

# *Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ*

## *Worship Celebration*

*December 15, 2024, 10:00 a.m.*



### *Welcome Everyone!*

**If you are visiting with us, and you are looking for a spiritual community...**

**where you will be loved, accepted, supported and affirmed regardless of your age, class, ability, race, ethnicity, gender identification or sexual orientation...where you will be encouraged and challenged to reflect on your beliefs, acknowledge your doubts, ask your questions, and grow in your faith...where God's desire for compassion, healing, reconciliation, justice and joy is preached...where you are given the opportunity to put your faith action through effective outreach ministries...then we hope to get to know you as a new friend.**

**No matter who you are, or where you are in your life journey...**

**You are welcome here!**

Seeking to love all people ... growing in faith ...  
working toward God's vision of justice, healing and joy.

*Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ*  
*An Open and Affirming/Creation Justice Congregation*  
*Worship Celebration*  
*Third Sunday of Advent - "Second Chances"*  
*December 15, 2024, 10:00 a.m.*

## **Welcome**

## **Choral Introit**

*Wait For the Lord*  
The SCUCC Choir

Taize

## **Lighting the Third Advent Candle - JOY** **LaMoyne and Jerry Ebner**

**Leader:** Let us share these words from Psalm 96:

**“Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice.  
Let the sea roar, and all that fills it.  
Let the field exult, and everything in it.  
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before God,  
for the Lord is coming.”**

## **Lighting of the Candle of JOY**

**Leader:** With the lighting of the Candle of Joy, we proclaim the Joy God offers us – a Joy so vibrant that it lights a path from the heavens to earth and back. It is the Joy which Jesus, the One who is coming, shows us the way to.

God's light brings Joy, and where there is Joy there is light.

**Hymn**

*Angels from the Realms of Glory #136 (on p. 4)*

**Opening Prayer (together)**

Holy One, in this Advent time, You call us to open our hearts, minds and spirits to receive the light which Jesus brings into our lives and Your world. You call us to let Hope in. You call us to let Peace in. You call us to let Joy in.

At times though, in the struggles of life, it can be harder to receive that light than to shut it out. At times, it can be harder to embrace that Hope than to fall into despair. At times, it can be harder to believe in and work for Peace than to give up on it. At times, it can be harder to let Joy in than to be cynical or complacent.

Help us, God, in these Advent days and beyond, to receive Jesus and all He offers us fully, reverently and gratefully. Help us to take hold of and trust in the promise of knowing Hope, Peace and Joy in and through Him - the promise of new and better life for us and all Your people.

Amen.

**Music Meditation**

*Advent*

Smith

The SCUCC Choir

**A Time of Prayer with The Lord's Prayer**

(Please use the wording most meaningful to you.)

**Invitation to Giving****Offertory Music**

*Christmas Suite*

Stickles

**\*Presentation of Offering and Congregational Response**

*(In the Bleak Midwinter, v.4)*

*What can I give Him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb  
If I were a wise one, I would do my part  
What can I give Him? Give him my heart*

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

O God, with the light of the Candle of Joy to lead the way, may these gifts help bring some measure of Your Joy to those served by them. May they find Joy in knowing they are not alone in whatever struggles they face. May they know that You – and we – are with them.

Amen.

**Ministry of the Word**

**John 8:2-11 (on p. 5)**

**(New Revised Standard Version Translation)**

1. An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er  
 2. Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your  
 3. Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions  
 4. Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in

all the earth; as you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,  
 flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing;  
 beam a - far; seek the great de - sire of na - tions;  
 hope and fear, sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,

Refrain

now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
 yon - der shines the in - fant light: Come and wor - ship,  
 you have seen Christ's na - tal star:  
 here a - mong us shall ap - pear:

come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

WORDS: James Montgomery, 1816, alt.  
 MUSIC: Henry T. Smart, 1867

RBGENT SQUARE  
 87.87.87

The son of Moravian missionary parents, James Montgomery was editor of *The Sheffield Iris* in Sheffield, England, a poet and a champion of human rights.

