

Prayer Corner

Advent Prayer of the Month:

"Come, Lord Jesus, Even Now"

Adapted from Church Assistant: Liturgy, Bible Study, Prayer

Come, Lord Jesus, into this season of waiting and wonder. In a world that often chooses fear over faith, remind us that your light still breaks through the longest nights. When hope feels fragile, help us trust that you are near. When peace seems distant, settle our spirits with your presence. When joy is buried beneath grief or weariness, stir it gently within us. And when love is hard to offer, teach us again the depth of yours. Walk with us in our homes, in our neighborhoods, and in this church. Let us not rush through Advent, but dwell with intention—listening, watching, expecting. Let our lives reflect your promise, our witness speak of your coming, and our hearts make room for your arrival. In the name of the One who is always drawing near, we pray. Amen.

Prayer Requests

- Condolences to the family of Teri Gray who passed away on November 29th. She is the sister of Larry Gray and cousin of Carlton & Coral Garner.
- Project 2027 (Black Faith Agenda)
- Rondo Community

Covering in Prayer

- Johnny Barker
- Rakesha Eaton (daughter of Theresa Phillips)
- Willie P. McCoy, Jr.
- Juanita Robertson
- Joseph Towns (Son of Sanna Towns)

Seniors and Homebound

- Glenice Booker-Butler
- Brenda Bolar
- Doris Douglas
- Johnette Houston
- Pat Jemie
- Barbara Wulf



Loving God. Loving People.



585 Fuller Avenue | St. Paul, MN 55103
www.camphorconnects.org

December 7, 2025 | 10 am
What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope



Rev. Cynthia Williams | Lead Pastor

Welcome to Camphor Memorial UMC!

We are an open, welcoming, and affirming congregation, intentional and inclusive of all God's people. Camphor worship services are filmed, recorded and broadcast on line. Whoever you are – you are safe here.

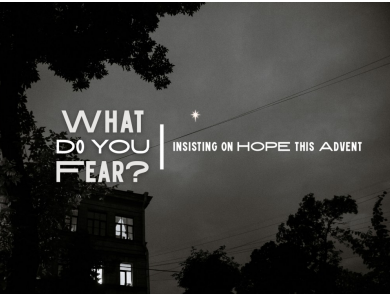
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and Streaming License Number: 20160361

- ↑ All stand
 - * Please be Seated
- Where indicated, speak or sing the words in **bold**

Centering Moment: Our Daily Bread
Check out today's passage from
"Our Daily Bread" to get centered for Worship.



Advent 2025: What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope



Even in a world marked by fear, the story of Jesus' birth reminds us that God draws near with reassurance and courage. Together we will explore the fears of Herod's time and our own, listening for the angels' persistent message of hope. Christ's presence breaks into our lives in ways that steady us and set us free. This Advent season, we invite you to walk with us as we seek God's transforming hope.

Prelude
↑ Bringing in the Light | Processional

Welcome
↑ CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor Cynthia Williams
Nieeta Presley

One: Family of faith, God is at work!

Many: God is healing and creating,

One: Redeeming and dreaming,

Many: Calling and sending,

One: Listening and loving

Many: Yes, indeed, God is at work!

One: So may we worship our God who never gives up.

Many: May we worship our God who holds onto hope. Amen!

(Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org)

Camphor Bulletin Board

S.E.R.V.E. @ Camphor Memorial UMC
Sharing **Every Resource, Voice, & Experience** | *"Because ministry takes all of us."*



Are you looking for a way to use your gifts and make a meaningful impact in the life of our church? S.E.R.V.E. @ Camphor is your invitation to share your God-given resources, voice, & experiences in service to our community. This is more than filling a spot—it's about living your faith out loud & strengthening the body of Christ through love in action. Join one of the ministry areas below & let your presence be a blessing.

Usher Ministry: Help create a welcoming environment for worshippers.
Contact: Saran Cryer – sarancryer@gmail.com

Communion Stewards: Assist in preparing and serving Holy Communion.
Contact: Harold Golden – harold.golden@comcast.net

Digital Ministry: Support worship and outreach through technology.
Contact: Forest Clardy-mediaministry@camphorconnects.org

Christian Education: Help lead and grow our spiritual formation programs.
Contact: De Anna Conover – deanna.conover@state.mn.us

Congregational Care Team: Support, prayer, presence, compassion, connection.
Contact: Nieeta Presley – nieeta@yahoo.com

UWF Christmas Party (Today!!!)



