *Glory Be To The Father*, 71

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.

— Lesser Doxology, 3rd-4th cent.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God-with-us, even in Advent, we confess that you can seem far away.
You seem hidden when we need you near.
In our hurt, doubt, and fear, we do not try to draw closer to you;
instead we lash out—against you, our neighbor, even those we love.
Forgive us, we pray, and come to save us.
Let your face shine until our tears are dried, our sins are faded, and our hope is restored.
After all, we belong to you, and in your hands we can be made new.
In Jesus name, we pray to you now in silence.

(A time of silent prayers of confession.)

Words of Assurance

The grace of God, given to us in Christ Jesus, strengthens us to the end so that we may be blameless when Christ comes again. Thanks be to God, who is faithful to forgive our sins in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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A Stewardship Moment/Invitation to the Offering

RESPONSE — *Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow*, 95

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

— Thomas Ken, 1674

THANKSGIVING

Prayer of Thanksgiving

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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, [Meaning save us from the time of trial.]
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen.**

GOING FORTH

HYMN* — *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, vs.1,2,4,5 UMH-211

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God Appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
2. O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge show and cause us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
4. O come, thou Root of Jesse's tree, an ensign of thy people be; before thee rulers silent fall;
all peoples on thy mercy call. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
5. O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home.
The captives from their prison free, and conquer death's deep misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

— WORDS: 9th cent. Latin; trans. st. 1, 3, 5ab, 6cd, 7ab, *The Hymnal*, 1940; st. 2, Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916; st. 4, 5cd, 6ab, 7cd, Laurence Hull Stookey, 1986 Sts. 1, 3, 5ab, 6cd, 7ab © 1940, 1943, renewed 1981 The Church Pension Fund; trans. sts. 4, 5cd, 6ab, 7cd © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House. — CCLI# 811889

Blessing

Postlude

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Please note that **bold type** indicates congregational participation. "UMH" stands for *The United Methodist Hymnal* (blue book); "FWS" stands for *The Faith We Sing* (black book); and "WS" stands for *Worship and Song* (green book).

CLOSING CREDITS

Anna Gugler and Angie Hoerner, Piano
Carson Woodworth, Special Music
Heather James and Andrea Purvis, Liturgists
Joy Clemence and Tyler and Tray Green, Sound and Slides
Clark Williamson, Director of Music Ministries
Wendy Robinson, Director of Children and Youth Ministries

The introductions to the scripture readings were adapted from
Will Willimon's Lectionary Sermon Resource: Year B, Part 1.

SERMON NOTES AND DOODLES

Hope: In the words of *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary*: "In the Bible, hope is not normally expressed as desire (something good that one would like to have happen) but as expectation (something good that one knows is going to happen and, so, anticipates)." The Christian hope is not something that may or may not happen, but we really wish it would, Christian hope is a longing for the arrival of God's kingdom in all its fullness on earth as it is in heaven.

The Newsletter

November 29, 2020

First United Methodist Church, Abilene, Kansas

The mission of First United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ as we work together toward our vision of a church of open hearts, open minds, and open doors.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please note: prayer concerns will be listed in the bulletin for four (4) weeks unless the church office is notified otherwise.

MEMBERS AND FRIENDS: Verl Eckman [11/22], Rev. Dee Williamston (Salina District Superintendent) [11/8], Lavetra Brown [11/8], Sandy Sleichter [11/8].

COMMUNITY PRAYER CONCERNS: Those grieving the loss of Terry Mosier (son of Donna Smith) [11/29], Kris Noland and Sue Noland (friends of Gregg Root) [11/22], Sally Shrader Olsen (friend of Margie Miller) [11/8], Rebecca Allen (Daughter of Jim & Patsy Barlow) [11/8], Tina Heater [11/2], Kim Goodman [7/15/2018]; Samantha Schmitt (Granddaughter of Gary & Virginia Donley) [11/8], Bob Collins [11/8], those grieving the loss of Gordon Taylor (Terry Taylor's father) [11/8], doctors, nurses and other health care workers; students, teachers, administrators, school nurses, and other employees of local schools; restaurant and retail employees, postal workers and other delivery personnel; and all others working in essential industries.

THOSE WORSHIPING FROM HOME: Gary Donley, Evelyn York, Velma Becker, Joe Clemence, Steve Crump, Walt Hartman, Ray Power, Marla Rutz, Bob Murnahan, Donna Smith, Martha Zutavern, Donna Richards, Dorothy Veach, Darlene Sexton, Melvin Leckron, Dorothy Snider, Linda Chase, Barb Hawk, Verl Eckman and many of us!

THOSE SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES: Greg Austin, Tim Barns, Kayla Berven, Billy Brockman, Matthew Brinker, Ross Covington, Jessica and James Green, Christopher Griffith, Gavin Hanna, Cameron Hoskins, David Hoskins, Ryan Kriesch, Colby Miller, Samuel Miller, and James L. Wise, Jr.

THOSE IN AUTHORITY: The President, the Governor, the Mayor, the County Health Officer, County Commissioners, other elected officials and the judiciary (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

DISTRICT PRAYER CALENDAR: Today we pray for the Glen Elder United Methodist Church and their pastor, Grace Gichuru.

