



Hope UCC Weekly Update: December 14, 2025

There is always something happening at Hope UCC, so we thought we would add a weekly announcement feature to the bulletin that is mailed and emailed out to everyone. This Weekly Update will provide you with announcements, information, and updates on all that is going on in our community – at church and beyond.

UPDATE Christmas Gift Book Extravaganza with Ruth Circle

The time has been changed from 10:30am to 11:30am for December 17th at Moline Housing Authority (Spring Valley) to set up the books for our wrapping on the 23rd. We will still have our lunch at Village Inn after!

Blue Christmas on the Longest Night Service Sunday, December 21 at 4:00 P.M.

In the midst of this season where we see 'JOY' almost everywhere we look, what do we do with the grief and loss we carry? It can be challenging to face the joy and happy chaos of the Christmas season when we feel grief, sadness, anxiety, or pain. Our 'Blue Christmas on the Longest Night' service at Hope UCC is a space to claim those feelings and find hope in the compassionate love of God. We will gather for this service on the day of the Winter Solstice - the longest night of the calendar year. All are invited to join the quiet service as we share and hear prayers, scripture, music, and rituals that acknowledge God's presence is here and very real for those who mourn, for those who struggle and that God's word comes to shine light into the darkness.

Christmas Gift Book Extravaganza with Ruth Circle: Two Opportunities to Help: December 17 & December 23!

EVERYONE is welcome to join the ladies of Ruth Circle to provide books for the families at Moline Housing Authority's Annual Christmas Party at Spring Valley.

December 17 at 11:30 A.M.: Instead of the monthly meeting there will be a set up party at the Spring Valley Community Room where the books get organized displayed. Afterwards we'll have lunch at Village Inn.

December 23 at 12:00 P.M.: The Big Day! Meet at the Spring Valley Community Room to help children and families select and wrap the books they select. This is a super festive and fun afternoon getting to know so many neighbors! Please put this on your calendar and join the fun. Please see Barb Hawotte, Dorothy Burdick, or Ginny Anderson with any questions.

Advent Devotional Available December 7

Hope UCC's 2025 Advent Devotional will be available Sunday, December 7. You can pick up your copy at church anytime. Please contact the church office if you would like one mailed to you.

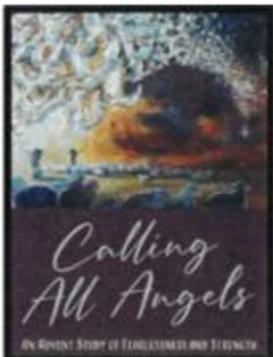
Advent Devotional Study: Calling All Angels

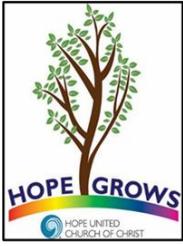
Tuesday, December 16 at 6:00 P.M.

"What would we do if we weren't afraid? What would change in our relationships, in our vocations, in our congregations, maybe even in our communities and in our world – if God's people led with a courage and vision that was always, first and foremost, unafraid?"
Erin Wathen

Where might you journey? Where might our congregation journey? Where might we sojourn together?

Join Member in Discernment, Lindsey Svetlick, for an Advent Devotional Study starting Tuesday, November 18th at 6pm. We are reading "Calling All Angels: An Advent Study of Fearlessness & Strength" by Erin Wathen. Hope UCC office have books available for purchase of \$11.00. Class meeting dates are Tuesday, November 18, December 2, 9, and 16th. Financial assistance is available. Please see Lindsey with any questions.





**Hope United Church of Christ Moline, IL
Worship Bulletin December 14, 2025
Third Sunday of Advent
Rev. Santina Poor, Pastor**

Thank you for joining us for worship today.

We are glad you are here!

*Because you are who you are,
you are welcome here!*

***Those who are able, please stand.**



PRELUDE

Star Child

Marilyn Rada acc. by Robyn Carter

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE Candle of Joy

Joyful Union Era: This era recognizes the brave and bold discernment of members of Union Congregational UCC as they celebrated with joy the history and legacy of that congregation and the joyful merging with Hope UCC in 2018.

