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## Welcome, we're glad you're here!

We welcome you to join us on a transformative journey.

**Seeking God**, we strive to know God and love God.

**Serving others**, we follow our Servant Savior to help bring fullness of life to others.

**Sharing Christ's love with all**, we proclaim the unconditional love of Christ filled with joy and hope.

*If you are a Miami student, we invite you to make this your church home away from home during your time at Miami.*

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**Liturgist: Nancy Moeckel**

(Note on Image - For Advent, we will be featuring the photography from our mission journeys to Russia and Colombia. Today's image from the 2014 journey to Russia is inspired by this Sunday's Advent theme of "Hope".)

### WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

*\*Please rise in body or in spirit*

#### CHIMES

#### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRELUDE** "Creator of the Stars of Night" arr. Robert Lau

**CHORAL INTROIT** "While We Are Waiting, Come"  
Claire Cloninger & Don Cason

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: In Advent we watch and wait,  
and prepare to welcome the Christ Child into the world.

**All: Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

One: In Advent we prepare for a life of discipleship,  
and watch faithfully for signs of God's light breaking into the world.

**All: Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

One: As we wait, dear One,  
we watch for signs of your action in the world,  
Actions of compassion and grace breaking in.

**All: Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

One: Holy God,  
we recognize that we do not know the day or the hour,  
but we know that the day is near.

**All: Come, Lord Jesus, come!**  
**Be born anew in our world and in our lives.**

\*HYMN - "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 1-2, 6-7) #88

#### \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Holy and Loving God,  
we give thanks for the promise  
of this sacred season  
and for the joy we find in the Christ Child.**

**Yet even as we rejoice,  
we recognize that we often fail to  
live with the hope of redemption.**

**In this season of anticipation,  
we know that we are easily distracted  
by our own projects and preparation.  
We lose focus on the one  
who is the Source of our joy.  
Forgive us, Lord, and restore our hope in you. Amen.**

#### \*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

The promise of the season of Advent  
is the promise of Emmanuel, God with Us.  
Jesus calls us to keep awake  
so that we are ready for God's arrival.  
Therefore, let us lay aside all those things that distract us  
from faithful watching for the Lord.

Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.  
Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen.**

#### \*SHARING THE PEACE

#### A TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES & LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

As our days grow shorter and our nights longer,  
we who are people of faith turn to the light of a  
single candle to proclaim our belief in the  
unquenchable light of Emmanuel, God with Us.

**In faithful anticipation,  
we prepare for the coming of the Reign of God.**

This Advent, we call out to the Lord.  
This Advent, we open ourselves to be  
remade in the image of God's incarnated love.

**We who are open with anticipation  
feel faith rise up within us.  
And so we light this first candle  
and name it Hope.**

(The candle of Hope is lit, and the congregation sings vs. 1  
of "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" #85.)

**Light one candle to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish the darkness.  
He shall bring salvation to Israel,  
God fulfills the promise.**

Children in Preschool through Grade 8 are dismissed  
to class following the children's message.)

### WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

#### UNISON PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Speak to us, Lord.  
Speak to us in the waiting, the watching,  
the hoping, the longing,  
the sorrow, the sighing, and the rejoicing.  
Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days,  
and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.**

#### SCRIPTURE

A reading from Zephaniah 3:14-20

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON** - "The Songs of Advent: Unspeakable" Pastor Lawrence

### WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD

\*HYMN - "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn" #107  
(vs. 1 &4)

#### THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

#### INVITATION

Come, all who walk through the darkness  
seeking hope and peace.  
Here is a place where you are welcome.  
This is a table where you can rest in the heart of love

One: (Singing) The Lord be with you.

**All:** (Singing) **And also with you.**

(Singing) Lift up your hearts.

(Singing) **We lift them up to the Lord.**

(Singing) Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

(Singing) **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

#### PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

**Lord, we gather here in defiance  
of all the world wants to proclaim in this season.  
Surrounded by noise and busy-ness,  
by pressures to conform and perform,  
we defiantly proclaim this simple message:  
God so loves the world,  
and has done so from the beginning,  
and will do so long after our time is done.  
Christ's love is unconditional and everlasting.  
It permeates all our being and lasts long  
beyond fleeting moments of celebration.**

**And so in this Advent season,  
when we anticipate all it can mean  
that God came to dwell within our world  
and our hearts,  
we join our hearts with all who have gone before,  
and proclaim:**

**All:** (Singing)

**Holy, Holy, holy Lord; God of power and might.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna n the highest!  
Hosanna in the highest!**

An elderly couple named Elizabeth and Zechariah  
opened their hearts to your song...

