



First Week of Advent

9:30 a.m. | November 30, 2025

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Iowa City

Today's Worship Participants

The Rev. Dr. Carl Anderson, *transitional pastor*
Scott Fisher and Pat Cone-Fisher, *worship leaders*
Logos Choir | Austen Wilson, *director*
Julia Van Den Top, *organist and accompanist*



After Worship Today

- **PreK-5th Grade:** *Children's Gathering Area*
- **Middle School:** *Middle School Classroom (#17)*
- **Learning Academy (teens welcome):** LGBTQ+ 101: *Becoming a Welcoming Church*, with Angela and Virginia Ibrahim-Olin | *The Hub*



Flowers on the Chancel

- Today's flowers are given by Skip & Pat Wells: "With Christmas Blessings."

Questions for Reflection

- When you hear the long list of "What gives you hope?"—from waffles to justice to babies taking their first steps—what rises up in you? Do you trust that God speaks as clearly through those ordinary images as through the mountaintop vision of Isaiah?
- Isaiah imagines weapons hammered into garden tools. "Keep Your Lamps!" warns that the time is drawing nigh. Which truth feels more real to you right now—the world's fear or God's future—and how does that shape the way you watch and wait this week?
- In the Prayer of Confession, we told God that hope feels "too risky." Where in your life does hope feel dangerous—and what might happen if you let God hold the part of you that always chooses safety first?
- Today's music keeps returning to longing—"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus," "Gloria," "Soon and Very Soon." Which hymn echoed deepest in you? What desire or ache did it name that you usually keep buried under busyness or responsibility?



Finish the Race
Owe Nothing But Love



STEWARDSHIP 2026

ST. ANDREW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



140 Gathering Place Lane, Iowa City, Iowa, 52246

319-338-7523 |

www.saintandrew.ccbchurch.com | bit.ly/SAPCYouTube



First Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. | November 30, 2025

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church | Iowa City, Iowa

Welcome + Announcements

Prelude

Lighting of the Advent Candle

✠ **Gathering Hymn** | “Here’s a Promise We Can Count On,” pg. 7 | *to the tune of “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”*

✠ **Prayer of Confession and Promise of Ever-Present Grace** | *adapted from a liturgy by Sarah Speed*

In God’s house, everyone is welcome—those who seem like they have it all together,
and those who feel like their world is falling apart.

No matter who we are, there’s room for us here.

With that confidence, we turn to God in prayer, speaking the truth of our lives.

Let us pray:

God of today and God of tomorrow, you say, “Bring your full self. There’s room for you here.”

But we say, “Our lives are too messy.”

You say, “Bring your hopes and your dreams. There’s room for you here.”

But we say, “It’s too risky to hope.”

You say, “Bring your grief and your prayers. There’s room for you here.”

But we say, “Some things are easier to forget.”

God of today and God of tomorrow, we know in our hearts that there’s room for us here.

Forgive us for withholding our full selves from you.

Forgive us for giving only our Sunday best.

Help us remember, today and tomorrow,

there’s room for every story.

Time for Silent Confession

Hymns + Songs | Pages are listed for the printed bulletin

Numbers (#) are listed for music in the *Lift Up Your Hearts* (red) hymnal

Bold Print | Speak or sing together in unison.

✠ | Please rise in body or in spirit.

Family of faith, we who feel scattered are held together.
We who have lost our way are forgiven and found.
And we who are lonely are brought into the fold and are told, “There’s room for you here.”
From generation to generation, this is the good news of the gospel.
In Jesus, the Christ, we are held, forgiven, found, and welcomed.
Thanks be to God!

✕ **Musical Response** | Refrain from “Angels We Have Heard on High” (*hymnal*, #82)

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

✕ **Sharing of Christ’s Peace & Compassion**

And now, as a visible sign of what it means to live together
in the care and context of Christ’s community,
let us extend Christ’s peace and compassion to those around us!
The peace of Christ be with you all! **And also with you!**

Gospel Reading | Matthew 24:36-44 (*The Voice*)

The word of the prophets for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Time for Young Disciples †

Old Testament Reading | Isaiah 2:1-5 (*The Voice*) † †

The word of the prophets for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

† As the piano plays, children are invited forward for Time for Young Disciples. Afterward, they may return to their parents, or—if Kindergarten and younger—head to the Lower Level Children’s Area for children’s programming.