One: Today we light the Candle of Joy. Joy is often considered the easiest of these four weeks before Christ's holy birth. We may cling to hope, and pray for peace, but in joy, we delight. In joy, our struggles are released. In joy, we find relief and comfort, a connection to friends and family and God. In joy, we find innocence within that has not been ground out. The lighting of this candle is joy and it reminds us of candles lit in our lives.

Many: The candles of our lives light our way and warm our hearts. No matter the size or color of the wax, no matter what room it is lit in, the act itself is exquisite. While the flame dances, we are one in the miracle and beauty of its light.

As Candle of Joy is lit, please join in singing We Will Rejoice in Joy

**We will rejoice in Joy,
Lift up our voice in Joy,
Make every choice in Joy,
We will uphold your world in Joy,
We will delight in Joy,
Share and invite in Joy,
Till all unite in Joy,
We will enfold your world in Joy.**

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come away from haste and frantic busyness.
This is the season for quiet waiting.

**Many: It is hard to still our souls when we are so busy.
It is hard to be patient with ourselves or others.**

One: Receive God's mercy and strengthen your hearts.
A Savior is coming; God's love is near.

Many: We want to hear and believe God's promises.

We want to become patient, loving seekers.

One: God presents us with a high and holy way.
Come before God now with praise and singing.

Many: We sense the joy God offers to us.

Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior.



OPENING HYMN

Oh Come All Ye Faithful

NCH #135



*PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Mighty One, we rejoice that you strengthen our weak hands and make firm our feeble knees. You open our eyes and unstop our ears. You meet our hungers with good things. You disturb our false pride while helping us discover our true strength. You topple us from our pretensions while lifting up the lowly to claim the inner power you alone can provide. We have assembled to worship you. Awaken the gladness that comes when we recognize your presence. We long to know you in this hour. Amen.



*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Come into our emptiness, gracious God. We feel empty because we have shut you out of our lives. Break through our pretensions, Holy One. We pretend to be powerful because we have not claimed the peace that is available deep within when you dwell with us. Quiet our grumbling and complaining. We are impatient because we have focused on things, not on you. Enter our lives with forgiveness you have promised to all who are truly sorry for their unfaithfulness. Release us from our self-created prisons. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*SHARING GOD'S PEACE



PASTORAL PRAYER/LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

One: The Lord be with you.

Many: And also, with you.

One: Let us pray: ...

With the assurance Jesus offers, together we pray the words Jesus taught us:

Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.



HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON

Isaiah 35:1-10

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.]]

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

*GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 1:46-55

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;

⁵⁰ indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

SERMON

Magnified Joy

SERMON HYMN

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

NCH #119

INVITATION TO OFFERING

God continues to lift up the lowly and to topple the powerful from their thrones. God judges us, not by worldly standards of greatness but according to the genuineness of our compassion and the extent of our faithfulness. Our offerings are one measure of our priorities.



Hope UCC thanks you for the gifts you share with this congregation. Your offering enables us to live into our mission. Offering plates are located near the Sanctuary doors.

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION



Majestic God, thank you for inviting us to share the blessings you pour out on us. We want to extend the healing ministry of Jesus who gave sight to those who were blind and new insight to some who only pretended to see. Use our resources to heal attitudes as well as bodies, to bring wholeness, not just cures. Help us to address the inequities of the earth that leave so many without food or shelter or hope. Lead us into your realm in the midst of our daily living. Amen.



We will come forward to hang our ornaments on the tree during our closing hymn.

*CLOSING HYMN & DECORATING OUR TREE *Joy to the World*
(while we decorate the tree)

*BENEDICTION

One: God has been present with us here today.
God also sends us out into the world.

