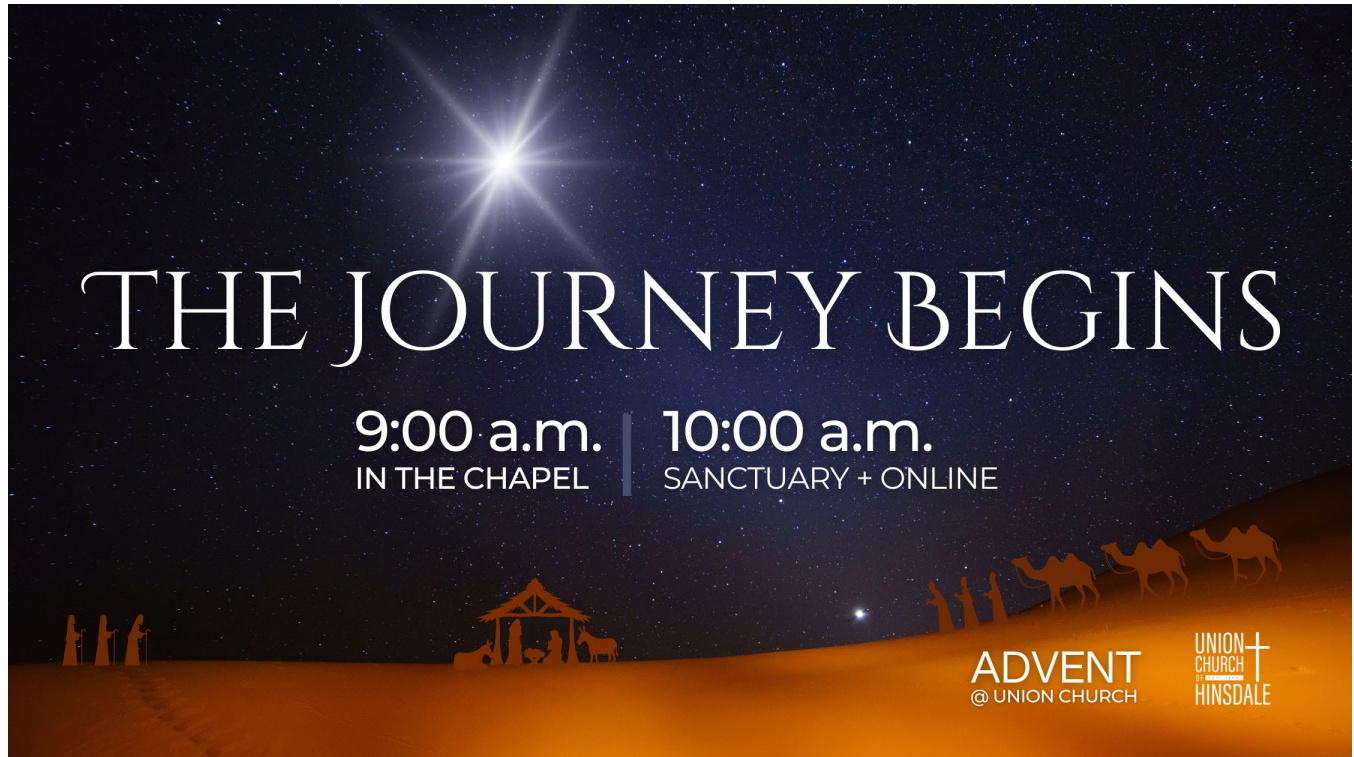


UNION CHURCH OF HINSDALE

137 S Garfield Ave., Hinsdale, IL 60521 • United Church of Christ



Children's Christmas Pageant

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2024

Our Welcoming Statement, adopted January 28, 2024:

We are all called by God as disciples of Christ. We affirm & welcome all persons as precious to God, just as they are. As a community of faith, in the service of God, we are enriched by our differences including diversity of gender identity and expression, age, marital & economic status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, race, and physical & mental abilities and qualities. We affirm that the Holy Spirit gathers us as a congregation in which all persons are invited to participate equally in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, concerns, & joys of our community of faith. We pledge to love, encourage, & support one another as the Body of Christ.

What are we all about at Union Church?
Living lives of love for God and all people.

You are welcome here!



A GATHERING IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST ON THE 8TH DAY OF CREATION

* = Those who are able and willing, please stand

PRELUDE

Where Are You Christmas?
Good King Wenceslas
David Sands - Cello

Horner, Jennings, and Carey
arr. Schmidt

WELCOME

Grant Glowiak

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

* LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

The Klein Family

Leader: When the people were looking for deliverance, the prophet Micah declared, "But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah...from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient day." *Micah 5:2*. But what if Micah is also talking to us, proclaiming, "But you, O Union Church, from you shall come forth for me..." What? What might God be calling forth from us?

