



KENILWORTH UNION  
CHURCH

Kenilworth Union Church  
Thirty-fifth Week in Ordinary Time  
Tuesday, November 30, 2021, 12:15 p.m.  
[Connect to Mid-Day Prayer Here](#)

*God of our Advent,  
the banner has been strung across the main street  
of our journey of life and faith—  
“Christmas is coming only a few weeks to go.”  
For our Advent has begun—  
now it's preparation time;  
now it's excitement time;  
now it's time for childlike anticipation.*  
Tom Gordon, Iona, Advent Stories

### Opening Prayer

D.C. Weber, UMCdiscipleship.org

Leader: Something stirs deep within us—a longing, a hope,  
**All: A thirst for joy, a hunger for peace, a yearning for blessing.**  
Leader: We know deep within that our hopes and fears  
**All: Will be met by angel songs and baby sighs.**  
Leader: It is Advent—  
**All: Season of waiting, hoping, yearning.**  
Leader: Advent—  
**All: Time to go home.**

### Responsive Reading

Psalms 25:4–10

Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.

**Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.**

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

**Good and upright is the Lord; therefore, God instructs sinners in the way.**

God leads the humble in what is right and teaches the humble God's way.

**All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep God's covenant and decrees.**

### Scripture Reading

Luke 21:25–36

There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see “the son of man coming in a cloud” with power and great glory.

Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near. Then he told them a parable: Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout

leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Be vigilant at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the son of man.

### **A Connected Church**

This inaugural week of Advent reminds us anew that we are in a season of anticipation and of hope, of listening and waiting. A time to listen for God's promise of deliverance and reconciliation. A time to be reassured of God's love for each and all of us, and hope for the world.

Yet the world Jesus describes in Luke is falling apart, with cosmic signs and a warning to "be vigilant at all times." Quite a contrast to the childlike anticipation described in today's opening poem, "Christmas is coming—only a few weeks to go." How to match this reading to the season?

Jesus used variations of the phrase "be vigilant" many times during his ministry: "be alert," "be careful," "stay awake." During Advent, the most salient interpretation is "pay attention." It is wonderful to anticipate the holidays and prepare for special time with our loved ones. And even to be a little busy. Yet Advent also calls us to a deeper attention—to the presence of God at each moment of life, to ways we can make the most of every interaction, to the presence and plight of our neighbor, and to opportunities to act as God's instrument for peace in the world.

Our present world may seem about as far from peaceful as the one foretold in today's scripture reading. We continue to face a world-wide pandemic and extreme climate changes. We struggle with national and global unrest and turmoil. We have come face-to-face with hatred and blatant prejudice, and polarization in our society, our politics and even within our community.

Jesus warns us to be vigilant and pay attention to this world and its problems. Even so, Advent reaffirms our belief in all that Jesus has already accomplished in us. And we see in that belief a reason to hope for so much more, and rest in the wisdom that "All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness."

### **Prayers of the People**

Righteous God, we lift our souls to you, in you we place our trust, and in you we wait all day long. God of our salvation, abounding in mercy and steadfast love, grant us not fear, but rather yearning for the coming day of the Lord. And raise our heads in joyous anticipation that we may stand before you on that day. Cause us to know your ways, O Lord, and lead us in your truth.

In silence, we pray now that you will give us ears to hear and eyes to watch, that we may pay attention to your presence in our midst during this holy season of joy as we anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ.

O God, we come before you with thankful hearts this day for our church and its members. We pray for the following members, asking for your steadfast love and blessing on: Douglas and Charlotte Shehan, Michael and Marni Sheehan, Stephen and Debbie Shepherd, Meredith Shi, Margy Shortridge-Werd and Greg Werd, David and Wendy Shpiz, Alexander and Margaret Shubny, Nancy Shuma, Randal Simonds, Richard and Bonnie Simonds, John and Laura Simpson, Ron Sipiora and Gretchen Bodum, Greg and Patti Skirving, Sue Smart, Rick and Holly Smirl, Don and Zig Smith, McShane and Erin Smith, Garrett and Mary Smith, Ralph and Sallie Smith, Jeff and Chris Snell.

We bring to you supplications for those made known to us who are in need of special spiritual and physical blessings. We pray for:

Our hearts remain heavy today over the plight of refugees throughout the world, especially those who recently made their way to Europe, only to be left in limbo at borders, corralled like animals, and abandoned shelter-less, hungry and helpless to face the winter cold and elements. Impress upon us individually a generosity of spirit and action toward these people in need and guide our world leaders to find some way to ease the affliction of the nearly 26 million refugees worldwide. May each of these souls, and especially each refugee child, know that they are valued.

We stand in awe and wonder before your mighty deeds, and we pray in the name of Jesus who taught us to say:

**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.**

### **Blessing**

Almighty God, fulfill our desire and kindle our hearts by your spirit,  
that being filled with the oil of your grace,  
we may shine as bright lights at the coming of your son Jesus Christ;  
who lives and reigns with you and the holy spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**