## MINISTRY OF THE WORD

### John 8:2-11

Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them.

The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, ‘Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?’ They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him.

Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, ‘Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.’ And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground.

When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ She said, ‘No one, sir.’ And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.’

**Message**

**Dr. Mark Boyea**

**Hymn**

*Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come #134 (on p. 7)*

**Blessing**

**Postlude**

*Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come (improvisation)*

**\*All who wish are welcome to stand.**

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re -  
 2. Joy to the world! the Sav - ior reigns: let earth her  
 3. Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 songs em - ploy; let fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous - ness,

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heaven and na - ture sing and  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -  
 and won - ders of his love, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing.  
 peat the sound - ing joy,  
 won - ders of his love,

WORDS: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.  
 MUSIC: Attr. Georg Frederick Handel, 1741; arr. Lowell Mason, 1848

ANTIOCH  
 CM w. repeat

This is Congregationalist Watts' paraphrase of Psalm 98.  
 His free paraphrasing helped wean churchgoers from  
 singing only literal renditions of the Psalms.



## FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

*“I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I woke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.”*

Rabindrath Tagore, Indian poet

*“Joy is the most powerful revolutionary tool.”*

Alice Walker, American novelist and poet

*“Joy is the justice we give ourselves.”*

J. Drew Lanham, American author, poet and wildlife biologist



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## To Our Guests This Morning

If you are with us today for the first, or one of the first times, please let us know. Also, please take a moment to introduce yourself, or reintroduce yourself, to Rev. Mark. Our hope is to provide you with the most graceful welcome possible.

## TODAY Sunday, December 15 – Third Sunday of ADVENT

We continue the sacred season of Advent today, Sunday, December 15. During these weeks in which we prepare to once again celebrate the birth of Jesus, the embodiment of God and God's ways for us in the Christian spiritual community, our theme for this year is "*Second Chances*".

During each of the four Sundays in Advent, the morning's Message will explore how characters in the Gospels received "*second chances*" through Jesus' coming into the world - opportunities to find or reclaim their voice, be delivered from unfair or unjust burdens, or become spiritually and emotionally stronger.

## Holiday Baroque Concert and Reception TODAY

Join us today at **2:00PM** in the Sanctuary for the Holiday Baroque Concert described in the flyer that has been near the end of the bulletin the last few Sundays.

Following the concert at **3:00 PM**, we warmly invite you to a Holiday-Themed Reception and Tea in Fellowship Hall. Celebrate the season with beautiful music, festive treats, and warm fellowship. We look forward to seeing you there!



## Christmas Eve at SCUCC!

After a two-year absence, we are blessed to be able to celebrate Christmas Eve this year in the SCUCC Sanctuary!

We will join together at **5:30 PM on December 24** for a time of readings from Luke's Christmas story, inspiring music, the Sharing of Light, and a "*Dramatic Reflection*" from Mark.



## Third Annual MESSIAH SING!

On **Sunday, December 29** we will once again have the opportunity to both hear and sing the Christmas portions of Handel's Messiah, accompanied by a professional orchestra.

There will be guest singers performing the solos, and you will have the opportunity to sing along with them or just listen to all of your favorite choruses. **The event begins at 3 PM, lasts about one hour, and will be followed by a reception in Fellowship Hall.**

Be sure to invite all your music-loving friends, neighbors, and relatives to this special event.

## Mission Moment – The Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund supports the *Veterans of the Cross* and the *Emergency Fund of The United Church of Christ*. This fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, monthly supplementation of small annuities and health insurance premiums, as well as “*Thank You*” gift checks each December to lower income retirees. In 2023, \$1.9 million in pension and health benefits, emergency grants, and thank you checks were provided to retired church servants and their families.

Your gift to the Christmas Fund brings relief and hope to clergy and church employees who have dedicated their lives to serving our churches. It reminds them that they are not forgotten, that they are loved, and that their ministries are appreciated and remembered. Many served small congregations with low compensation, often being supplemented by “in-kind” gifts. Therefore, their pensions are also low.

