



Thomas A. Edison
Congregational Church

December 3, 2023



Order of Worship

First Sunday of Advent - Hope

** You are invited to stand
(Please remember to silence your cell phone during the service.)

When the prelude begins, let us quiet our hearts and conversation.

Church Bell Calls Us to Worship

Prelude

Prelude on "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Tune: Veni Emmanuel

Arr. By: David Laskey

Call to Worship (Responsively)

One: Oh Immanuel, God with us, truly in this Advent season we celebrate that You are not hidden in some faraway cloud, but You chose to be with us in the blur and mystery of our daily lives.

All: In the midst of lists and rush, You are with us as a song that echoes in our minds, as the light of a candle, and as a card from a friend. They are signs of Your presence.

One: We turn to You this season and pray that You would birth joy and healing, blessing and hope in us. Let something wonderful begin in us — something surprising and holy.

All: May Your hand be upon us. Let Your love fill us. Let Your joy overwhelm us.

One: Let our longing for You be met again on an up coming holy night.

All: Immanuel, come thou long expected Jesus, with us once again. Amen.

Slightly adapted from a prayer written by the Rev. Jerry Chism,
Found at <https://www.umc.org/en/content/a-prayer-for-the-advent-season>

Hymn of Faith #74

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Passing of the Peace

May the Peace of Christ be with You.
And also with you!

Advent Candle Liturgy 2023



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B:

One: In the days of exile and uncertainty, the prophet Isaiah cried out:
O that You would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at Your presence. As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make Your name known to Your enemies and cause the nations to quake before You! For when You did awesome things that we did not expect, You came down, and the mountains trembled before You. (Isaiah 64:1-3)

All: **In the midst of our own encounters with uncertainty and upheaval and our longing for deliverance.**

One: Jesus calls to us, "Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the

master of the house will come". " (Mark 13:35)

All: We wait as people surprised again and again by God who shakes us out of our complacency and wakes us up to the work of the kingdom all around us.

One: We recognize this first light this candle as a sign of our shocking hope.

All: May we stay awake to God's activity in the world as we wait in expectation that even now God is with us, working to restore us to the fullness of life with God and one another. Amen.

~slightly adapted from a prayer written by LISA HANCOCK

Advent Carol

Hope, Hope, Hope

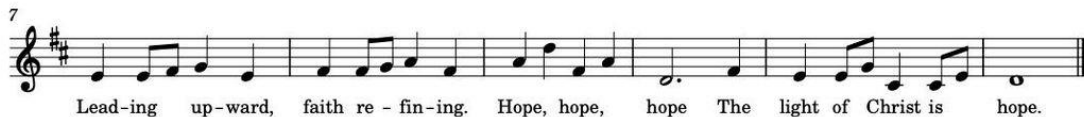
Tune: Still, Still, Still

Words By: Ken Bible

Music: Traditional Austrian Melody

Arr. By: Ken Bible

Still, Still, Still - Advent Version



Prayers for the People

Our Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

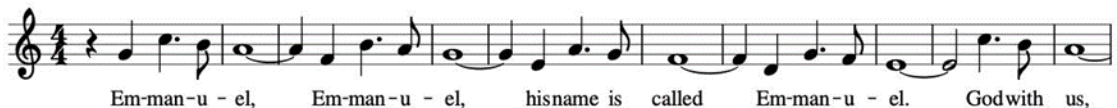
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Prayer Response

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

Bob McGee

Bob McGee



Today's Scripture

Isaiah 64:1-9

If only You would tear open the heavens and come down! Mountains would quake before You ² like fire igniting brushwood or making water boil. If You would make Your name known to Your enemies, the nations would tremble in Your presence. ³ When You accomplished wonders beyond all our expectations; when You came down, mountains quaked before You. ⁴ From ancient times, no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God but you who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him! ⁵ You look after those who gladly do

right; they will praise You for Your ways. But You were angry when we sinned; You hid Yourself when we did wrong. ⁶We have all become like the unclean; all our righteous deeds are like a menstrual rag. All of us wither like a leaf; our sins, like the wind, carry us away. ⁷No one calls on Your name; no one bothers to hold on to You, for You have hidden Yourself from us, and have handed us over to our sin. ⁸But now, LORD, You are our Father. We are the clay, and You are our potter. All of us are the work of Your hand. ⁹Don't rage so fiercely, LORD; don't hold our sins against us forever, but gaze now on Your people, all of us:

-Common English Bible

Gift Music

Open Wide Your Heavens!

Tune: Gustav Theodore Holst
Text by: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

Open wide your heavens! Let your name be known!
So the world will know, Lord, we are not alone.
You who once did awesome deeds – show your presence here!
Open wide your heavens! Let us know you're near.

