Sunday, November 29, 2026

10:00 am Worship Service

1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Mission Statement: Compelled by God's love and our faith in Jesus Christ, Unity Church, a diverse people of faith, seeks to realize God's dream for the world through worship, learning, giving, and serving.

Core Values: We love children. Serve Christ with courage. Embrace diversity. Nurture community. Be an advocate for justice and peace.

Vision Statement: We are called to Reach Up, Reach In and Reach Out

(302) 658-5288 UnityChurchELCA@gmail.com
2101 Lancaster Avenue, Wilmington, DE 19805
www.unitywilmington.org

We invite you to contact Unity's staff members:

The Rev. Brian K. Sanders, Lead Pastor
443-676-2239; bks0808@aol.com

The Rev. Dr. Melissa P. Lemons, Pastor for Community Ministry
melissalemons@gmail.com; 302-803-8866
Office hours: by appointment

Norwood Coleman, Jr., PhD, Music Director
Mrs. Sharlene Drummond, Choir Director

YOU CAN ACCESS US ON SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 9:30AM ON YOUTUBE, UNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, WILMINGTON, DE WITH THE CURRENT SUNDAY DATE. FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, USE LINK BELOW.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN4vkddPnbKEzTKlFg-Lkvg

Worship leader: Min. Cynthia Slater
Ushers: ssisting Minister:
Communion Assistants:

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*Those who are able are invited to stand ** **Please, no walking or standing during this time. BOLD PRINT**: Congregation responds, P: Presider, A: Assisting Minister/ Worship Leader. Where you see a ✢, you are invited to make the sign of the cross.

THE GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRAISE & WORSHIP
RINGING OF THE BELLS

Introduction

A: Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

OPENING HYMN-"REJOICE, REJOICE BELIEVERS" ELW 244

Please Stand

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (Please Stand)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who calls out to the weary, whose word endures forever. **Amen.**

A voice cries out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord!" We are called to confess our sin and turn back toward God's love. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Comforting God, **we are your people, but we have neglected to call on your name. We are your people, but we have not remembered your ways. We are your people, but we have forgotten your hold on us. We are your people, but now we fade like a leaf, and our sins, like the wind, take us away. Restore us as your people. Cleanse us from our sin, and clothe us in your righteousness. Amen.**

"Comfort, comfort my people!" says your God, who has clothed you with the garments of salvation and wrapped you in the robe of righteousness. God has given you a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

In the name of ☩ Christ, your sins are forgiven: Rejoice in the Lord! Rejoice in the Lord! **Amen. [Thanks be to God!]**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A or P: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. **By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD (Please be seated)

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

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. 5 You 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.

6 We 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. 7 There 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. 8 Yet, O Lord, you
are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the
work of your hand. 9 Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not
remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (READ RESPONSIVELY)

1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth,
you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your
strength and come to help us.

3 Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be
saved.

4 O Lord God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your
people pray?
5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them
bowls of tears to drink.

6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies
laugh us to scorn.

7 Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall
be saved.

17 Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have
made so strong for yourself.

18 And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may
call upon your name.

19 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and
we shall be saved.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ.

4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God
that has been given you in Christ Jesus, 5 for in every way you have
been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— 6 just
as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— 7 so
that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our
Lord Jesus Christ. 8 He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you

may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] God is faithful,
by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ
our Lord.
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (Please Stand)

GOSPEL

P: **The Holy Gospel according to:** Mark 13:24-37
C: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] [24] "In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be
darkened, and the moon will not give its light, [25] and the stars will be
falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

[26] "Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great
power and glory. [27] Then he will send out the angels and gather the
elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of
heaven.

[28] "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes
tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. [29] So
also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is
near, at the very gates. [30] Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass
away until all these things have taken place. [31] Heaven and earth will

pass away, but my words will not pass away.

32 “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in
heaven nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Beware, keep alert, for you
do not know when the time will come. 34 It 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.

35 Therefore, 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, 36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37
And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”
The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you , O Christ**

SERMON PASTOR MELISSA LEMONS

Notes…

HYMN OF THE DAY – “COME BY HERE” TFF 42

APOSTLES CREED (Please Stand)

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Or, "he descended to the dead," another translation of this text in widespread use. From sundaysandseasons.com.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (Please sit, stand or kneel)

A: In hope and expectation, we bring to God our prayers for the church, the world, and all in need. *A brief silence.*

Strengthen your church in this season of anticipation. Nourish all people who gather around word and water, bread and cup. Reassure any whose faith feels dry that you are always near. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Come and restore the earth. Give rest to weary lands and renewed life to species at risk. Make us wise stewards of the places we call home. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Bring peace among all nations and communities. Embolden leaders to seek creative and sustainable resolutions to war and conflict. Show us new possibilities in places where peace has been elusive (*especially*). God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Sustain all who are heavy with weariness, grief, illness, or worry (*especially*). Comfort families who are estranged from one another and any who are separated from loved ones. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Inspire liturgists, preachers, musicians, and all who lead our worship and prayer. May we be prepared as we await Christ's coming this Advent season. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You embrace all the saints from the far reaches of the earth. We remember with care all who have died and now abide in their eternal home. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We entrust these and the prayers of our hearts to you, most holy God, in the name of Christ Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always
C: And also with you. Please share a sign of Christ's peace.

OFFERING

(God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. 9:7, 8)
(*During the offering, the ushers will pass the offering plates moving from back to front while a musical selection is played. Then the congregation will sing the Offertory hymn printed below*.)