As we share this bread and cup,  
strengthen our hope in the promises of this season,  
and give us courage to live in the way of hope and  
peace as we lift up the prayers of our hearts today.  
(Joys and concerns are shared here.)

We lift up all these prayers in name of the Prince of Peace  
who taught us to pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
Your kingdom come, your will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and  
deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen.

**SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP**

(All are welcome to approach the communion stewards at the front or back of the sanctuary. Receive the gift of Bread, then dip it into the Cup. Please return to your seat by the outer aisles. If it's not comfortable for you to walk, a steward will joyfully offer you communion in your seat. The crackers on the communion plates are gluten free.)

**OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM** "The Yearning"  
Susan Bentall Boersma & Craig Courtney

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

\*HYMN - "Love Has Come" #110

**\*BLESSING**

**We go into the world and keep awake!  
The time is drawing near when  
God's hope will be revealed.  
We go into the world and keep watch!  
The signs of Christ's light are breaking  
into the world.  
We go into the world and nurture hope  
for salvation and justice  
this day and always.  
Alleluia! Amen.**

\*CHORAL RESPONSE "Prepare"  
Joseph M. Martin

\*POSTLUDE "Lift Up Your Heads" arr. Robert J. Powell

\*\*\*\*\* (tear) \*\*\*\*\*  
Please place this portion of your bulletin in the offering plate  
or Administrative Assistant mailbox.

**Special Music Fund and Poinsettias:** Please use this form to order a flower or contribute to the special music fund. Checks should be marked for flowers or the Special Music Fund. **The cost of the poinsettias this year will be \$16.50**

\_\_\_\_\_ Poinsettia (Cost \$16.50) \_\_\_\_\_ Special Music Fund  
\_\_\_\_\_ Donate Poinsettia to Deacons

**Dedication to be put in bulletin:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Paid by check (no.) \_\_\_\_\_ or Cash \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Last day to order is Wednesday, December 5, 2018**

Large-print bulletins and hearing assistance units are available from the ushers. **Please sign the friendship pads found at the end of the pew and pass them to your neighbors.**

**Greeters:** Jim and Billie Maynard

**Advent Wreath Candle Lighters:**  
Middle School Sunday School Class and Prue Dana

**Congregational Concerns:** Betty Barnhart, John Curry, Tracy DeGood, Bob Douglass, Nancy Gates, Genee Hesse, Breanna Kinneman, Ruth Miller, Jan Reinhart, Becky Rudolph, Sarah Soika, Joan Teckman, Dave Wilson, Stacey Winn, John and Jean Woodruff

Email prayer requests to Janet Holmes, [holmest2@frontier.com](mailto:holmest2@frontier.com), call Pat Roberts, 513-255-0549 or email the church office, [office@oxfordpresbychurch.org](mailto:office@oxfordpresbychurch.org).

Fellowship hour following worship hosted by Becky Quay on behalf of the Deacons.

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**MINISTRY NEWS:**

**Oxford Presbyterian Women's Christmas Tea:** Sunday, December 9 at 2:30 p.m. in the Molyneaux Lounge. Jean Derickson will lead us in the Carol Sing. Karen Simpson will read a Christmas Story. Everyone is welcomed to attend. Contact Karen Simpson, 523-8363, [k.simpson2007@yahoo.com](mailto:k.simpson2007@yahoo.com). if you have any questions.

**Service of Comfort:** Join us Thursday, December 6, for our annual Service of Comfort, hosted by Holy Trinity Episcopal Church at 3:00 p.m.

**Church Services at the Knolls:** December church services on DVD will be shown at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday December 11 and **notice this change Thursday December 27** (because Christmas falls on the 4th Tuesday).

**Celebration at the Manger:** Sunday, December 16, the children and youth of Oxford Presbyterian Church will present the fifth annual *Celebration at the Manger* program during the 10:00 a.m. worship service.

**Christmas Eve Service:** Mark your calendar and join us Monday, December 24. Service will begin at 7:00 p.m. Bring your family, friends and neighbors. All are invited!

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**Oxford Presbyterian Church**  
**For a full ministry calendar, please visit:**  
<https://oxfordpresbychurch.org/calendar/>

**Lawrence H. Bartel, Pastor Julia R. Fisher, Clerk of Session**

# First Sunday of Advent



**Sunday, December 2, 2018**



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[oxfordpresbychurch.org](http://oxfordpresbychurch.org)

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