The United Women in Faith will hold their Annual Holiday Gathering on Sunday, December 7, from 12:00-3:30 p.m. at Doolittle's Woodfire Grill in Eagan.

All Camphor women are invited for food, fellowship, and a gift exchange. For details, contact Saran Cryer at sarancryer@gmail.com.

Sermon Notes

sermon title:

key verses:

Prayers

† Hymn of Praise

“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

UMH 196

[Verse 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.**

[Verse 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.**

(Worshippers May Enter)

Lighting of Advent Candle: Peace

Family of Mazel McCoy-Anderson

One: In a world full of fear, where do you see glimmers of peace?

**Many: We see glimmers of peace in the quiet of early morning, when
people shake hands, when loved one say they're sorry, and
when the church sings together.**

One: You are right. Even in a fearful world, peace is all around us. Today
we light the candle of peace as a reminder of this good news. May
this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world,
peace is present. We only have to look for it.

(Light the first purple candle that has been lit. Then light a second purple candle.)

Many: Thanks be to God! Amen.

Centering Prayer (In Unison)

Nieeta Presley

**Merciful God, we need bread and we need laughter. We need music and we
need a hand to hold. We need a chair to sit in and we need work to do. But
maybe more than anything, we need your Word and a reason to hope. So
move through this space today and speak to us as only you can. Speak a
word of hope deep into our weary bones. For we need bread and we need
laughter, but most of all, we need you. Amen.**

(Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org)

Laura King

(Worshippers May Enter)

Walk With Me

AA/HH 563

When the shades of life are failing, Lord I want Jesus to walk with me

Pastor Cynthia Williams

Pastor Cynthia Williams

Pastor Cynthia Williams

2nd Offering: Tithes & General Offering



UMH 95 | AA/HH 651

Sanctuary Choir

Carlton Garner

Sermon Notes

key verses:

Prayers

Prayers

Camphor Bulletin Board

Christmas Decorations Available!



'Tis the season for sharing! We have a collection of surplus Christmas decorations displayed downstairs, and we invite everyone to browse through and take any items that could brighten your home this holiday season. From ornaments to garlands and festive accents, you may find just the perfect touch to add to your Christmas décor.

Feel free to look through the items after worship or anytime during the week. If you need something to carry your selections, empty plastic tubs are available in the rear storage room.

Let's make sure these decorations continue to bring joy—anything not selected will be donated so they can bless someone else this Christmas.

Stay Connected with the Camphor Community!



We invite you to stay informed and inspired by subscribing to our weekly newsletter and church communications. Scan the QR code below to visit our website. Once you're there, simply scroll down to the "Subscribe" section and enter your email address.

By subscribing, you'll receive regular updates about worship services, upcoming events, ministry opportunities, and more — right in your inbox. Don't miss a moment of what God is doing at Camphor!



† Scripture Lesson

Matthew 11:1-11 (NIV) -cont'd

Carlton Garner

5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. 6 Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me." 7 As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? 8 If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. 9 Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10 This is the one about whom it is written: "'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' 11 Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

(Leader: The Word of God for the People of God/ **All: Thanks be to God**)

Ministry of Music

Sanctuary Choir

Sermon

Pastor Cynthia Williams

When We're Running Out of Hope, God Is at Work

Invitation for Prayer

Pastor Cynthia Williams

(Those who desire prayer or anointing with oil may come at this time.)

Call to Confession

Pastor Cynthia Williams

Near the end of his ministry, John the Baptist reached out to Jesus with a heart full of anxiety. John was in jail. He knew he might not get out, so he asked Jesus, "Did I make a mistake? Am I making a difference here? Or did I get it all wrong?" Like John, let us be fully honest with Jesus about our innermost thoughts. We can pour out our heart out to God because God always meets us with grace, tenderness and mercy. So friends, let us go to God in prayer. Let us be honest, like John the Baptist. Let us pray.

Prayer of Confession (In Unison)

On-the-move God, we have every reason to hold onto hope. We have every reason to believe that spring will come, that flowers will bloom, that the sun will rise. And yet, too often, hope slips though our fingers. With anxious hearts we cry out to you, "Will change ever come? Will things ever get better? Will I ever make a difference?" Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places where the sun is shining. Show us the places where you are on the move. With open hearts we pray. Amen,

Words of Assurance

Pastor Cynthia Williams

Family of faith, in our honesty, **We are heard.**

In our worries, **We are held.**

In our failings, **We are forgiven.**

In our fear, **We are not alone.**

Friends, this is the good news of the Gospel!

