

**UPCOMING WORSHIP**

December 14 @ 10:00 a.m.  
*Third Sunday of Advent*  
 Rev. Julie Kline  
 "Even in Our Fear, We Are Called Forward"  
 Luke 1:26-39  
 Jeremiah 1:4-10

**WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE OUR GUEST TODAY!** If you are worshipping with us for the first time, please stop by the Welcome Center.

**Child care** with trained and fully vaccinated staff is provided on the second floor for infants to 3-year-olds.

**Worship activities for children** can be found on a cart outside the side sanctuary doors.

**LARGE PRINT** Bibles and hymnals are available at the Park Street entrance.

**Hearing assistance devices** are available at the Welcome Center.

**Today's service is being livestreamed.** You can find previous recordings of worship services on our website ([www.umc-kzo.org](http://www.umc-kzo.org)) under the Livestream tab, or find us on our YouTube page.

**Church Staff**

Rev. Julie Kline.....Lead Pastor  
 Rev. Matt Weiler.....Community Formation  
 Jacqueline Stilger ....Organist/Dir. of Music  
 Cari Miller.....Associate Dir. of Music  
 Julia Librizzi.....Children & Families  
 Drew Bolton .....Bldg. Superintendent  
 Linda Hamill.....Office Manager  
 Christiane Stakely .....Office Assistant  
 Erika Jones.....Communications  
 Cody Collmenter.....Bookkeeper  
 Bryan Heany.....AV Team Leader  
 Eamon Bronson.....Building Host  
 Alison Ericson .....Building Host  
 Samantha Lee.....Building Host  
 Jim Tiffany.....Custodian  
 Ruth Butters .....Young Adult Resident

**Kalamazoo First United Methodist Church's Call To Action**

*In response to racism and bias: as part of Kalamazoo First United Methodist Church's vow to resist oppression in all its forms, we commit ourselves to the decisive action that is needed to resist and dismantle racism at every level. This action must go beyond our historically empty rhetoric about repentance and broken promises to be a church that is a credible and active witness for peace, equity, and justice in the face of harm visited upon communities of color. We beckon our clergy and lay leadership to unapologetically shine the light of truth on our church community so that we recognize our complicity in systemic racism, recognize and condemn white supremacy as sin, and seek a deep knowing of what God calls us to do. We make these vows so that every person—especially Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)—may live in safety, health, and freedom.*

**Worship Leaders:** Rev. Julie Kline, Rev. Matt Weiler, Julia Librizzi, Daniel Whitcomb

**Director of Music/Organist:** Jacqueline Stilger

**Associate Director of Music:** Cari Miller

**Musicians:** Chancel Singers

**Audio-Visual Team:** Bryan Heany, Drew Eaton, Lucas McGinnis, Kennedy Hayes

**►► We are always looking for A/V volunteers. ►►**

Training is provided. All ages welcome. We'll work around your availability. Inquire with Bryan Heany for more information: [bheany@umc-kzo.org](mailto:bheany@umc-kzo.org).

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Walk the Labyrinth** - The labyrinth will be set up in Wesley Hall each Sunday of Advent: November 30, December 7, December 14, and December 21. Join Pastor Julie for a shared time of devotion and walking the labyrinth following worship. The labyrinth will be available Sunday evenings throughout Advent, except for December 7th from 5:30-7:30 pm for self-guided prayer walks. Although several people can walk simultaneously, please take care to allow space for each other as we journey together.

**Sunday School for children** meets after worship today at 11:00 a.m. in room 206.

**Academy Class** - Part two of "Looking Deeply: A Meditative Journey with Our Stained Glass Windows" taught by Mark Stucky. We will meet in the Sanctuary today after worship.

**Youth Group** will join **Children and Family Ministries** for **Gingerbread House Making** today in Wesley Hall from 2:00-4:00pm.

**Manna**, our young adult ministry, gathers every Tuesday in the youth lounge from 6:30-8:00pm. Contact Ruth Butters at [RuthTButters@gmail.com](mailto:RuthTButters@gmail.com).

