

# ST. LUKE'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Independence, Missouri 64050  
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www.stlukesuccindep.org

Rev. E. Paul Emily, Pastor  
Pastor's Phone: 816-379-5726  
stlukes@stlukesuccindep.org  
Margie Foley, Organist/Pianist  
Matthew Bennett, Conductor/Violinist  
Nanette Moore, Administrative Assistant

Pastors Emeriti: Rev. David Lyon & Rev. Ralph Koch

\*If comfortable doing so, you are invited to stand.

**The hymns today come from The Methodist Hymnal.**

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**DECEMBER 15, 2024**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**SILENT MEDITATION:** "For it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its might founder was a child himself." *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens

## GATHERING MUSIC

### GREETING

### PRELUDE

"Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow"

Arr. David Huntsinger

**\*CONGREGATIONAL HYMN** No. 202 "People, Look East"

BESANCON

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year. Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table. People, look east: Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there. Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish. People, look east: Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim, shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together. People, look east: Love, the star, is on the way.

Angels announce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth. Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming. People, look east: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Sing aloud, sons and daughters!

**All: Our hearts shout, "Rejoice!"**

One: With shouts of hope, sing to God.

**All: Again, we sing, "Rejoice!"**

One: With hearts of laughter, proclaim Christ's coming.

**All: Again, we say, "Rejoice!"**

## \*CALL TO CONFESSION

### \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

God of Promise, we are so easily distracted. We spend our time seeking joy that does not last. We see the beautiful lights of the season, but we fail to see the Light Of The World. We frantically seek that perfect gift, but we have forgotten to be still and treasure the Gift we have been given. Forgive us and turn our hearts toward the fullness of Joy which comes to us in the Christ Child. Open our eyes today to see your joy reflected in the smiles of children everywhere. Amen

## \*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

### \*GLORIA PATRI

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.

## LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE: PEACE

All: Source of All Light, draw us more deeply toward the pleasant glow of joy which is found in a life that has connection to you and to others.  
Let our joy shine forth with the brightness of this candle and let ours be a joy that gives light to all that are in the house. Amen

## PASTORAL PRAYER and 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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

## SPECIAL MUSIC

"Jesus is His Name"

Arr. Joseph Linn

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT "A World of Christmas Customs"

Scripture: Numbers 24:17a, Romans 15:12 & Revelations 22:16a

Children Share Customs about Christmas Stars

Congregational Hymn "The First Noel" (vs 1,2)

THE FIRST NOEL

The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east, beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night. (Refrain)

Scripture Luke 2:1-7

Children Share Customs about the Animals

Congregational Hymn "The Friendly Beasts" (Kids sing verse 1 and then congregation joins)

ORIENTIS PARTIBUS

Jesus, our brother, kind and good, was humbly born in a stable rude,  
and the friendly beasts around him stood, Jesus, our brother, strong and good.

"I," said the donkey, shaggy and brown, "I carried his mother uphill and down,  
I carried her safely to Bethlehem town; I," said the donkey, shaggy and brown.

"I," said the cow, all white and red, "I gave Him my manger for his bed,  
I gave him hay to pillow his head; I," said the cow, all white and red.

"I," said the sheep with curly horn, "I gave Him my wool for his blanket warm,  
he wore my coat on Christmas morn; I," said the sheep with curly horn.

"I," said the camel, yellow and black "Over the desert, upon my back,  
I brought Him a gift in the Wise Men's pack, "I" said the camel, yellow and black.

So every beast, by some good spell, in the stable dark was glad to tell  
of the gift he gave Emmanuel, the gift he gave Emmanuel.

Scripture Luke 2:8-14

Children Share Customs about the Angel's Message of Peace

Children's Handbell Choir "Let There Be Peace on Earth"

Scripture Luke 2:15-16

Children Share Customs about the Nativity

Congregational Hymn "Away in a Manger" (Kids sing verse 1 then congregation joins)

AWAY IN A MANGER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;  
I love you, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray;  
bless all the dear children in your tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with you there.

Scripture Luke 2:17-20

Children Share Customs about Christmas Bells

Children's Handbell Choir & Congregational Hymn "Joy to the World"  
(Kids play through one time and then all sing)

ANTIOCH

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

## REFLECTION

"The Man Who Got Christmas"

## STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

### CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

**THE BEAUTY OF SHARED GIFTS** "Do You Hear What I Hear" Noel Regney and Gloria Shayne

### \*CELEBRATING STEWARDSHIP — DOXOLOGY

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

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (In Unison)

**Great and Giving God, these gifts are brought with our love for you and our hope for our world. Bless these offerings with the power of the Holy Spirit. May the way be prepared and the message of Christ's coming be proclaimed. Use us as your messengers to all who wait to hear the good news of great joy which is for all people. Amen**

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;  
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; (Refrain)

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,  
Jesus, to thee be all glory given.  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: (Refrain)

**BENEDICTION  
POSTLUDE**

"A King He's Born to Be"

Arr. David Huntsinger

The Liturgist today is Julie Sehr.  
Thank you to Carol Lyon for accompanying the hymns.

