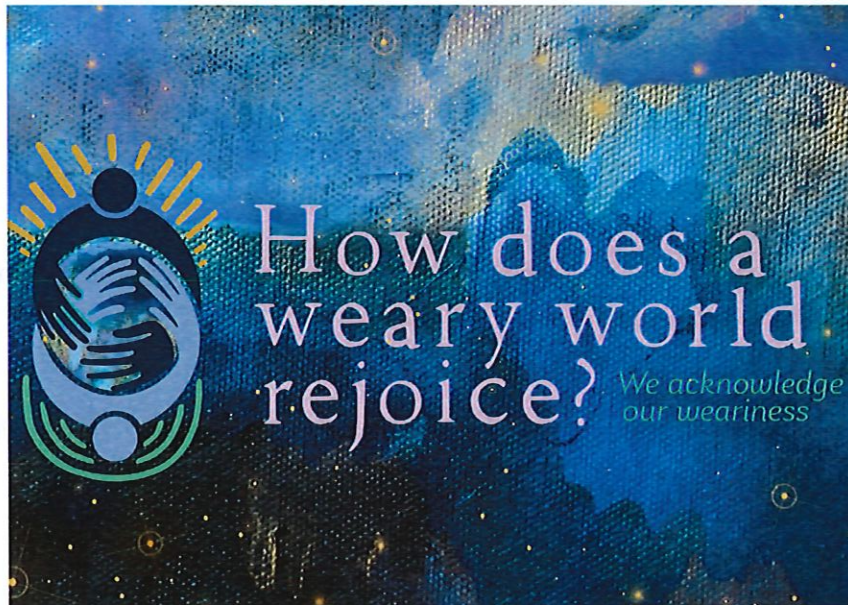


# Central United Methodist Church



**The First Sunday of Advent**

**December 3, 2023**

**10:45 a.m.**

*Our Vision:*

***Making Christ known by extending hospitality,  
serving the community, and embracing all.***

**201 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Knoxville TN 37917**

**[www.knoxcentralumc.org](http://www.knoxcentralumc.org)**

# ***We Gather to Praise God***

## **Gathering Music**

**Prelude**                      *Sing We Now of Christmas with God Rest Ye Merry, Gentleman*                      arr. Brant Adams

**Choral Introit**                      *Advent Cry*                      Joseph Martin

**Welcome**                      The Peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**                      Rev. Jimmy Sherrod

**Opening Prayer**                      Rev. Stephanie Parrott

## **† Call to Worship**

In God's house, we can be joyful.

**We can be grateful. We can be hopeful.**

In God's house, we can be weary.

**We can be anxious. We can be grieving.**

In God's house, we can be honest—

**inspired or tired, delighted or doubtful, connected or curious, and everything in between.**

This is God's house. You are welcome exactly as you are.

**Let us worship our loving God.**

## **† Opening Hymn**                      *Watchman, Tell Us of the Night (tune Hark! The Herald Angels Sing)*

Watchman, tell us of the night, what its signs of promise are.  
Traveler o'er yon mountain's height see that glory beaming star!  
Watchman, does its beauteous ray any joy or hope foretell?  
Traveler, yes; it brings the day, promised day of Israel. [repeat]

Watchman, tell us of the night, higher yet that star ascends.  
Traveler, blessedness and light, peace and truth its course portends.  
Watchman, will its beams alone gild the spot that gave them birth?  
Traveler, ages are its own; see, it bursts o'er all the earth! [repeat]

Watchman, tell us of the night, for the morning seems to dawn.  
Traveler, darkness takes its flight; doubt and terror are withdrawn.  
Watchman, let your wandering cease; hasten to your quiet home!  
Traveler, lo, the Prince of Peace, lo, the Son of God is come! [repeat]

## **Lighting the Candle of Hope**

Susie Knable and Archie Ellis

How does a weary world hope?

By telling stories of hope, by lighting candles in the night, and planting seeds in the winter that will bloom in the spring. By praying for children as they grow, and picking up trash on the sidewalk. By insisting that small acts can make a difference.



There are a million ways to practice hope. So today we light the candle of hope as a reminder and a charge.  
**With God's help, may we bring hope into a weary world.**  
**O come, O come Emmanuel! Amen.**

**Response**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (vv.1)

UMH 211

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

## ***We Listen to Hear God's Voice***

**Scripture**

Psalm 80:1-7;17-19 and Luke 1:5-23

*This is the Word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God!*

**A Time for Young Christians**

*Sunday school for nursery through 5th grade is offered every week following children's time except on  
Sundays when we celebrate Holy Communion (typically the first Sunday of each month).*

**Anthem**

*Come, All Ye Unfaithful*  
Madie Coffey, soloist

Sovereign Grace Music

**Sermon**

Acknowledging Our Weariness

Rev. Sherrod

## ***We Respond to God's Great Love***

**Hymn**

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

UMH 196

**Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us,  
let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.**

**Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King, born to reign in us forever,  
now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.**

## 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 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. Amen.

## Offering our Gifts

We will not be receiving an offering during the service, however, we invite you to give your offering and God's tithes using the plates as you exit the sanctuary. You can also give online at [KnoxCentralUMC.org/getinvolved](http://KnoxCentralUMC.org/getinvolved).