This year’s theme is *Be the Light* from Luke 2:9, “*The Glory of God shone around them.*”

You can donate online at [www.christmasfund.org](http://www.christmasfund.org) or through the church. The Mission and Benevolence Committee encourages you to give generously to the Christmas Fund. **Donation envelopes are available in Fellowship Hall, and will be collected with the Offering next Sunday, December 22.**



## **Church Office Hours**

**The Church Office is regularly open from 9am-3pm on Monday through Friday.**

Mark is normally on campus Tuesday-Thursday pending pastoral visits or off-site meetings. Please feel free to just “drop by” or make an appointment directly with him by email: [mark@sanibelucc.org](mailto:mark@sanibelucc.org) or text/phone at 908-477-5426.

Mackenzie Albert, our Director of Music, is normally on campus each Wednesday and some Fridays. Please make an appointment by phone or text at 203-517-5427.

## **SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION**

**This year’s “Advent Unit” concludes this Tuesday evening:**

***“LETTERS FROM THE EDGE OF THE WORLD”***

**Tuesdays: December 17  
7:00-8:15pm on Zoom**

This three-week Advent unit is based on Ruth Boling’s book, *Season’s Greetings*.

During our time together, we are exploring letters Boling imagines having been written by characters associated with the Christmas stories in the Gospels. Each week, we will review and discuss the content, context and spiritual concerns expressed in a couple of those letters, with an eye toward gaining new insights on the meaning of Christmas for us in the Christian community and for the world.

## **BIBLE STUDY**

**Bible Study will meet this Thursday, December 19, at 10:30am on Zoom.**

Each week, we explore the passages which will be part of that coming Sunday's Worship. These sessions are discussion based, with Mark guiding a structured conversation based on participants' questions, concerns and considerations of the text.

The passage(s) to be looked at each week, as well as the necessary information for joining in, will be sent by email the day before.

## **From the Mission & Benevolence Committee**

After a two-year pause following Hurricane Ian, the Sanibel UCC in conjunction with Bat Yam Temple is pleased to announce the return of the monthly Food and Paper Products Drive.

When: Every Third Wednesday, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Where: Church Parking Driveway

Each organization will supply 2–3 members to accept drive-in donations of:

1. Non-perishable food items
2. Bath and kitchen paper products

Collected donations will benefit local neighbors in need through F.I.S.H. and the Gladiolus Food Pantry. How to Volunteer:

If you are interested in assisting with this effort, please contact:

Ed Hannon, Mission and Benevolence Committee Member:  
(239) 240-7524



## Flowers for Christmas Eve Celebration

If you would like to donate flowers for our Christmas Eve Celebration, please fill out a donation form, which can be found in the Narthex, or contact the Church Office by phone or email, with your request.

Floral dedications will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin.



## “Adopt a Sunday” Fellowship Hour

Please consider volunteering your time to serve during our Fellowship Time after Worship. It’s a wonderful way to contribute to our community, connect with others, and give back to our spiritual home. If interested, please contact Mary Cavendish at 304-673-4495.

Here’s how you can help:

**Sign Up to Serve** – Select a Sunday and mark it on your calendar! You’ll find a sign-up sheet on the table at the back of Fellowship Hall. Serving is easy, and help will be available if needed.

1. **Bring a Treat** – If you love to bake or have a favorite snack to share, consider bringing it along to make our Fellowship Time even more special. Beverages are also welcome.
2. **Contribute to Fellowship Time** – If serving isn't for you, a donation is a meaningful way to support this cherished time together.

### **Shell Point Women's Group January Luncheon**

The Sanibel Congregational UCC Shell Point Women's Group will have its next monthly luncheon meeting **on Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am. The location is yet to be finalized.** Please make reservations with Emily Kletzien at [emily.kletzien@gmail.com](mailto:emily.kletzien@gmail.com).

