

# 1st Sunday of Advent

November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 10:30am (Onsite & Online)



## GATHERING

**Welcome and a Time of Greeting**

Rev. Tyler Ung

**Candle Lighting**

Acosta Family

One: Today we light the first candle!

**Many: Why do we light this candle?**

One: We light this candle to remember that God is always with us. We hope together as we watch for God.

**Choir Anthem** "Light a Candle in the Night" UPUCC Choir

**\*Call to Worship**

Ephraim Acosta

*Congregation will repeat each line after it is read.*

**God, you are here.**

**You are with us.**

**Help us feel you near.**

**Help us know you better.**

**Amen.**

**\*Song**

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (adapted by Mark Belletini)

Congregation

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and with your captive children dwell.

Give comfort to all exiles here, and to the aching heart bid cheer.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come within as Love to dwell.

O come, you Splendor very bright, as joy that never yields to might.

O come, and turn all hearts to peace, that greed and war at last shall cease.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come within as Truth to dwell.

O come, you Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by your presence here.

And dawn in every broken soul as vision that can see the whole.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come within as Light to dwell.

O come, you Wisdom from on high, from depths that hide within a sigh,  
to temper knowledge with our care, to render every act a prayer.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come within as Hope to dwell.



"Zechariah and the Angel"  
by Hannah Garrity

A Sanctified Art LLC  
[sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

## HEARING AND RESPONDING

**Story** "Elizabeth and Zechariah"  
from *The Peace Table Storybook Bible* Emilia Tucker-Pleet,  
Bob Martin

**Responding** Connecting Around Craft and Conversation Congregation

**\*Song** #478, "I've Got Peace Like a River" Congregation

**COMMUNION** Rev. Tyler Ung

Words of Blessing:  
"The Bread of Life"  
"The Cup of Blessing"

**\*Benediction** Rev. Tyler Ung

**Postlude** David Wilson

# umstead park

UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

## Church Staff

Lindsay Cooper, she/her  
Nursery Director

Rev. Tyler Ung, they/them  
Senior Pastor

Gwen Vass, she/her  
Financial Administrator

Cody Walter Welch, he/him/they/them  
Teaching Intern

David Wilson, he/him  
Director of Music

Rev. Paula Womack, she/her  
Associate Pastor

## A special "Thank You" to this week's volunteers!

Don Alderman, AV Team  
Bill Yoder (he/him), AV Team  
Dan Harrell, Asst. Treasurer  
Tim Champion, Auditor  
Nina Nalle Robinson (she/her), Greeter  
Jonathan McLean (he/him), Usher  
Laura Carter-Scheid (she/her), Usher  
Ephraim Acosta, Lay Leader  
Sara Acosta (she/her), Lay Leader  
Elliot Acosta, Lay Leader  
Emilia Tucker-Pleet, Lay Leader  
Bob Martin (he/him), Lay Leader  
Kailina Grace (she/her), Greeter



We at  
Umstead Park  
United Church of Christ  
welcome and affirm all  
as we journey to seek  
the divine, to embody loving  
community, and to strive for  
justice as a progressive  
community of  
faith.

## Giving



Scan the QR code to make a one-time  
or recurring donation!

## Visiting?



You are invited to fill out the online visitor  
form so that we can get to know you!

## Realm



Access your  
Realm account

# Supplemental Texts and Hymns

## Choir Anthem

“Light a Candle in the Night” Text and Music by Lloyd Larson

Light a candle in the night. Prepare the way for the holy Light:  
God with us, Emmanuel, eternal hope with us to dwell.

Child of hope, come in Your glory, heaven’s gift, the wondrous story!  
Messiah King shall come to earth! Prepare your heart for His holy birth.

O come to my heart, Lord Jesus; there is room in my heart for you.

## Artist Statement

“Zechariah and the Angel”

Hannah Garrity

Within the political landscape of Herod’s time, hope was not on the horizon—that’s the point. And Elizabeth had been barren for many years. This miracle visited her—in her body, in her womb—because it was so unexpected.

In this piece, I imagine the angel in a female form arriving close to Zechariah in the darkened Temple, surprising him by her presence. His reaction is a fearful one in this image. He leans away, squints his eyes, and covers his head. He protects himself from her, from her presence, from her power, from her words, from her gaze. He hides. The incense swirls around them. In contrast to his fear, her message is one of hope: long-yearned-for-joy and family security. Here the angel’s message is represented by the doves and the stars. Her message flows into his space with the same power that invoked his fear. I imagine Zechariah lets his guard down then, and listens to her in shock. I imagine he takes in her words, lets his arm down, meets her gaze, and holds onto joy, despite his ongoing apprehension.