People: **God invites us to receive the promise of God's salvation and the sustenance of God's mercy and grace, enabling us to live the promise as God-bearers to the world. As Christ was born in Bethlehem, so too we answer God's invitation to have Christ born among us today and every day.**

Leader: We light this candle of love as a sign of our commitment to live as people of God's promise, a promise of salvation and flourishing for all people that springs forth from God's love for all creation.

*HYMN # 135

O Come All You Faithful
Stanzas 1-3

* OPENING PRAYER

Robb Knuepfer

God of hope, peace, joy, and love, we come this morning to the manger, gazing lovingly on the Child born to bring your kingdom to our world. Open our hearts today as we hear the story anew. Guide us by the light of Christ, that we may truly feel the power of your love and bring that love, with joy, to all we meet. Amen.

* SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you!

People: **And also with you!**

* GLORIA PATRI

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end: Amen! Amen!***

LIFE OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY

ANTHEM

O Holy Night
Elizabeth Young - Handbells • Ollie Townsend – Piano

DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

*HYMN # 129

Good Christian Friends Rejoice

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Part One

PRAYER, ENDING WITH A PRAYER WE LEARNED FROM JESUS

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 sins as we forgive those who sin 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.

MOMENT FOR MISSION

OFFERING AND OFFERTORY

We Three Kings

We'd love to get to know you! If you are visiting and would like a follow-up conversation with our clergy or church staff, please leave your name & contact info in the black friendship pads found at the end of the pews.

For e-giving, head to hinsdale.church, and click on the 'Live Generously' tab, or text "GIVEUCH" to 73256. Thanks for giving to the life and work of Union Church!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Part Two

* HYMN (SEE SCREEN)

Joy to the World

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

A Christmas Celebration

arr. Don Phillips

FLOWERS – Today's flowers are given by Lise & Ed Spacapan Jr. in memory of their parents, Shirley & Ed Spacapan Sr. and Anne & Henry Taylor Jr.

STAFF AND WORSHIP LEADERS

*(h = he/him/his, s = she/her/hers, t = they/them/theirs)**

Associate Minister – Grant Glowiak (h/t)	Dir. of Audio & Visual Media – Adam Nakutis (h)	<u>Section Leaders</u>
Associate Minister – Robb Knuepfer (h)	Dir. of Handbells – Elizabeth Jung (s)	Jess Koehn (h)
Dir. of Christian Education – Penny Johnson (s)		Coleman Dziedzic (h)
Dir. of Music and Worship – Stephen C Edwards (h/t)		Dei Nikoi (s)
		Tierra Whetstone-Christian (s)
Ushers – Chris, Lucy, & Jack Kapcar and Vicky Hurst		Trap Set – Kalyan Pathak (h)
	Guitars – Andrew Sudhibhasilp (h) and James Lang (h)	
* Go to https://tinyurl.com/ymabnh5t for a guide to gender identity terms		Bass – Ben Dillinger(h)

2024 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT CAST

Littlest Angels

Leo Benjelloun
Charlie Caraballo
Gemma Chakos
Olivia Dowling
Ben Gamber
Logan Houser
Rhys Lawler
Sammy Logan
Theodore Mushynski
Carter Schulz

Donkeys

Emilia Diaz
Parker Dowling
Charlie Elberfeld
Luna Everette
Wesley Happ
James London
Maddie Mushynski
Rosalie Ott
Ava Poetter
Maggie Seidman
Jack Thayer

Cows

Benjamin Caraballo
James Logan
Casey Schulz
Sheep
Anna Elberfeld
Lucy Kieffer
Greta Klein
Jackson Schaefer

Doves

Keaton Houser
Marie Klein
Antonia Logan
Charlotte Poetter
Narrators
Quinn Houser
Vivian Kapcar
Emily Parwani
Gaylen Saviano
Jack Seidman

Mary

Morgan Saviano
Joseph
George Schaefer
InnKeeper
Henry Weil
Angels
Adelaide Saviano
Alexandra Weil

CHRISTMAS EVE AT UNION CHURCH!

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Tuesday, December 24 at **4:00 p.m.**, in the Sanctuary

A family friendly/focused worship service (more like our 9:00 a.m. service)

CHRISTMAS EVE FELLOWSHIP

Tuesday, December 24 at **5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**, in the Gathering Place

Please join us between the two Christmas Eve services for an elevated coffee hour! All of the usual goodies of our Sunday coffee hour plus a few delicious Christmas surprises!

ALUMNI BELLS

Tuesday, December 24 at **7:35 p.m.**, in the Sanctuary

A much-beloved Union Church tradition you won't want to miss!