## Offertory

*Carol of Christmas*

arr. Harold DeCou

## † Dedication of Gifts

(Veni-Emmanuel - tune of O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

## Celebration of Holy Communion

UMH 12

## Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, we are weary.

For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray:

**Forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard.**

**Remind us that we deserve Sabbath rest.**

For weary minds that feel overwhelmed and saturated with news, we pray:

**Forgive us for creating so many distractions.**

**Remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you.**

For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray:

**Forgive us for being impatient with ourselves and others.**

**Remind us that healing takes time, and that joy and grief can coexist.**

For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope,

**Forgive us. Remind us of Zechariah and Elizabeth.**

**Remind us that your good news knows no bounds. Amen.**

## Words of Assurance of Forgiveness

Family of faith, no matter how many times we wear ourselves thin,

no matter how many times we lose ourselves to distractions, no matter how many times we ask ourselves,

"How can this be?" God's love keeps showing up for us. So say this with me:

**We are loved. We are claimed. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

# ***We Are Scattered to Serve God In Our World***

## **† Closing Hymn**

*Weary World Rejoice* (tune of Silent Night)

Weary world, God's own vine tears our only bread and wine.  
Crying out to be restored desperate for a break from war  
Weary world rejoice. Come and raise your voice.

Weary world, broken and bruised name of God so misused.  
Can we see the light of Christ glowing in each person we spite  
Weary world rejoice. Come and raise your voice.

Weary world, out of hope disbelief is how we cope.  
We've left faith to rot and rust dreams are covered in layers of dust  
Weary world rejoice. Come and raise your voice.

Weary world, waiting still holding our breath until  
Christ returns in truth and grace will we recognize his face?  
Weary world rejoice. Come and raise your voice.

## **† Benediction**

### **Postlude**

*Toccata on Mendelssohn*

Joel Raney

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† Please stand in body or spirit

Liturgy by Rev. Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

*We serve Holy Communion by intinction. You will be offered a piece of bread dipped in the cup for you.  
You are welcome to light a candle in honor of/remembrance of a saint in your life  
as you spend time praying at the altar.*

*For those with gluten sensitivities, a gluten-free alternative is available at the center table.*

*All are welcome at Christ's table.*



## Looking Ahead ~ Our Calendar

Weekly: AA, Monday and Thursday at 10:00 am  
Builder's Class Bible Study via Zoom, Tuesday at 6:30 pm  
Downtown REO, Wednesday at 8:30 am  
Choir, Wednesday at 6:30 pm

December 3	Family Christmas Event, 5-7 pm, Play and Pray
December 6	Caswell Manor Lunch, 12 noon, 1505 E Fifth Ave
December 8	Sunshine Christmas Party, 9:30 – 2 pm, Fellowship Hall
December 12	Beta Party, 6-8 pm, Fellowship Hall
December 15	Volunteer Ministry Center lunch, 11 am (serving 1 hour earlier)
December 17	Christmas Cantata, 10:45 am, Sanctuary
December 18	4 <sup>th</sup> and Gill Meeting, 6-8 pm, Room 210
December 19	Friendship House Christmas party, 9:30-2 pm, Fellowship Hall

**Attention:** If you need sizes for any of your Beta friend gifts, reach out to Megan Brown ([mgbrown59@gmail.com](mailto:mgbrown59@gmail.com)) and she can get those to you. Reminder, gifts are due on 12/10, wrapped and with the name of the Beta Friend they belong to.

### How Does a Weary World Rejoice

Our theme for Advent draws from the line in O Holy Night “the weary world rejoices.” We are going to look at the many ways we can rejoice even in the midst of our weariness. Through community, presence, acknowledging our weariness, allowing ourselves to be amazed and to be open to the many possibilities God has put before us. As a part of this theme from Sanctified Art, we are offering an Advent devotional featuring commentary, poetry and art that will help guide us through Advent. There is a link to the online edition in the Central Hub, it will remain throughout Advent. We can provide a limited number of printed copies if you prefer that. Please let us know if you'd like a printed copy. You can e-mail [jimmy@knoxcentralumc.org](mailto:jimmy@knoxcentralumc.org) to request a printed copy.