In this image, I placed my paper lace over a cyanotype print, which is created using photosensitive paper, objects, and sunlight. The cyanotype didn’t work the first time; I had to paint the light-sensitive solution again and then expose the print for longer in brighter daylight. I really needed plexiglass to hold my branches and leaves tightly to the paper, but I didn’t have it. Nonetheless, the final print reflected the flow of energy in this text.

The movement in the cyanotype is horizontal—perfect for the lateral conversation between the angel and Zechariah. Pine needles created shapes that appear to reiterate the angel’s words as they are leaving her mouth toward Zechariah’s ear. These words, this unexpected and miraculous hope, are the focal point in the text and the art. In the cyanotype, there are deep blues with silhouettes of leaves and stems, but nothing so powerful as these words, these pine needles creating a high-contrast focal point. God is breaking in.



# UPUCC Updates

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**Pledge Goal**

\$265,000

**Current Pledges**

\$206,000

**78% of Goal**

Our 2026 Pledge Campaign is underway as we enter this new season of our church's life. Your pledge will help us live into our vision of "Connecting with Courage and Care." The accompanying tree image will fill with color as we progress toward our goal! Thank you for your support in the year ahead!

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To accomplish the objectives of the Ministry Plan, please consider increasing your pledge by 13% over last year. The tree trunk above will fill with color as we approach our goal, and the leaves will turn green as more people increase their pledge amount. One of the areas of focus in our Ministry Plan is **Mutual Support and Internal Cohesion**. Our goal in this area is to build a culture of helping one another, fostering genuine connections, and ensuring no one feels alone. This would look like creating a system of mutual aid among members, strengthening the intergenerational aspects of our community, and providing opportunities for shared experiences. We'll need a system and infrastructure to support this mutual aid network.

To live into the vision of our Ministry Plan, please consider increasing your pledge by 13% over last year. To date, we have received pledges from about 68% of this year's expected giving units and have raised about 78% of our overall goal; 100% of our overall goal would fully fund our ministry plan for 2026. We want to celebrate that we have received pledge increases from about 2/3 of pledges received to date. Thank you to all who have committed to bringing our vision into reality. And we also recognize that this is a difficult and thin moment for many—individual circumstances change from year to year impacting our ability to give. We are also grateful for you who continue to give, especially in the midst of difficult circumstances. At this point in our campaign, pledge decreases have slightly outpaced pledge increases. As a community committed to helping each other, we are asking those who are capable of increasing their pledges to consider doing so, and for those who have yet to pledge, please consider pledging in the next several days. The tree trunk above will fill with color as we approach our goal, and the leaves will turn green as the total of year over year pledge amounts make it possible for us to accomplish our goals for 2026.

Direct questions or requests for assistance to **Gwen Vass** at [finance@upucc.org](mailto:finance@upucc.org) or **Vickie Teal** at [treasurer@upucc.org](mailto:treasurer@upucc.org). Thank you for supporting the exciting year ahead for UPUCC!

**Visit [upucc.org/giving](https://upucc.org/giving) to make your pledge!**

## **We're Hiring!**

Explore two part-time opportunities—Youth Director and Teaching Intern—in our vibrant, progressive faith community. We are thrilled to have Cody Walter Welch on staff as one teaching intern, and are looking to add to our team!

## **Ongoing Needs - Food Donations**

Food donations are needed—and so are volunteers to deliver them! Bring meal-focused items on Sundays and let Jane Weidig know at [womweid@gmail.com](mailto:womweid@gmail.com) if you can help.

## **Mom-a-Thon Fundraiser**

Kathy Austin invites you to join her in supporting Impact Global Health Alliance's life-saving work for mothers and babies around the world.

## **Help Host Healing Transitions on 1st Sundays**

We host our friends from Healing Transitions on the first Sunday of every month. If you would like to get to know our neighbors through food, drink, and fellowship, check the [upucc.org/news](http://upucc.org/news) page to sign up!

## **Advent**

### **Advent Devotionals | Season of Advent**

Would you like to receive emailed devotionals during the season of advent? If so, you may find details for how to sign up on the "News" page of the website.

### **Ornament Making! | December 7 at Noon**

Come join the fun and fellowship as we make warm holiday memories – and a few simple ornaments. No special skills needed! Great both for families and solo acts!

### **Longest Night Service | December 21 at 5:30pm**

When the holidays feel heavy, join us for our Longest Night service—a gentle space for the grieving, the lonely, and the blue—Sunday, December 21 at 5:30pm.

### **Christmas Eve Service | December 24 at 6:00pm**

We will hold our Christmas Eve service on Wednesday, December 24th at 6:00pm.

Learn more at [upucc.org/news](http://upucc.org/news)!