† † **Note on the Scripture:** Isaiah sees an amazing picture of the future, a future which only God can create. In that vision, Jerusalem and the temple of the only God will sit on the highest mountain at the center of the world. In that day, all the nations of the world will stream to the holy city and seek God’s guidance and instruction. God will sit as King and Judge, dispensing real justice—not some man-made counterfeit—not only in international but also local matters. Perhaps, most amazingly for a world weary of war, this will be a time when war is a thing of the past and its lethal instruments are turned into tools for life and peace. (*The Voice*)

The Message | Pastor Carl Anderson

✠ **Hymn of Reflection** | “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus,” pg. 8

Offering Our Time, Treasure, and Talents

Offertory | *Keep Your Lamps!*, arr. Andre Thomas ✠

✠ **Response to Our Offerings** | “In the Lord, I’ll Be Ever Thankful,” pg. 9



Give Online

**In the Lord, I’ll be ever thankful;
in the Lord, I will rejoice!
Look to God; do not be afraid.
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.
Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.**

Prayers of the People | The Lord’s Prayer, adapted from Luke 11:2-4 & Matthew 6:13 (*The Voice*)

Father in heaven, may your name be revered.

May your kingdom come.

May your will be accomplished on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us the food we need for tomorrow.

Forgive us for our wrongs, as we forgive those who wrong us.

Lead us away from temptation, and save us from the evil one.

But let Your kingdom be ... and let it be powerful and glorious forever. Amen.

✠ **Sending Hymn** | “Soon and Very Soon,” pg. 10 (*hymnal*, #482)

✠ **Note on the Music:** *Keep Your Lamps* is a spiritual based on the parable in Matthew 25 where wise and foolish maidens are preparing for the bridegroom, the second coming of Christ. In spirituals, freedom, heaven, salvation, and the second coming are closely intertwined. Freedom was the goal of every enslaved person, who believed that they were meant to be free. Often spirituals have multiple meanings. Although there is little historical evidence to support this idea for this specific spiritual, I have to wonder if there might have been a coded message in part of the words “the time is drawing nigh.” Perhaps a coded message here could have been that the time to escape was drawing nigh? — Austen Wilson

✠ **Benediction** | *adapted from a liturgy by Sarah Speed*

We believe in a God who promised to Abraham,
who wrestled with Jacob,
who walked with Ruth,
who spoke with Moses,
who grieved with Bathsheba,
who danced with David,
who dreamed with Joseph,
and who hoped like Mary.

We believe in a God who has been loving,
inviting, transforming, and challenging us
from generation to generation.

**And we believe that same God is here with us now saying,
“Come on in; there’s room for you here.” Amen.**

Postlude



Here's a Promise We Can Count On

W ZLOBIE LEZY 4.4.7.4.4.7.4.4.4.7 ("Infant Holy, Infant Lowly")

1 Here's a promise we can count on!

It's the word Isaiah saw:

One day coming, God's own mountain

Will be highest of them all.

All the nations will be yearning

For God's teaching, and returning,

They'll find guidance in God's law.

2 On that day of celebration,

All will listen to the Lord.

God will judge between the nations

Till all justice is restored.

Out of weapons made for harming

They will fashion tools for farming

And they'll put aside the sword.

3 One great day, the prophet told us,

God will triumph! It is true.

Lord, we trust this word of promise

As we hear your word anew.

When we're lost among the mountains

Of the world's ways that confound us,

Show the path that leads to you.

Biblical Reference: Isaiah 2:1-5

Tune: Polish melody ("Infant Holy, Infant Lowly") (MIDI)

Text: Copyright © 2012 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.

Email: carolynshymns@gmail.com

New Hymns: www.carolynshymns.com

The Presbyterian Outlook magazine commissioned this hymn.

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful 654

In the Lord I'll be ev - er thank - ful; in the Lord I will re -

joice! Look to God; do not be a - fraid. Lift up your

voic - es; the Lord is near. Lift up your voic - es; the Lord is near.

This refrain from the ecumenical monastic community at Taizé, France, is meant for repeated singing. A wonderful quilt of psalm-like phrases, it would be appropriate at any time but the concluding emphasis on the nearness of the Lord makes it especially fitting for use in Advent.

TEXT: Taizé Community, 1986

MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1986

Text and Music © 1991 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

IN THE LORD I'LL BE EVER THANKFUL

Irregular

Soon and Very Soon

F B^b/F F

1,4 Soon and ver - y soon, we are going to see the King!
 2 No more cry - ing there— we are going to see the King!
 3 No more dy - ing there— we are going to see the King!

C7 C9 F

Soon and ver - y soon, we are going to see the King!
 No more cry - ing there— we are going to see the King!
 No more dy - ing there— we are going to see the King!