**Many: The world we are about to enter is God's world.
We can count on God to be with us every day.**

One: God's judgment is sure, but so is God's love.
God lifts up the lowly and offers them strength.

**Many: Our eyes and ears have been opened to God's truth.
We have good news for all who need to hear it.**

One: Be patient with others and do not grumble.
Be patient with yourselves as you seek the Holy Way.

**Many: Like the prophets, we seek to speak in God's name.
Like lowly servants, we are eager to help others. Amen.**



*POSTLUDE A medley of bells arr. Bill Wolaver

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Serving in Worship Today: Reverend Santina Poor, Pastor Hope UCC

Liturgist: Stacy Demarest

Ministers of Music: Laurel Filzen Etzel, Greg Etzel

Accompanist: Robyn Carter

Greeter: Caridad Ramos

Fellowship Hour: Zoie Fuller, Ben Carter, Ken Curtis, Bob Morales

Audio-Visual Ministry: Jenny Hookey, Donna Werner, Bob Tallitsch, Kathy Hobson,
Bob Poor, Bek Svetlick

Altar Flowers: The altar flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Rev. Parker Lewis' birthday by Kathy Lewis.

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Adeste Fideles

(O Come, All You Faithful)

Luke 2:11-15; John 1:14

Latin, 18th century; attrib. to John Francis Wade
Transl. Frederick Oakeley, 1841, and others; alt.

1 A - des - te, fi - de - les, lae - ti tri - um - phan - tes; ve -
1 O come, all you faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2 God of true God . . . Light of true Light . . .
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 A - men, Lord, we greet you, born this hap - py morn - ing;

ni - te, ve - ni - te in Beth - le - hem.
come now, O come now to Beth - le - hem.
born of the Vir - gin's womb in hu - man form;
sing, all you mes - sen - gers of heaven - ly love:
Je - sus to you shall all glo - ry be given;

Na - tum vi - de - te Re - gem an - ge - lo - rum.
Come and be - hold the rul - er of all an - gels:
Tru - ly our God, be - got - ten, not cre - at - ed:
"Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est":
Word of our God . . . now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

Refrain

Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
O come in ad - o - ra - tion, O come in ad - o - ra - tion,

ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, Do - mi - num.
O come in ad - o - ra - tion: Christ is Lord!

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

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Miriam Therese Winter, 1987

Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Sam. 2:1-10

1 My soul gives glo - ry to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
 2 My God has done great things for me: yes, ho - ly is God's name.
 3 From age to age, to all who fear, such mer - cy love im - parts,
 4 Love casts the might-y from their thrones, pro-motes the in - se - cure,
 5 Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup-ports those in dis - tress,

God lift - ed up my low - li - ness in man - y mar-vel-ous ways.
 All peo - ple will de - clare me blessed, and bless - ings they shall claim.
 dis - pens-ing jus-tice far and near, dis - miss - ing self - ish hearts.
 leaves hun - gry spir-its sat - is - fied, the rich seem sud-den-ly poor.
 re - mem-ber-ing past prom-is - es with pres - ent faith - ful - ness.

This New Testament canticle, with its mosaic of liberation motifs that proclaim the justice of God, is known as the "Magnificat," the opening word of its Latin translation.

Tune: MORNING SONG C.M.
 Melody from Kentucky Harmony, 1816
 Harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1940

Joy to the World!

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*Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.**Ps. 98:4-9; Luke 2:11-15*

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth its
 2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

prais - es bring; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Christ room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of God's righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 and won - ders of God's love, and won - ders of God's

and heaven and na - ture sing, and
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
 and won - ders of God's love, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of God's love.

heaven and na - ture sing,
 peat the sound - ing joy,
 won - ders of God's love,

Stanza 1 may be sung, "Joy to the world! the Sovereign comes: . . ."

Isaac Watts, an English Congregationalist, freely paraphrased Old Testament psalms to glorify Christ and here develops a hymn of advent and nativity from a psalm.

Tune: ANTIOCH C.M.
 Lowell Mason, 1836