**PAGEANT PARTICIPANTS**

Aiva Champagne

Anelise Izzard

Hazel Jaberg

Jackson Jaberg

Caden Lavigne

Kaylee Lavigne

Mikayla Spangler

Emmersyn Trussell

Ransym Trussell

Timmy Trussell

Narrator ~ Marita Ray

Director ~ Dianne Emily

Additional Helpers ~ Jodie Puhr, Lisa Jaberg, Marita Ray, Jessica Lavigne

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**RECEPTION AND PHOTO BOOTH**

There will be a reception immediately following worship in the Fellowship Hall.  
There is also a photo booth set up for people to take family and individual pictures.  
Someone will be available to help with pictures

## **THE PAGEANT IS GOING ON THE ROAD**

The children are taking the Pageant on the road! They will be performing for the residents at Maywood Terrace on Monday, December 23rd, at 10:15. The children would love to invite anyone in the congregation to join them. In addition to performing, the children will also go bearing gifts of warm blankets. They are collecting money for enough blankets for approximately forty residents. Blankets can be purchased for about \$10 each. This is a beautiful opportunity to teach the kids how our congregation works together to share joy and kindness with others. You can donate in person or on the website using the "Give Now" button or on the Vanco App. Please use the Misc tab if donating online.

## **CHRISTMAS FUND/VETERANS OF THE CROSS SPECIAL OFFERING**

The Christmas Fund Offering will be received next Sunday, December 22nd.

You can place your offering in the Offering box or donated on the website or the app.

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross is an annual UCC offering that expresses our thanks to retired and active UCC pastors and lay church workers and their families facing financial need, providing direct assistance to supplement pensions, help with the cost of medical insurance, a thank you gift at Christmas, and funds to meet emergency need.

## **CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE**



The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be Tuesday, December 24th, at 7:00 PM in person or virtual. Invite a friend to this very special Christmas Eve Worship Service.

## **OFFERING ENVELOPES**

If you would like Offering Envelopes for the new year, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex or contact the church office. Let us know whether you would like weekly or monthly envelopes

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

There will be no Sunday School on December 29th (New Year's Breakfast will take place during Sunday School time). Sunday School, both virtual and in person, will resume on January 5th.

## **WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A LITURGIST?**

If you would like to be a liturgist please contact the church office. A new list goes out twice a year and you typically serve 2-3 times in a six month period

## **WINTER WEATHER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

If in person worship is canceled due to winter weather conditions, the announcement will be put on the website, in the Facebook group Windows Into St. Luke's, and on Channel 9. When looking on Channel 9, look for St. Luke's UCC, Independence. There are other churches with the same name.

The service will be livestreamed on Facebook no matter what the weather is.

## **SAVE THE DATES**

There are many things coming up that you want to add to your calendars.

More details will be put in the bulletin and Glimpse closer to time.

## **NEW YEAR'S WORSHIP AND BREAKFAST**

Let's celebrate the end of 2024 and the beginning of 2025 with breakfast, fellowship and worship with your church family on December 29th. Breakfast at 9:30 followed by worship at 10:45 AM.

## CHECK IN, SHARE AND COMMENT



If you are worshipping in person, please “Check-in” on Facebook, then, share the service, comment on it and like it. You are encouraged to have your device out during the service. If the music inspires you, tell Matthew and Margie by commenting about how wonderful it was or say thank you. If the sermon speaks to you, comment with how it touched you. If there is a great story during Children’s Moment or a kid makes you laugh, comment and tell what it was. If someone makes a comment, reply to them. We encourage you to connect with those online as well as in person. If you are worshipping online, share and comment on the service. Comment on the things listed above, reply to and/or like other people’s comments. It is so important to stay connected & these are simple ways to do that.

## INSTAGRAM

Use this QR code to follow St. Luke’s UCC on Instagram!



## WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

10:45 AM Online & In person Worship followed by in person fellowship  
Monday—Friday, 9:45 AM Live with Pastor Paul in Windows Facebook Group  
Monday & Wednesday, 6:30 PM NA Meeting

For more information about any of these, please email the church office at [stlukes@stlukesuccindep.org](mailto:stlukes@stlukesuccindep.org)

## GIVING OPTIONS

If you wish to make a donation to St. Luke’s, there are several options available:

1. Check mailed to church office at 727 N. Main, Independence, MO 64050
2. Internet donation – you may now donate from a secure site by clicking on the Give Now button on the website.
3. Electronic funds transfer – your offering can be automatically deducted from your checking or savings account.

To sign up, click here. After completing the form, contact the church office [stlukes@stlukesuccindep.org](mailto:stlukes@stlukesuccindep.org) for instructions.

4. Vanco Mobile App - download the free app on Google Play or the App Store. Enter St Lukes (without punctuation) as the church name Select St. Luke's United Church of Christ in Independence. From there you can create an account and use the app for donations.
5. Text the word GIVE to 816-312-5053 and you will be directed to a secure site for giving.



## CONNECT

If you are visiting today we would love to connect with you.  
Text CONNECT to 816-312-5053 or use the QR code to the right.



## PHOTO/VIDEO POLICY

May it be understood that any pictures/videos taken during any church event may be used for promotion. Church events, including but not limited to, worship services may be broadcast live on Facebook.

If you are not in agreement with this notify the church office.