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Tuesday, December 24 at **8:00 p.m.**, in the Sanctuary

A 'lessons and carols' style worship service (more like our 10:00 a.m. service)

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS OFFERING



HCS family services
EMPOWERING FAMILIES. CHANGING LIVES.
TOGETHER WE THRIVE.
Since 1937

The Christmas Offering of Ministry for Change this year is for our local partner agency HCS Family Services. HCS Family Services is a compassionate not-for-profit organization which has been serving 360 neighbors weekly in need since 1937. Their work is to prevent food insecurity and create an improved quality of life for the people we serve and their families.

As a nonprofit, HCS Family Services is dependent upon the generosity of food and financial donations and the manpower of more than 400 volunteers to support its mission. Last year, local retail partners donated 400,000+ pounds of food through the Food Rescue program to stock the food pantries. There are many opportunities to volunteer during the week on the website.

For every \$1.00 donation the pantry can purchase \$8 in groceries. Please give generously to help the families who need food support. Also, paper and plastic grocery bags are collected in the bin inside the north entrance.

For more info or to volunteer visit the HCS website: <https://www.hcsfamilyservices.org/>. To donate towards our Christmas offering, please visit our webpage, [hinsdale.church](https://www.hinsdale.church), click on the 'Live Generously' tab, then select 'Make a Contribution.' After hitting the 'Donate' button, find and select "Christmas Offering-HCS Family Services" on the dropdown menu. You may also send in a check made out to the church and put "Christmas Offering" in the memo line. For both online or check, if you want to split amounts between the church and HCS Family Services, just put that in the memo line on the giving page or on the check.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

There is always Sunday School and nursery care for children five and under in classroom 129 on the lower level.

We won't have Sunday school today for elementary school children, since so many of them are already in the pageant! As always, we welcome children & their joyful energy in our worship services whether in the pageant or the pews. You may ask the ushers for a red activity bag & feel free to use the Narthex (through the glass doors under the balcony) for extra space if you/your child wants to move around during service.

RESTROOMS

To find the gender-neutral restroom, exit through the main doors of the Sanctuary into The Gathering Place. Follow the glass doors on your left until a hallway opens on your left. It is a few steps down that hallway on your right.

We also have larger gendered restrooms through the main doors and to your right, off The Gathering Space – complete with changing tables on the lower and main levels.

DON'T MISS A THING!

Keep up with all our upcoming events by following us on Facebook & Instagram and subscribing to our weekly newsletter.

Head over to www.hinsdale.church, and click on the 'Connect' button for more info!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGN UP FOR NEW PASTOR LISTENING SESSIONS!

Following a strong response to the New Pastor Survey, we are now ready to discuss a few questions in small group meetings. These Listening Sessions will add to our understanding of the congregation's vision for the church and traits we seek in our next senior pastor.

The Listening Sessions will be gatherings of 6-12 people where we will each offer thoughts in response to a few questions. It is important that we hear many points of view from all generations. The January meeting days and times include mornings, afternoons and evenings, on weekdays and weekends. Most gatherings are in person but a few are on Zoom. Some of the meetings in the church even offer childcare with snacks!

Please use the QR code or the link in the Thursday email to reserve a spot that works for you. Once 12 slots in a meeting are reserved, that meeting will be closed. For childcare needs, email Penny Johnson pjohnson@uchinsdale.org so she can make arrangements in advance. If you prefer to have someone help you sign up, call Adriana in the church office at 630-590-6689.

Thanks to all who are participating in this important work!

The Discovery Team



WE'D LOVE TO SEE & DISPLAY YOUR CHRISTMAS CARDS! IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Please include Union Church (137 S. Garfield, Hinsdale, IL 60521) on your mailing list this year and count us among your family and friends. We will display all the cards that we receive on the bulletin board in the Gathering Place for the congregation to enjoy together and be reminded of our connections, friendships and shared life here together at UCH over the winter season.

UCECP AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY MITTEN TREE

We are collecting **new** mittens, hats & scarfs for our mitten tree at the top of the main stairs. Your donations will help support the children of our Mission Ministries. UCECP families can send their donations with their child, and they will personally place their items on the tree. Members & friends of UCH, you may also place your items on the tree or bring them to Adriana in the church office to place on the Mitten Tree. Thank you for helping to spread kindness and warmth during this winter season!

CARE MINISTRY - *We're Here for You*

We are creating a new ministry at Union Church: *The Care Ministry*. We are elevating the former, long serving Care Team to a Ministry at UCH to demonstrate the importance we all place on offering compassion, time and support to home bound church members and people who are in need. This is even more important in this holiday time and in this time of transition. Pastor Robb Knuepfer will be our Pastoral Care Advisor. Adding a new Ministry will be voted on at our Annual Meeting, January 26th.