**Grief Group:** Sundays after worship: today and Dec. 14 we will meet in the chapel. The group will be facilitated by Ann Kneas and Deb Search Willoughby. Retired pastor Doug Vernon will also join us and bring some thoughts about caregiving and loss.

**Kalamazoo Community Chorale Concert:** Today at 3pm! Join us for "There Is Still Our Joy" as we sing holiday favorites, some new tunes and have an audience sing. Kick off your holiday season with us!

**"Seeing the Possibility in Hope" Workshop**

A hands-on mosaic project led by Mary Whittaker Duncan and Vickee Seals: Wed., Dec. 10 from 5:30-7 pm in Wesley Hall. Ages 10+ (children with adult). Sign-up required. The glass pieces we create will be assembled in January into a new whole.

**Candlelight Service:** Join us for a special Candlelight Service on Wednesday, Dec. 10th, at 7 pm in the Sanctuary. All are warmly invited to this sacred gathering for a time of worship and reflection as we celebrate the season of Advent. Experience the beauty of the sanctuary, adorned with twinkling lights and candles that create an atmosphere of peace. Together, we will enjoy quiet singing, prayer, communion, and Scripture, forming a sanctuary amid the darkness and allowing the warmth of the Redeemer's coming to fill our hearts. If you are attending the Mosaic Workshop earlier in the evening, this service is a wonderful way to wrap up your day. Come and find the quiet center. All are welcome.

**Advent Concerts:** Our second advent concert will take place in the Sanctuary on Thurs, Dec. 11 at 12 noon. Soprano Emily Barron will perform "Choral Scholar Christmas."

**The "Our Story is Never Over" Project:** inspired by *The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves* by Dr. Shawn Ginwright. Look for the easel outside the sanctuary that invites your response to pivot-related questions. Keep an eye on the bulletin board for details, dates, and new opportunities!

**Abounding Hope - Just 19 to Go!**

We're thrilled to share that we're only 19 pledges away from the number of pledges we received last year. Each pledge is like a spark that lights up the bigger picture of our ministry for the year ahead. If you haven't pledged yet, now's the perfect moment to make it happen—drop it in the offering plate, mail it to the church, or pledge online at [umc-kzo.org](http://umc-kzo.org). Let's finish strong and celebrate what we can accomplish together. Thank you for helping hope abound!

**December 7, 2025**



# First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo

269.381.6340  
[umc-kzo.org](http://umc-kzo.org)

## SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Matthew 11:1-11  
 Isaiah 43:19-21

# WHEN WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF HOPE, GOD IS AT WORK

## Welcome to First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo

We would like to connect with you. Please fill out the **attendance pad** and introduce yourself as you pass it to your neighbor. You are invited in these beginning moments to use the **green prayer cards** found in the pews. The cards will be collected by an usher during the opening hymn to be shared with clergy.

\*Please rise in body or in spirit.

### PRELUDE *Once He Came in Blessing* (Arr. by Michael Burkhardt)

### PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION & LIGHTING THE PEACE CANDLE

Daniel Whitcomb

### \*HYMN OF ADVENT #211 *O Come O Come Emmanuel*

(UMH - red hymnal)

### LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLES

Rev. Matt Weiler

### WELCOME

Rev. Julie Kline

### INTERLUDE OF HOPE

### CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

### On-the-move God,

We have every reason to hold onto hope. We have every reason to believe that spring will come, that flowers will bloom that the sun will rise. And yet, too often hope slips through our fingers. With anxious hearts we cry out to you, "Will change ever come?" Will things ever get better? Will I ever make a difference?" Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places where the sun is shining. Show us the places where you are on the move. With open hearts we pray, Amen.

## WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Family faith, in our honesty,  
**we are heard.**

In our worries,  
**we are held.**

In our failings,  
**we are forgiven.**

In our fear,  
**we are not alone.**

Friends, this is the good news of the gospel!  
**When we're running out of hope, God is still at work.**  
Thanks be to God!