### **Shell Point Men's Group January Luncheon**

The Sanibel Congregational UCC Shell Point Men's Group will have its next monthly luncheon meeting **on Tuesday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at noon at the Palm Grill in the Woodlands Common.** Please make reservations with Candy Atchison at [JimAtch@aol.com](mailto:JimAtch@aol.com) or 561-714-4655.

### **Dinners for 6, 7 or 8**

One of our most loved offerings is the social gatherings known as "Dinner for 6, 7 or 8". If you would like to participate, please send your names, email addresses and phone numbers Shirley Akins at [akinsteach@gmail.com](mailto:akinsteach@gmail.com).





## Ushers Needed



We have ushers lined up through January, but if you would like to be added to the contact list, please reach out to Inky Meng at [inkymeng@hotmail.com](mailto:inkymeng@hotmail.com).



## INTERESTED IN JOINING SCUCC???

If you are considering becoming a member of SCUCC, or would simply like to find out more about us, please let Rev. Mark know. After you and he discuss the expectations and, as the old commercial says, “the benefits of membership,” you and he can schedule a Sunday that works best for you to become an official part of the SCUCC community.



## Like A Ride To Worship?

If you would like a ride to Sunday Worship from Shell Point or Cypress Cove, please contact the Church Office at [office@sanibelucc.org](mailto:office@sanibelucc.org) **by noon on Thursday.**

★  
★  
★  
ASTRALIS  
CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

PRESENTS

# HOLIDAY BAROQUE



Angela Massey  
FLUTE



Yu-Ming Ma  
VIOLIN



Laura Usiskin  
CELLO



Alexandra Dunbar  
HARPSICHORD

DECEMBER 15, 2024

SANIBEL CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
2050 PERIWINKLE WAY  
SANIBEL, FL 33957  
239.472.0497

2<sup>PM</sup>

The award-winning musicians of the Astralis Chamber Ensemble; Angela Massey (flute), Yu-Ming Ma (violin), Laura Usiskin (cello), and Alexandra Dunbar (harpsichord); present "Holiday Baroque." The concert will include selections for Advent as well as Vivaldi's famous "La Notte" Concerto and trios to fit the spirit of the season by JS Bach and CPE Bach. Join us for an enchanting afternoon of music and celebrate the season with the Astralis Chamber Ensemble.

## **Grethe is back!!**

She will be teaching her Gentle Yoga Class in Fellowship Hall on Thursdays, starting at 10:45am. Please arrive a few minutes early to check-in.



## **The Santiva Islanders are Back on Campus!**

Please join Mahnaz Bassir at SCUCC for cardio & strength. SCUCC is a temporary location for this class while St. Michael's repairs Hurricane Milton damage. Classes are held Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10am-11am in Fellowship Hall.

Mahnaz has long been a favorite exercise instructor on Sanibel. Come find out why. You'll meet friends and have fun, all while getting and staying fit.

The class starts off with light to moderate aerobics, followed by strength and balance exercises, and concluding with stretching. Please bring plenty of water and a towel. Participants may also want to bring light weights to use during the strength portion. Exercises are done standing so there is no need for a mat.

Come try a class out for free. After that, the cost for Santiva Islander Members is \$5 per class/\$60 per calendar month. The cost for non-members is \$10 per class/\$120 per calendar month.

An annual Santiva Islander Membership is \$25. You can join online or at the door.



## **Assisting With Today's Worship Celebration**

Liturgist: Kathy Y. Carter

Ushers: Sharon & Ed Hannon

Ministers: All Members and Friends of SCUCC

Moderator: Neal Halleran Vice Moderator: Kathy Y. Carter

Parish Nurse: Linda Convertine, R.N., B.S.N.

Music Director: Mackenzie Albert

Church Administrator: Jenny Chacon

Assistant Church Administrator: Tammy Flatley

Tech Team: Dr. Renee Rawe, Luke Crater

Missionaries: Alex Maldonado-Lizardi & Xiomara Cintron-Garcia  
in Colombia

Senior Minister: Rev. Dr. Mark Boyea

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. Ran Niehoff

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