In this Advent season, Lord, we wait and pray:
Why do you seem hidden? Are you far away?
Though your faithfulness is sure, we have often sinned;
Like the leaves we're fading, carried by the wind.

Carried by our culture, we seek more and more;
As we long to prosper, we forget the poor.
As we yearn for earthly things, we forget your name.
Open wide your heavens! Make us whole again.

Lord, you are the potter; we are simply clay.
Take the lives we offer; mold us more each day.
In this holy Advent time, show us all anew:
You reach out and bless us, when we wait for you.

Response to the Sharing of God's Story

The Story of God for the People of God!
Thanks Be to God!

Pastoral Words

Hymn of Faith: #82

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Invitation to the Table

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome at this table.

Invitation to the Offering

What we give and the spirit with which we give it, enables this church to make a difference in the lives of all whom we touch.



In addition to our offerings for Advent, consider bringing one or all 4 of these items with you weekly. We will be creating a can good Christmas tree in the Fellowship Hall.

Offertory

Interlude No. 4

By: Paul Tate

**Doxology

Doxology

For Advent



Em G C D7 G D G C G
Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea - tures

5 Am Bm7 Em Am Em B7 Em A7 D Em
here be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. Praise

10 D Bm G C Am D7 G D Em Bm G
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -

15 C D7 Em D G C G Am Em Bm Em
man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674
Music: 15th Century French

VENI EMMANUEL
LM with Refrain

Text and tune adapted by Dean McIntyre, The United Methodist General Board of Discipleship, PO Box 340003, Nashville TN 37203-0003. Telephone 615-340-7073. Website <http://www.umcworship.org>. Email address: music@gbod.org. Text and tune are public domain.

Life of Our Church

Quilting on Wednesday at 12:00 pm.

Faith Development

Faith Development for Advent
November 29th – December 20th
An Unlikely Advent by Rachel Billups

This four-week Advent study focuses on the experiences of four sets of often overlooked characters in the Nativity story. During this Advent season, Rachel Billups guides readers through the themes of hope, love, joy, and peace by sharing the stories of Elizabeth and Zechariah, Herod, the Magi, and the shepherds. Each set of unexpected characters has something to teach about living faithfully on the journey to Christmas.

Week Two (12.06.23) “Playing the Villain”
Week Three (12:13.23) “A Curious People”
Week Four (12:20;23) “When God Shows Up”

Join us on Wednesdays, in person, at 11 AM & 6:30 PM.
Thursday online at 11 AM.

Reading for next Wednesday:
Matthew chapter 2

Sunday December 3rd (Today)
right after Sunday’s Service,
Beth Moss will be offering Blood Pressure checks.
Blood Pressure Screening is an important part of health
maintenance. All are encouraged to do this.

Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board to donate
flowers to enhance our Sunday Service.

We are looking for Volunteers for Cathy's Place and for Ushers.
Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board if interested.

For next week's God's word:
Peace – Changing Your Mind
Isaiah 40:1-11 & Mark 1:1-8

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS
AT THE CHURCH

Friday December 8th “Let it Snow”
Piano concert here at the church
starting at 6:00 PM.

Students of Alena Michel will be performing.

Sunday, December 10th from 4:00 – 5:30 PM

Join us for an inter-generational event to create a Community Christmas tree at the church. We will be making decorations for the tree at the church and make one for your own tree too. Decorate (and eat) a Christmas cookie before heading home for the evening. Please bring gifts of CANNED foods for the local food bank that will be used to build Christmas trees of nourishment for those in need during the holidays.

December 13th – Women's Fellowship Christmas Party.

All are welcome. The gathering will be at the church at noon and there will be a fun gift exchange. It will be a pot-luck luncheon. Please RSVP to Gail Courtwright - gailcourtwright26@gmail.com for more details.

December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship – music starting at 4:30PM



Edison Church Christmas Elves



Thank you to our Christmas Elves for making our Church look so beautiful.

Benediction/Blessing for Our Journey of Faith (Responsively)

One: Beyond the darkness, there is a star.
Beyond the noise, there is an angel song.
Beyond the rush, there is a wondrous stillness.
May the God of Advent days touch your lives this season with hints of a holy night – Still yet to come.

All: Amen.

~Adapted from a prayer found at homiletics online

Postlude

Alena Michel

Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus

By: Rowland H. Prichard

Time with our Children

The Potter

Isaiah 64:1-9

By [Lois Parker Edstrom](#)

Do you like to play with clay? It is fun to roll the clay around to form little people or animals. Shaping a snake is especially easy by twirling the clay between your hands.