**Amen.**

## \*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*As we have experienced God's forgiveness and reconciliation let us now rise and share signs of peace and reconciliation with one another.*

## A TIME FOR THE CHILD WITHIN US ALL

Julia Librizzi

## LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

Jai Tiarks & Christine Charles

*The Advent wreath holds five candles: four for the Sundays leading to Christmas and a center candle for Christmas. One new candle is lit each week, symbolizing the growing light of Christ approaching. The four outer candles traditionally signify hope, peace, joy, and love, marking our journey of anticipation and preparation. The center candle, called the Christ Candle, represents the light of Christ coming into the world and is lit during our Christmas Eve worship.*

In a world of fear, where do you see glimmers of peace?  
We see glimmers of peace in the quiet of early morning, when people shake hands,  
when loved ones say they're sorry, and when the church sings together.  
You are right. Even in a fearful world, peace is all around us.  
Today we light the candle of peace as a reminder of this good news.  
May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world,  
peace is present. We only have to look for it.

**Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## HYMN #2090 *Light the Advent Candle (Advent Song) - refrain only*

(FWS - black hymnal)

## PRAYER FROM EXPERIENTIAL BULLETIN

### OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 43:19-21

Daniel Whitcomb

### \*GOSPEL READING

Matthew 11:1-11 NRSV

This is what the Spirit is saying to the church.

**Thanks be to God.**

### MESSAGE

"When We're Running out of Hope"

Rev. Matt Weiler

## HYMN #207 *Prepare the Way of the Lord*

(UMH - red hymnal)

## INVITATION TO THE TABLE

*All are welcome to the meal Jesus hosts. There is no one here who is ineligible or unwelcome; no one too old or too young; no one who has too many doubts or too few beliefs. You, who are part of God's creation, are welcome to receive Holy Communion this morning. Come forward by the center aisle, take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup of juice and eat it. Servers will offer the bread by saying, "the bread of life," and "the cup of love." You may respond with "Amen." Gluten-free bread is available at each station.*

## GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

### SANCTUS - pg. 17

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION - pg. 18

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

### COMMUNION ANTHEM: *Do Not Be Afraid* (by Philip Stopford)

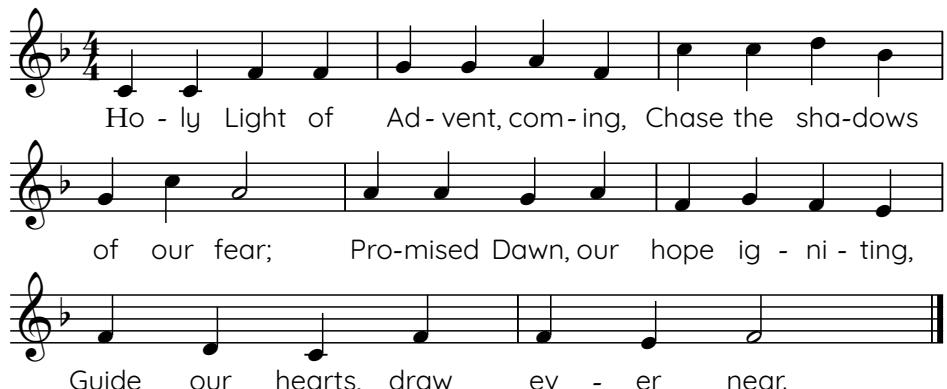
Chancel Singers

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

## CALL TO OFFERING

### OFFERTORY *Go and Tell John* (Lloyd Pfautsch)

### \*DOXOLOGY *Holy Light of Advent* (Tune: Stuttgart, 1715)



## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Loving God, may the gifts we bring today  
be multiplied to bear witness to our hope  
in your promises for a world renewed by your love and justice  
that comes with the birth of Jesus Christ.  
In gratitude for all you have given us we bring these gifts to you.  
Amen.**

## OUR SHARED LIFE

### \*HYMN #209 *Blessed Be the God of Israel*

(UMH - red hymnal)

## \*BENEDICTION

### POSTLUDE *Savior of the Nations, Come* (Arr. by Paul Manz)

## MISSION

We are called to:  
• Experience God's love  
• Celebrate God's love  
• Share God's love

## VISION

We are a Christ-centered community where our stories are woven with God's story.

## CORE VALUES

 Love: God is Love and all creation is made in love, by love, and for love.

