

Christ Congregational United Church of Christ
14920 S. W. 67 Avenue, Palmetto Bay, FL 33158
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Web site: www.christcongregationalucc.org
The Rev. Candace Thomas, Designated-Term Pastor
Jay Harragin, Director of Music
Anita Smith and Family, Liturgists

Our Vision: A church that listens, praises God, inspires, and serves others.

November 29, 2020 – 10:30 a.m.

First Sunday of Advent

Preparation for Worship

Hope is a good thing, maybe even the best of things, and good things never die. Andy Dufresne (Shawshank Redemption)



PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CALL TO WORSHIP: (Centered around *Esther 4:14*)
(Responsive)

One: For such a time as this,

Many: God's Love becomes flesh. Again.

One: For such a time as this,

Many: A child is born to us. Again.

One: Though the night of our despair long lingers,

Many: There comes a Light no shadow can overcome.

One: Though our hearts ache for a justice we cannot yet see,

Many: The Holy One works for those who watch and wait.

One: Though distanced from one another and well-acquainted with death,

Many: Our Deliverer draws near to bring us new life.

One: No ear has yet heard, no eye has yet seen, God's glory fully revealed.

Many: And so we wait.

One: We know not when or where or how our Hope will be made manifest.

Many: And so we watch.

One: The One who loves us does not slumber.

Many: So let us keep awake.

One: Hope of the nations, come.

Many: Hope of our hearts, come.

The first purple candle is lit.

ALL: FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS, KINDLE OUR HOPE.

***OPENING HYMN: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (No. 116, NCH)
Verses 1,2,6**

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Child of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

**O come, O come, O Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and
nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show, and help us in that way to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

**O Come, O Day-spring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here;
Love stir with-in the womb of night, and death's own shadows put to
flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

***THE COMMANDMENT OF JESUS** (*John 15:5, 12*)

I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

**Rider of the Clouds of Heaven,
Surprising answer to heartfelt prayer.
In whatever way you choose—
Come. Shake us up.
Help us find you at work in our lives
Showing the way to make all things new.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS: *Psalms 89:1-7, 17-19* NRSV

I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations. I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David: 'I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations.'" Selah Let the heavens praise your wonders, O LORD, your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones. For who in the skies can be compared to the LORD? Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD, a God feared in the council of the holy ones, great and awesome above all that are around him? For you are the glory of their strength; by your favor our horn is exalted. For our shield belongs to the LORD, our king to the Holy One of Israel. Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said: "I have set the crown on one who is mighty, I have exalted one chosen from the people.

Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— 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! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. 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. 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. 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. 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. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

For our tendency to put our hopes in everything but you, forgive us. In the bitterness and despair we feel when our hopes are not realized, comfort us. O, that you would tear open the heavens and come into our wandering hearts with your love. O, that you would reveal your steadfast goodness and restore our hope. Honor our hope: That you would walk with us through these times, that you would redeem these times. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON-Pastor

1 Corinthians 1: 3-9

God is faithful,
and gives us grace in Christ Jesus.
In this fellowship we can count on being enriched
In speech, in knowledge, in every spiritual gift.
Let us give thanks, in Christ, we are forgiven
and sent forth to work for God's reign among us.

**PRAYER SONG: "Come, O Long-Expected Jesus" (NCH, No.122)
verse 1**

**Come, O long expected Jesus, born to set all people free:
From our fears and sins release us; grant us your true liberty.**

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE PRAYER OF JESUS(Unison)

We join our hearts together as we 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass
against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For
the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.
Amen**

OFFERING INVITATION

PRAYER OF DEDICATION:(Unison)

**Creator God who came to us as one of us, Spirit who lives among and
within us, Redeemer who comes to us again in ways both mysterious
and plain, at times long-awaited and in unexpected moments: See how
your love has opened our hearts. Bless these gifts of hope and
compassion, faithfulness and gratitude. For all your love has already
done, thank you. For all you will yet do, through these gifts and by your
Spirit, we praise you.**

MUSICAL OFFERING:

MESSAGE: “Just Waiting” Pastor Candy Thomas

CLOSING HYMN: “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” (No. 403, NCH

**My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ love and faithfulness;
I dare not trust this earthly frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name.**

**On Christ, the solid Rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.**

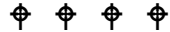
**When Christ shall come with trumpet sound,
oh, may I then in Love be found,
Dressed in God’s righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the
throne.**

**On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.**

COMMISSION

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE



Welcome to Everyone!