When we're running out of hope, God is still at work. Thanks be to God!

Amen.

(Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org)

Service of Word and Table (The Great Thanksgiving)

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

...We praise your name and join their unending hymn **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God, and power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

...as we proclaim the mystery of faith **Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

...now and forever. **Amen.**

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

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; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen

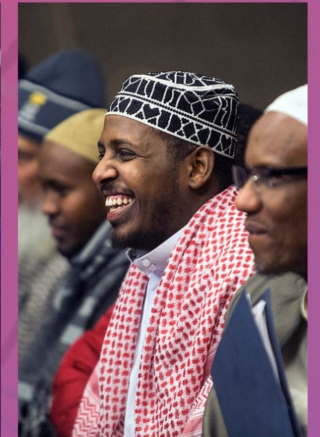
Sharing of the Meal

Please come forward as the ushers direct to receive by intinction: taking a piece of bread and dipping it into the cup.

• ISIAAH & FAITH IN MINNESOTA PRESENT •

A LIGHT IN THE STORM

AGENDA LAUNCH & ANTI-AUTHORITARIANISM STRATEGY TRAINING



**SATURDAY
DEC. 13**

**11AM - 12:45PM
SIGN IN & CONCESSIONS**
**1PM - 6PM
EVENT PROGRAM**

**MINNEAPOLIS CONVENTION
CENTER, 1301 2ND AVE S.
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55404**

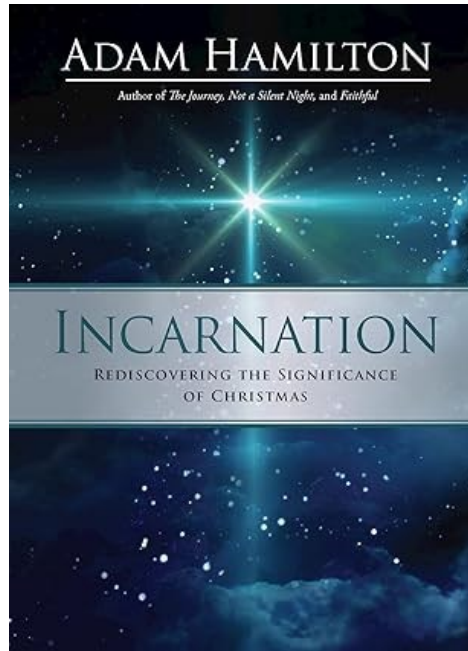
THOUSANDS OF ISIAAH AND FAITH IN MINNESOTA LEADERS FROM ACROSS THE STATE WILL COME TOGETHER TO LAUNCH OUR AGENDA THROUGH 2027 AND PLAN A PATH IN THIS MOMENT TO PROTECT OUR STATE, NEIGHBORS, AND FAMILIES IN THE FACE OF RISING AUTHORITARIANISM. TOGETHER WE ARE GOING TO MAKE MINNESOTA A PLACE WHERE FAMILIES ACROSS RACE, PLACE, AND RELIGION CAN THRIVE.



**SCAN TO REGISTER
OR VISIT: [BIT.LY/ISIAAH2025](https://bit.ly/ISIAAH2025)**

Camphor Bulletin Board

Advent Bible Study: Incarnation



Join us on Wednesday evenings beginning December 3 at 6:30 p.m. for our three-week Advent Bible Study Series, Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas. We will now be meeting online via Zoom until further notice.

Based on Adam Hamilton's exploration of the names of Christ in the Gospels, this study reflects on both the historical and personal meaning of Jesus' birth.

Together, we will embrace more deeply the significance of the Christ-child who gathers us, heals us, and calls us to be light in our lives and in the world today.

Zoom Link (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89022802750>). The link will also be available in the Tuesday Camphor Connects email.

Angel Tree Ministry



Camphor's United Women in Faith will sponsor the 7th Annual Angel Tree Ministry, providing Christmas gifts to children whose parents are incarcerated.

Angels may be selected on November 23, November 30, December 7, and December 14. Please return all wrapped gifts by Thursday, December 18.