Another type of clay, often found along the banks of a river, is used by potters to make beautiful and useful items for the home. They may roll the clay into long coils, like making a snake and fashion it into a bowl or use a potter's wheel and spin the clay around as they shape it with their hands.

When the potter has formed a pitcher, plate, mug, or vase, it is heated to a high temperature to harden it. These objects are often painted in lovely colors and become beautiful works of art.

Artists, whether a potter, painter, writer, or musician, feel much joy when creating something of beauty.

The Bible compares God to being like a potter. We read: "... we are the clay, and you, our potter; and we all are the work of your hand".

What a wonderful image to think of being shaped by God's hand. Not only are we created by God, but as we study and pray, we continue to be shaped by God's wisdom and love.

You are created by God. You are beautiful! Just by being yourself you bring joy to others and to God.

Scripture quotations from the World English Bible, Copyright 2014, Richard Niell Donovan

Advent

By [Dr. Dan Wuori](#)

Mark 13:24-37

Today we begin a very special time of year in the church. We call it Advent.

The word Advent comes from a Latin word—"adventus"—which means "coming." Can you guess what's coming?

That's right, it's Christmas—which is the church's celebration of Jesus' birth. Advent is a time of waiting—and preparing our hearts for Jesus' coming.

We mark the days and weeks Advent in different ways. One way is with candles. Do you notice the special advent candles here today? During each of the four weeks of Advent we will light another one, until all four are lit. Then on Christmas Eve, we'll light the fifth candle in the middle.

Another way you might choose to mark Advent with your family is with one of these: an Advent Calendar. If you look carefully, you'll notice that this calendar is covered with little doors—there are 24 of them. They may be hard to see right now, because they're all closed—but an Advent Calendar is a way of helping to count the days that lead up to Christmas. Usually, we open the first door on the first day of December, which is tomorrow—and then open one more door each day. When all the doors have been opened, Christmas will have arrived. This one

has a picture behind each door—but sometimes they even have chocolate inside.

I have an Advent Calendar to help each of you count the days of Advent. But before we hand them out, let's pray.

Dear God,

We are ready to celebrate the coming of your son, Jesus. We thank you for sending him to Earth and ask that you give us the strength and wisdom to follow his examples. Amen.

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PRAYER LIST

Our Church Members:

Kate Baumann; Roy Shipley; Barry Pierce; Liz Lloyd;
Dan Van Riper; Sharlene Dozier; Barbara Buch.

Friends & Family:

Pat Tanguoso (Friend of the Church and Quilter);
Duane (Friend of Tom & Sherrie McIntyre); Shelly (friend of Pastor Anton); Lillian Helling (Sister-in-law of Tom Johns & Joseph Helling); Betty Denson; Jim Martin (Teri Martin's husband); Kim Gaide (for the passing of her husband Dave); Martha Calvert, (Friend of Ian Laughlin); Jeffrey Lloyd (Son of Liz Lloyd); John Schmidt (Gail Courtwright's brother); Carmella Colitti (great niece of Rosemary Priore); Roberta Hoft (Cindy's mother); Shannon Randall (daughter of co-worker of Pastor Anton); Jim Marc-Aurele (Lou & Carol's son); Darlene Gonzales (Flo Newbrough's sister); Tom Jenkins (friend of Tee and Flo Newbrough); Mike Robbins (friend of Tee and Flo Newbrough); Andy Anderson (friend of Joe Helling); Jim Johnson (friend of Sandy Cole); Bob and Darlene Kulesza (Bob is Carol Marc-Aurele's brother).

***No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you're welcome here at Edison Congregational Church.
Welcome home!***

Website:	www.edisonchurch.com
Facebook:	Facebook.com/EdisonChurch
Email Pastor:	Pastorjim@taecc.com
Email Office:	Admin@taecc.com
Office Phone:	239-334-4978
Office Hours:	Monday-Thursday 9 AM – 12PM
Mailing:	1619 Llewellyn Dr., Ft. Myers 33901

Pastor Jim can be reached at the office
or on his cell phone at 502-494-6649 (voice & text).

Our Church Staff

Senior Minister – Rev. Jim Harper, III

Associate Minister – Rev. Anton Pierce

Administrative Assistant – Cindy Wilson

Distinguished Director of Sacred Arts – Dr. Tony Contino

Assistant Director of Sacred Arts – Alena Michel

Pianist - Barry Pierce

Beth Moss – RN, MA Faith Community Nurse

*Your gifts are deeply appreciated and enable this ministry to continue. Our church retains the
right to redirect donations to the area of greatest need.*