*Whoever or whatever brought you to our on-line worship service this morning, we believe that the Spirit of God had a hand in you joining us. We hope that you feel the Holy Spirit in our service of prayer and praise. At Christ Congregational Church we strive to love one another as God has loved us and welcome one another as Christ has welcomed us. Therefore, we are an **Open and Affirming** church, loving and welcoming all people in all of God’s variety; including racial, ethnic, and economic diversity, gender diversity and expression, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities.*

JOYS AND CONCERNS – Please let Pastor Candy know of any joys or concerns you would like lifted up in worship by notifying her by Sunday morning at 10 a.m. via phone, text or email.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE SEASON OF ADVENT BEGINS TODAY as we light the first candle of HOPE on the Advent wreath to begin this holy time of waiting together.

PRIME TIME, EVERY Sunday, from 9:00-9:45 a.m.

We will continue to discuss the book:

"An Altar in the World"

A Geography of Faith”

by Barbara Brown Taylor.

To Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6917354836?pwd=QnNrdE1VWWUvNjMvOWkzU1UwYzdPUT09>

Meeting ID: 691 735 4836 Passcode: 338243

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Topic: Care for the Poor I

To Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/79506625182?pwd=akZPVIBlQ0JldEUxbkNRbithN1UyUT09>

Meeting ID: 795 0662 5182 Passcode: 13s43p

BIBLE STUDY

We will meet on Zoom at 6 p.m. on Mondays.

To Join Zoom Meeting Sign-in information is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82547685992>

Meeting ID: 825 4768 5992 One tap mobile Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kb9UP3HTiy>

Please stipulate when your giving is other than pledge or plate by letting Judy Carlson or Michelle Simone know.

ONLINE GIVING - We invite you to use our online giving option as a quick, simple and secure method to make your pledges and any ancillary contributions. **Clicking on the “Give Online Today” button at the bottom of this newsletter, or going to our church website at christcongregationalucc.org and clicking “online giving”** will bring you to the secured Moon Clerk site which will allow you to enter your credit card information.

Please let Michelle, our Administrative Assistant, know if there are names you’d like added to the Prayer List She may be e-mailed at christch@bellsouth.net or call her at 305-235-9381. Thanks be to God for prayers answered and for comfort given!

Prayer List:

The family of Gloria Fuller, Gail Kenan, Graham and Carmen Andrew and their entire family, Mr & Mrs Jerry Parks, Linda Dalrymple, Barbara Parker, Lindsay Robertson, Mary Ellen Prather, Frank Tirb, Rosemary Daniels, The Family of Margie Fickes, The Family of Dollie Bryan, Rhonda Johnstone Cepedes, The Family of Ray Radkiewicz, Lauren Kline, Margarita Morell’s sister, All medical professionals and first responders, Bill & Maggie McDowell, Wendy Olson, Ezell Smith, The family of Tula Vernon.

For **Pastoral Care Needs**, please call *Pastor Candy* at **925-640-9289** or you may call or leave a message at the **Church Office, 305-235-9381, Monday-Friday, from 9:30 a.m –2:30 p.m.** and our Office Administrative Assistant, *Michelle Simone*, will assist you in reaching *Pastor Candy*. **When the office is closed** you may call the **Board of Deacons** Chairperson, *Jim Ketzle*, at **305-495-4452** and he will be able to help you. For **Use of Property Needs** or if you identify a Maintenance Concern call the **Board of Trustees** Chairperson, *Julio Balcells*, **305-282-7882**. For **Other General Questions** or Needs call the Church President/Moderator, *Lorrie LeGrand*, **305-978-3801**

Safety Protocols For Outside Services at Christ Congregational UCC

In-person worship services are being held in the Garden Chapel on Sundays at 10:30 a.m..

It is expected that people will attend only if they are well. A photo will be taken of those in attendance in the event that contact tracing is needed. Ushers will obtain contact information from any guest visitors.

Live streaming on Facebook will continue. Worshippers may choose the option with which they are most comfortable.

All attendees and participants are required to wear masks at all times which cover both mouth and nose.

Social distancing must be observed at all times—prior, during, and following the worship service. As much as you would like to extend a welcoming handshake or warm hug, **please don't** out of respect and love for the health of our community.

An Usher will be stationed at each of the three entrances to the Garden Chapel to assist in seating the congregation.

Hand sanitizers will be available at each entrance.

Seating can be on the rock pews or chairs may be brought by congregants if desired. If cushions are needed for the rock pews they must be brought in as they cannot be provided. If assistance is needed to carry chairs from cars an Usher will help.

Worship programs will continue to be online each Friday and will also be handed out by Ushers wearing gloves.

The Kelsey building will remain locked. There will be no refreshments after worship. Water fountains will not be available. Only bathrooms in the linear classroom building will be available.

A receptacle will be available for offerings.

Monthly Holy Communion will be observed using individual Celebration pre-packaged elements.

Trash cans with bag liners will be placed at all exits. Live Streaming on Facebook will be continued. ***In case of bad weather, worship will be held in the Sanctuary with doors and glass side walls open.**