B^b/F F

Soon and ver - y soon, we are going to see the King!
 No more cry - ing there— we are going to see the King!
 No more dy - ing there— we are going to see the King!

F7 Gm/B^b Gm7(b5) F/C C7 F To stanzas

Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! We're going to see the King!

Optional interlude and final ending G7 C7 F G7 C7 F

Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah!

Questions about Worship?

- **Welcome!** We are happy to have you join us today. If you would like more information about St. Andrew, please email office@saintandrew-ic.org or fill out this short form: <https://tinyurl.com/sapc-guest>.
- Our worship services begin **in-person and online shortly before 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings**, followed by Sunday School and Adult Christian Education offerings from September to April and a variety of After Worship activities from May to August.
- **Nursery care** (up to age 2) is provided in the Lower Level throughout the morning. Programming for children (through Kindergarten age) begins in the Lower Level after the **Time for Young Disciples**.
- Unless otherwise designated, gifts given to the **weekly offering** support the church budget, including staff salaries, utilities, mission outreach, and all aspects of ministry.
- To log into the **St. Andrew Connect** system, either download the **St. Andrew App** through the **App Store/Google Play** or visit <https://saintandrew.ccbchurch.com>.
- There are wheelchairs available for use as needed in the lower level entrance foyer and by the coat racks near the upper level entrance.
- There is an AED near the Coffee Kitchen should a medical emergency arise.
- Permission to livestream the music in this service is from CCLI (#617801) and One License (A-711114).

Upcoming Events

- **Celebration of Life: Mary Mixdorf** | Today
- **Hills Bank's Lights of Remembrance** | Monday
- **At the Table** | Thursday
- **Sober Living Gala** | Saturday
- **Lessons and Carols** | Dec. 7
- **The Great Christmas Ring (offsite)** | Dec. 13
- **Children's Christmas Pageant** | Dec. 14
- **Orchestra Iowa Brass Concert** | Dec. 14
- **Food Market** | Dec. 17
- **Celebration of Life: Pat Dustin Wood** | Dec. 19
- **Cocoa and Carols** | Dec. 21
- **Christmas Eve** | 5, 7, & 11 p.m., Dec. 24
- **Bingo & Games** | Jan. 2, 2026
- **At the Table** | Jan. 8
- **Sunday School Resumes** | Jan. 11
- **Next Steps** | Jan. 18
- **Food Market** | Jan. 28
- **Women's Retreat** | Jan. 31
- **At the Table** | Feb. 5
- **St. Olaf Band Concert** | Feb. 6
- **Congregational Meeting** | Feb. 8
- **Chili Cookoff & Souper Bowl Lunch** | Feb. 8



WAR NO MORE

by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Inspired by Isaiah 2:1-5 | Silk painting with digital drawing and collage

When I started this art series, I returned to a familiar medium: silk painting with gold resist and ink dyes. I photographed my creative process, capturing the wrinkled fabric, the wet lines of gold, the inks bleeding into one another. I've collaged photographs of my silk painting into the backdrops of these digital drawings. The silk background represents a tapestry of time, like an interconnected web of beauty and story traced through the generations.

As I reread this familiar passage in Isaiah, I paused at my favorite line about swords that become plowshares and spears that transform into pruning shears. In the past, I've marveled at the poetry of tools for destruction becoming instruments for cultivation. This year, I contemplated the ways these tools are used and realized that this vision holds gritty promise. Iron plows, mattocks tools, adzes—these are used to break apart rock-hard (often long-neglected) soil so it might receive water, nutrients, and roots. Plowing the earth is a physically intensive process of deconstruction that gives way for seeds to be planted, to be nurtured, and—with all the right elements and some luck—to grow into something worth harvesting.

Pruning is a seasonal act of trust; it feels so risky, especially when it takes months for that new life to begin to appear. But pruning away what is dead or in excess allows the plant to direct its energy into growing new shoots and branches once spring comes.

In other words, I realized that both of these tools are used in the process of regeneration, but they are not in themselves symbols of a bountiful harvest. Like gardening, “learning war no more” is a daily practice requiring dedication and lots of trust that we are truly cultivating an environment for God’s peace to one day bloom. And so, in this Advent season, what needs to be plowed or pruned? What daily acts of regeneration will provide for you and the generations who come after you?

—Lisle Gwynn Garrity



Jesus, the Light of the World,
brings hope.

Together, we can bring hope to others
by receiving the Christmas Joy Offering.



CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 21