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Holy Creator, **we are the clay and you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand. Receive these gifts shape them and our lives for your purpose,through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING *All are welcome to communion*

P: The Lord be with you **C: And also with you.**
P: Lift up your hearts. **C**: **We lift them to the Lord.**
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. We remember and proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in Christ's death and resurrection. We look with hope for the Lord's coming and ask…**Come, Lord Jesus. Come Holy Spirit. Amen**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered as one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us:
(*Alternate/modern versions of prayer in This Far by Faith p. 3, WOV p. 39)*
C: 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, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: The glory of the Lord is revealed! Come and taste God's presence.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Providing God**, you feed your flock like a shepherd and gather your people in your arms. We praise you for the care and sustenance you give at this meal and always. As we leave your table, carry us near your heart, and send us with confidence in the way of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

THE SENDING

God blesses us and sends us to minister to the world.

BLESSING

P: God our provider, God our feast, God our companion, ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN– "SOON AND VERY SOON" TFF 38

Please Stand

SOON AND VERY SOON WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
SOON AND VERY SOON WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
SOON AND VERY SOON WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING

REFRAIN:
HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH, WE'RE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING!
HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH

NO MORE CRYIN' THERE WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
NO MORE CRYIN' THERE WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
NO MORE CRYIN' THERE WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
REFRAIN

NO MORE DYIN' THERE WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
NO MORE DYIN' THERE WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
NO MORE DYIN' THERE WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
REFRAIN

SOON AND VERY SOON WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
SOON AND VERY SOON WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
SOON AND VERY SOON WE ARE GOIN' TO SEE THE KING
REFRAIN

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Bring good news to the brokenhearted.
Thanks be to God.

"Let us exit to serve"

We are called to reach up, reach in, and reach out…..

IF YOU HAVE ANYONE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD TO THE PRAYER LIST, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE @ 302-658-5288. NAMES WILL REMAIN ON THE PRAYER LIST FOR 3 MONTHS, UNLESS YOU REQUEST LONGER. PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE to MAKE ADDITIONS – (302) 658-5288.

THIS WEEK WE ASK THAT YOU KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:

UNITY CHURCH PASTOR BRIAN SANDERS
HARRY WILLIAMS PASTOR CLARENCE PETTIT
REV. LORRAINE RUTH JOE
FRAN RODRIQUEZ CAROL EGAN
JOAN MILLER AL SHOLLENBERGER
JAMES SPAMER HARRY WILLIAMS
ROBERT OLIVER TANYA BIRCH
DONA RODRIGUES AND SON DANIEL
ALICE COLEMAN MICHAEL JACKSON
CURTIS & MICHELE JACKSON
MARY ELLEN BANE CLAIRE GARNETT
ARIELLE KEYSER LEE REISER
CAROL REISER BONNIE FISHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Birthdays, Anniversaries, Visitors

WE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME ALL VISITORS TO UNITY THIS MORNING.
IT IS SO GOOD TO HAVE YOU AND PLEASE COME AGAIN.

BOTTLE IN BACK OF CHURCH is for donations to our 2027

graduations. Please place your donations in the bottle.

COFFEE HOUR/FELLOWSHIP is served after Worship and ALL are invited to attend. If anyone is interested in joining the Evangelism Ministry or Hosting Coffee Hour, please contact Rev. Lorraine @ (302) 383-9755. (Cell)

PUB THEOLOGY – is held on the third Sunday of each month. We meet in the Weiser Room and hold a lively discussion centering around everyday life. It is quite interesting and everyone is invited is invited to attend. In December, we will meet on December 20th immediately following morning worship. Please join us!

ZUMBA CLASSES will be held at 9:15am for ½ hour on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays of each month. This is a fun way to get in some exercise. All are invited to attend.

WE WILL DECORATE THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS on Sunday, December 6th immediately following our morning worship. Please stay after the service to help in this effort.

DONATIONS FOR THE HOMELESS are being accepted by Kim Williams from October 18th until December 20th. Kim is gratefully accepting hats, gloves, scarfs, washcloths, soap, tooth brushes, tooth paste, deodorant, & socks for men and women to be given out by Kim on Christmas Eve. Please leave all donations in the box in the Narthex.

PLEASE CHECK OUT THE BULLETIN BOARD – The December Newsletters from Lutheran Campus Ministry and Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center have been posted. You'll be able to learn all about the activities at each of these locations.

PRIVATE PRAYERS – If you would like extra prayer time, you are welcome to stay at the altar after you have had communion.

Dementia Caregiver Support Group: 2nd Thursday of the month, 6-7:30pm. Contact Rev. Brain Sanders for more info.

REV. LORRAINE has been appointed by Council to oversee any rentals of our building. If you or anyone you know might be interested in renting space in our building, please contact Rev. Lorraine at (302) 383-9755 (cell) via text.

Prayer: Anyone interested in 30 minutes of presenting prayer leads is invited to join our Prayer Line every Monday evening at 6:30-7:00 pm. Dial 1-240-591-0390, 315-704#.

Offering/Giving: An alternative way to contribute to Unity is to set up VANCO on your mobile phone by texting (844)794-0738 and follow directions to donate by credit card. There is a "donate now" button on our Website which is www.unitywilmington.org

Spiritual Direction/Companionship: If you'd like to talk individually about your faith life and how God shows up for you, contact Pr. Melissa. Sessions are free for Unity members (normally $50 per hour). Companions usually meet once a month.

Bible Study is held every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm via Zoom.
Please access Zoom as follows:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87206052414?
pwd=cWxnSnJodFE5S3hObzQrVGdMWGwwUT09
One tap mobile
+13017158592,,87206052414#.....0#,,717690# US (Wash, DC)

PLEASE NOTE NEW ID & PASSWORD:
Meeting ID: 8245-543-1720
Passcode: 292159