We're serving up lunch to the residents of **Caswell Manor** (part of the Volunteer Ministry Center affordable housing network) this **Wednesday, December 6th**. We start serving at noon and end at 1 pm. Meet at the church at 11:30 to help load and transport food. Wear something festive and help bring some joy to the residents of Caswell Manor. If you have questions, call Melanie at 865-256-4280. If you are interested in serving text Melanie or e-mail [serving@knoxcentralumc.org](mailto:serving@knoxcentralumc.org)

**The Central Choir will present *Appalachian Winter*, a cantata by Joseph M. Martin on Sunday, December 17th at 10:45 am.** Our choral voices along with an orchestra (that even includes a banjo!) will fill the sanctuary that morning. You are encouraged to invite folks to join us on the musical journey during Advent.

**Come welcome Christmas with us at Central.** We will celebrate with two Christmas Eve services. (Remember that Christmas Eve is on a Sunday, and the morning service still reflect the season of Advent as we will finish up the season with then 4th Sunday of Advent). That evening, we will have two opportunities to celebrate with Candlelight and Holy Communion. We will offer a 5 pm service with special music provided by a vocal ensemble. We'll also have an 11 pm option with music beginning at 10:50 pm. Special music will include a string quartet. Central is a special place on Christmas Eve, so invite friends and family to join us as we share good news of Christ's birth!

## Weekly Prayer List

Sunday, December 3, 2023

**Jeanette Brewington** is home recovering from a broken leg.

**Billy Varnell** is recovering at home after treatment for a small bowel obstruction.

**Michael Dearen** (Patty Parham's nephew) is still hospitalized in Bartlett, Tennessee.

**Tasha Gant** (daughter-in-law of Bob and Kathy Gant) is home with IV antibiotics and home health care.

**Donna Shirley** (Larry Ward's sister) has been hospitalized since Thanksgiving in Jonesboro, Arkansas, with congestive heart failure.

**Tonya Wright** (Lily Wright's mother) is recovering from her Wednesday hip and leg surgery.

Please continue to remember **Pat Cowart** (Melanie Gangaware's mother), **Bill, Emalie, and Haley Dockery** (5215 E Sunset Rd, 37914), **Sancy Hail** (7545 Thunder Ct, Powell, 37849), **David Helms** (801 E Inskip Dr, 37912), **Blaine Honea** (son of Linda Stalsworth Honea, former member of Central), **Allen Knable** (Room 512A, 283 W. Broadway Blvd., Jefferson City, 37760), **Diane Lowe** (7125 Meadowbrook Cir, 37918), **Joan Moon** (7655 Apple Cross, Corryton, 37721), **Doris Jean Moore** (7404 Kentfield Dr, 37919), **Nancy Morgan** (3105 Atoka Ln, 37917), **Mike O'Tool** (Ron O'Tool's grandson), **Kelli Ragsdale** (wife of Stephanie Parrott's cousin), **Billy Varnell** (4121 Riverstone Ln, 37918), **Kathy Whaley** (friend of Penney Helms), and **Bill Winans** (1658 Wisteria View Way, 37914).



## Welcome Visitors!

If you are visiting with us today, we invite you to let us know you were here. In front of you in the pews you will find a visitor card. If you are willing, leave us your name and phone number or e-mail address so that we can connect with you and find out more about you and share more about who we are as well.

## Care and Prayer

If you have a prayer request, let us know so can be in prayer for you. Either use the visitor cards in front of you or e-mail Kathy Gant at [gants@att.net](mailto:gants@att.net)

## Sunday Morning Coffee

The coffee is on! Every Sunday morning at 9:30 am, you are invited to join us for coffee. Connect with Central folks for fellowship and conversation. Coffee is available from 9:30 until 10:45 am.

## The Central Hub

Keep up with what's going on each week by subscribing to our weekly e-newsletter. You can subscribe by going to [knoxcentralumc.org](http://knoxcentralumc.org) and fill out the form at the bottom of the page.

## Spiritual Discipline of Giving and Financial Update

Giving financially is a spiritual discipline and has the power to shape and transform us. When we give, it expresses priorities in our lives. All are encouraged to give out of the abundance that God has provided us. We aren't currently passing the offering plates, but we do ask you to consider giving to the ministries of Central Church in one of the following ways.

- Place your gift in the offering Plate on Sunday Morning. You'll find them as you exit the sanctuary.
- Mail a check to 201 Third Ave. or bring it by the office.
- Give online (text to give) and through the Vanco Mobile App.
- Set up an automatic withdrawal through your checking account. Please reach out to Laurie in the office to sign up.
- Scan the PayPal QR code, either with your cell phone camera or through the PayPal app.



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Sign up for our weekly e-letter, The Central Hub, on our website,  
[www.knoxcentralumc.org](http://www.knoxcentralumc.org)



## Pastoral and Administrative Staff

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Jeff Criswell, Custodian  
Ron O'Tool, Building Coordinator

Rev. Jimmy Sherrod, Pastor

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