The mission of the Care Ministry is to offer compassion, time and support to church members in need.

If you need support, please contact Adriana in the Church office (you will be directed to the right person)
630-590-6689 or AKieffer@uchinsdale.org

In an Emergency, contact our Pastoral Care Ordained Minister Rev. Robb Knuepfer
312-927-8913 or rknuepfer@uchinsdale.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

UNION CHURCH EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE - *WHAT IS THE LATEST WITH OUR SUMMIT PROJECT?*

The UCECI team has continued to work diligently as we seek to secure a location for a quality full day preschool in Summit. We have identified a potential building available for purchase in Summit. An initial environmental inspection has been completed on the property. Considerable work has been done to examine the financial feasibility of the site and to investigate a possible property tax exemption. We continue to research the feasibility of the property from a business perspective to ensure the preschool would succeed. Completion of this work will determine the possibility of seeking congregational approval prior to submitting an offer to purchase the property. We look forward to sharing more information with you at a future date.

\$\$ 2024 \$\$

\$80,336

Needed to meet 2024 budgeted plan/offering

THANK YOU FOR MAKING ELEANOR'S CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS A SUCCESS

Thank you to everyone who helped make Eleanor's Christmas Stockings a huge success this year. In two events the Gather & Grow kids, the Sunday School kids and members the Congregation and friends stuffed 517 stockings for Stepping Stones (assists women who were sex trafficked and their children), New Life (assists new immigrants), and the Pre-K, K and 1st Grade at Graves Elementary School in Summit. The Ministry for Change also stuffed 50 Holiday backpacks for homeless youth served by the Night Ministry. A big thank you to all of you who donated to the stocking project. You helped make this Christmas a little brighter this year for 567 needy children and youth.

The stockings were sewn by our stocking makers: Fran Evans, Sharon Bodziak, Kathy Anderson, Becca Anderson, Claudia Moffat, Elizabeth Krainc, Nancy Sullivan, Tracey Wolfgang, Jane Grimm and Elizabeth Jung. Other project helpers included: Trayce Biancalana, Diane Oostendorp, Christy and Randy Weimer, Carol Stoldt, Penny Davey, Anke Culver, George Lombardi, June Scott, Vicky Hurst, and James Lang. A special thank you to super helpers Zoe and Heather Manning, Kirk Grimm, Abby Lombardi and Ann Reiland who helped with the preparation and stuffing. Thank you all! This project couldn't have been done without your help. Apologies if I left anyone off by mistake.



If you'd like to help with the project or sew stockings next year, please contact Jane Grimm jgrimm723@comcast.net.



OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

In observance of Christmas, the office will be closed on Christmas day and on Thursday, December 26. We will resume regular hours, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 27.

The office will also be closed on New Year's Day and will resume regular hours on Thursday, January 2.

Have a blessed and joyous Christmas and new year, everyone!

NEED SOMETHING ANNOUNCED IN THE BULLETIN, MIDWEEK EMAIL, OR ONLINE?

Send your text to communications@uchinsdale.org. Subject line "Email Blast."

UNION CHURCH EXPLORES

THE THEOLOGY OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP



UNION
CHURCH
OF
HINSDALE

WINTER SERMON SERIES | SUNDAYS @ 9 + 10 A.M.



A GREAT WAY TO GIVE: GIFTING APPRECIATED STOCK

Making a gift of appreciated stock can be a great way to support the church financially, either to fulfill your “pledge” for the year, or to make an additional donation. The benefits to the member include avoiding capital gain taxes, getting a charitable deduction based on the fair market value of the stock on the day of the gift, and satisfying pledges or making donations without any out-of-pocket cash payments. Union Church of Hinsdale maintains a brokerage account for the convenience of members who choose to fulfill their pledges by gifting shares of appreciated stock. Find a link in the weekly email for FAQ’s.

You can also call or email our bookkeeper Ann Gleason agleason@uchinsdale.org for additional help.

9:00 A.M. WORSHIP FOR FAMILIES WITH LITTLE ONES

This family-friendly service in the chapel embraces the busy energy of young children. It is held every Sunday at 9:00 a.m. in our Chapel with wonderful live guitar and piano. In fact, you’ll usually find a familiar face leading the worship music: Cole! Cole led this year’s VBS and also teaches the UCECP music class. We embrace movement and busy curious little minds at this 25 – 30 minute service. While it is designed as a teaching opportunity and introduction to Christian worship for young children, we welcome anyone of any age or family stage.

Union Church is a *thinking church*.

Together we ask questions and explore the world beyond ourselves. We aim to grow in kindness and generosity with ***all people.***