 Community: Sacred relationship with God and one another

 Inclusion: All identities belong and are love in Christ.

 Justice: Restoration of equity and wholeness.

## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

### Sunday, December 7

8:30am - 12:30pm Labyrinth - Wesley Hall  
10:00 am Worship Service - Sanctuary  
11:00 am Sunday School for all ages  
11:00 am Grief Group - Chapel  
2:00 pm Gingerbread Houses - Wesley Hall  
3:00 pm Kzoo Community Chorale Concert

### Monday, December 8

11:40 am Similarities (NA) - Wesley Hall  
1:00 pm Building & Grounds meeting  
2:00 pm Leadership Team - Zoom  
6:00 pm SPRC - Parlor/Zoom

### Tuesday, December 9

9:30 am Worship Planning - Zoom  
11:40 am Similarities (NA) - Wesley Hall  
4:15 pm First Beats - Choir Room  
4:30 to 6:30 pm - Food pantry open  
6:30 pm Manna - Youth Center

### Wednesday, December 10

8:00 am Yoga - Zoom  
9:00 am Dawn Patrol - Parlor  
11:40 am Similarities (NA) - Wesley Hall  
12:00 pm Cuppa Inspiration - Facebook Live  
12:30 to 2:30 pm - Food pantry open  
2:00 pm CARES Committee  
5:30 pm Lay Leader Craft - Wesley Hall  
7:00 pm Candlelight Worship - Sanctuary

### Thursday, December 11

9:30 am First Stitchers - Fellowship Room  
11:40 am Similarities - Wesley Hall  
12pm Advent concert - Sanctuary  
5:45 pm Handbell Choir - Wesley Hall  
7:15 pm Chancel Singers - Choir Room

### Saturday, December 13

3:00 and 7:00 pm Kalamazoo Ringers Concerts

# Pray & Color

Dear God, open our eyes, ears, and hearts to take in the good news. When we feel like giving up, remind us of your promises. Amen.



Matthew 11:1-11  
Jesus sends disciples to bring hope to John while he's in prison.  
Main Idea:  
Signs of hope are all around.



Color in the story of John the Baptist. | Illustration by Rev. Anna Strickland

## Story

John was in prison for telling people about Jesus. He was worried that he had made a mistake, so he asked Jesus for reassurance. Jesus sent people to tell John about all the miracles that were happening.

## Color

Color the word "PEACE" below. Around the word, draw pictures of things that make you feel calm when you are worried or afraid.

# PEACE



## Find

Find the words from scripture when you hear them spoken in worship. Words can be vertical, horizontal, or diagonal, and they can overlap each other.

I	B	P	B	Q	P	D	X	Y	M	N	A	H	T	O
G	A	H	C	K	S	R	L	U	Q	U	I	U	H	R
Q	P	L	U	P	V	E	A	S	R	U	P	R	C	A
D	T	B	O	R	N	N	L	I	L	W	G	H	V	H
E	I	S	V	A	R	T	E	P	S	W	L	O	G	O
R	Z	S	Z	B	R	U	P	V	I	E	I	V	I	Q
E	E	E	O	O	M	O	V	R	A	C	S	N	J	J
W	E	N	H	U	W	L	R	K	O	E	S	N	D	H
S	R	R	W	T	A	N	A	C	N	P	H	I	A	U
N	Y	E	F	Z	H	U	G	G	M	P	H	I	D	S
A	K	D	Q	O	O	T	I	T	W	S	S	E	K	S
R	I	L	J	J	K	E	S	C	O	S	K	I	T	U
F	E	I	R	T	R	S	X	E	E	Q	N	L	C	R
Q	H	W	K	U	W	P	C	M	E	U	H	Y	X	P
G	R	E	A	T	E	R	M	E	O	D	Z	N	D	X

ANSWERED	GO	OUT	SKIN
ABOUT	GREATER	PRAISES	THAN
BAPTIZE	HEAVEN	PROPHET	WHO
BORN	JOHN	REIGN	WILDERNESS
DISCIPLES	MESSIAH	SEE	WIND

## Wonder

What would you tell John to make him feel better?

This word search was generated using [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com)