Gifts will be shared with the children during a celebration on Sunday, December 21, in the Narthex. Thank you for helping us share God's love and joy with families in our community.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (In Unison)

**Loving God,
In a world racked with fear,
you gather us together.
You set the table.
You meet us here.
You nourish our bodies
as you nourish our spirits.
You remind us that this is a joyful feast,
and that fear cannot win every time.
So with renewed courage,
with renewed hope,
with renewed conviction,
send us out into the world.
Help us to feed others as you have fed us.
With gratitude we pray,
Amen.**

† Benediction with Blessings

Pastor Cynthia Williams

**Let the Church say Amen,
Let the Church say Amen
God has spoken, Let the Church say Amen**

(Worshippers may depart. Go in Peace)



"When our hope runs thin, God is already stirring beneath the surface—making a way in wilderness places we've learned to fear. The work of God is often quiet, unseen, but always moving. Like John, we may question; like Israel, we may grow weary. Yet even then, God is at work—birthing new things, breaking open dry ground, and reminding us that despair never gets the final word."

—Inspired by Howard Thurman

Camphor Bulletin Board

Announcement Submissions: Please submit announcements for the newsletter, bulletin, and Tuesday weekly email by 10 a.m. two weeks before the desired publication date, ensuring events are promoted at least a month in advance to allow the congregation sufficient time to engage and participate.

This Week @ Camphor Memorial UMC

- Tuesday, December 9th** 6:30 pm- Finance Team Meeting (Zoom)
- Wednesday, December 10th** 4 pm- Woman’s Chorale Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
6:30 pm- Bible Study (Zoom)
- Saturday, December 13th** 9 am- Praise Dance Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
10 am: UWF Meeting (Fellowship/Narthex)
10:30 am: UMM Meeting (Conf. Room)
1 pm- Woman’s Chorale Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
- Sunday, December 14th** 8:45 am: Adult Sunday School (Conf. Room)
10 am: Worship (Sanctuary & Live-Stream)
11:30 am: Camphor Bday Reception
(Fellowship/Narthex)

Change for Change: Small Coins, Big Impact!



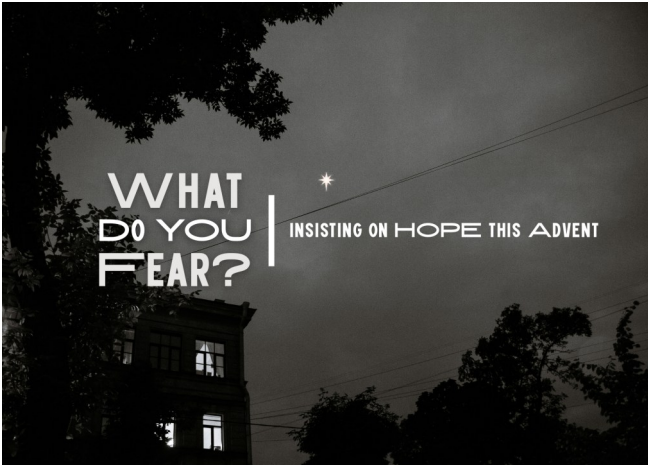
We are excited to continue our new “Change for Change” monthly offering—an ongoing opportunity to give our loose coins and spare dollars to bless local nonprofits making a meaningful difference in our community. All funds collected go through the Oglesby House of Blessing and are distributed to a different organization each month.

December: Irreducible Grace Foundation - Fostering the holistic wellness of BIPOC youth in community

Bring your loose change each Sunday and join us in this small but powerful way to bless our neighbors and make a difference together!

Camphor Bulletin Board

Advent 2025 at Camphor: What Do You Fear? – Insisting on Hope



This Advent, Camphor Memorial UMC invites you into a season of honest reflection and courageous hope. Luke’s Gospel begins “In the time of Herod,” reminding us that Jesus was born into a world shaped by fear and instability. Yet the angels continually proclaimed, “Do not be afraid.” Like Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi, we are invited to face our fears with faith, trusting that Christ’s coming brings good news even in uncertain times.

Throughout Advent, we will explore the fears present in Herod’s time and the fears we carry today, seeking the hope that is resilient, grounded, and strengthened by community. As we walk this journey together, we look for the ways God is breaking in, calling us toward courage, justice, and joy.

Advent Worship Dates:

- November 30 - In the Time of Herod: We’re Longing for God to Break In
December 7 - When We’re Running Out of Hope, God Is at Work
December 14 - Even in Our Fear, We Are Called Forward (Children will assist; Camphor’s 106th Anniversary)
December 21 - When You’re Afraid, Give Me Your Hand
December 21 at 4:00 p.m. - Blue Christmas Service
December 28 - Let Fear Fuel a Fire for Justice

As we journey through this season, may our hope deepen and our hearts open to the presence of Christ, who meets us with courage and peace.