GENERAL NEWS

ADVENT IN A BOX — COVID-19 is going to upend our Advent, but the Great Plains Conference has very helpfully developed a series of activities for children and their families. You can download it at: <https://bit.ly/2J7hcUw>.
— John Collins, 11/29/20

CLARK WILL BE BACK SINGING — If you've missed hearing someone sing the hymns, know that you have been heard. Clark Williamson, our Director of Music Ministries will be back—on a recorded basis for safety reasons—leading hymns this Sunday.
— John Collins, 11/29/20

CONTINUED IMPROVEMENTS IN ONLINE WORSHIP — We continue to improve our the quality of our online and radio worship services. The quilts on the pews have cut down on the echos in a mostly empty sanctuary. This week (thanks to a special donation) we're adding an additional Mevo video camera to allow those watching online a better view of the liturgist. Stick with us, it's going to keep getting better.
— John Collins, 11/29/20

I ENCOURAGE YOU TO WORSHIP FROM HOME — I've been asked what difference Dickinson County's new mask mandate (Health Order #DK11-01) will make in our services this weekend. The only thing that has to be changed is that the signs requiring masks currently posted on our doors must be enlarged from 8" x 8" to 8.5" x 11". That's it. Otherwise, we're already compliant. A change that may be made will be for me to wear a mask even while preaching. (The order allows me to remove my mask for the sake of the hearing impaired, but I haven't yet decided whether or not to do so. If I remain masked for the sermon, I have found a mask that better preserves the quality and clarity of my voice and I will publish my sermon notes online.)

I urge everyone who can watch online or listen on the radio instead of coming in-person to do so. I know that worship is important to many of you—it's really important to me too. I understand that the experience of in-person worship is far superior to "virtual" worship. But, because of the increasing spread of COVID-19, Dr. Holmes, Bishop Saenz, and I all urge you to refrain from in-person worship for at least a month. That said, we will have services at 10:30 a.m. on both Saturday and Sunday, we have plenty of extra masks, and I do not intend to turn anyone away.* In our present situation, you are the person best able to weigh your spiritual needs against the risks of in-person attendance. All I know is that the potential danger of attending in-person is both real and dire.

* To comply with #DK11-01, I will reluctantly turn people away in the unlikely event that we have more than 30 people show up.
— John Collins, 11/8/20

WORSHIP ON AUDIO CD — Are you having trouble streaming online or listening on the radio? We're delivering audio CDs with the same service that is broadcast on the radio. Contact John Collins or call the church office if you would like one.
— Staff

WEDNESDAY EVENING COMMUNION — We have a Zoom meeting scheduled for the Wednesday Evening Communion Service at 6:00 p.m. Here are the details:

Join Zoom Meeting	Manually Dial In With a Touch-Tone Phone	
https://bit.ly/38bf9qZ	+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)	
Meeting ID: 937 0998 7388	Meeting ID: 937 0998 7388	
Password: 67410	Password: 67410	— Staff

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY — We have a regular, ongoing Bible Study on the Gospel of Luke on Wednesday Evenings at 6:15. You don't have to make every meeting and you can start anytime—including this Wednesday. Here are the details for how to log on or dial in through Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting	Manually Dial In With a Touch-Tone Phone	
https://bit.ly/2BTwgBn	+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)	
Meeting ID: 931 9116 5788	Meeting ID: 931 9116 5788	
Passcode: 67410	Passcode: 67410	— Staff

RESTARTING THE PRAYER VIGIL — We're restarting the Prayer Vigil in virtual form from our homes. It's a full day of prayer every Thursday from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. We have the following openings. Please email John or call the church office if you are interested in participating. Here are the two slots that remain open: 8 a.m. to 9 a.m., 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.

— John Collins, 9/27/20, updated 11/15/20

EMAIL UPDATES — John uses a service called TinyLetter to send out blog posts by email every day or so. This way, you can keep up with their blog at revcollins.com by simply checking your email inbox. You can also reply with an email of your own and let us know what you think. You can sign up at tinyletter.com/jcollins11

— Staff

UPCOMING EVENTS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28

10:30 a.m. Recording the Online Service/In-Person Worship Service

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

10:30 a.m. In-Person Worship Service

10:30 a.m. Via KABI 1560 AM / Facebook and Vimeo (abilenefirstumc.org/onlineworship/)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30

7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts - Peatling

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1

10:00 a.m. Parkinson's Group Exercise in the Narthex

6:30 p.m. Outreach Committee Meeting

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2

1:30 p.m. Staff Meeting Via Zoom
3:30 p.m. Power & Light
6:00 p.m. Communion Via Zoom
6:00 p.m. Youth Group
6:15 p.m. Luke Bible Study Via Zoom

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3

5:00 a.m. Prayer Vigil Begins @ Homes
9:30 a.m. Hospice Quilt Workshop - Peatling
10:00 a.m. Parkinson's Group Exercise - Narthex

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4

Offices Closed at Noon

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5

10:30 a.m. Recording the Online Service/In-Person Worship Service

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

10:30 a.m. In-Person Worship Service
10:30 a.m. Via KABI 1560 AM / Facebook and Vimeo (abilenefirstumc.org/onlineworship/)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7

7:00 p.m. Staff Parish Meeting
7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts - Peatling

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8

10:00 a.m. Parkinson's Group Exercise - Narthex

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

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Clark Williamson, Director of Music Ministries — Email: clark@abilenefirstumc.org

Pam Jackson, Parish Visitor — Email: parishvisitor@abilenefirstumc.org