Avon Congregational Church

Avon, Connecticut United Church of Christ

Sunday, November 29, 2026

The First Sunday of Advent: Hope



The mission of the Avon Congregational Church is to enable people to know God's unconditional love and to be a community of faith helping one another to live as Jesus Christ lived and taught.

GATHERED TO WORSHIP

MEDITATIVE THOUGHT

"How many times Jesus comes into our lives, and how many times he sends us an angel, and how many times we don't notice because we are so taken, immersed in our own thoughts, in our own affairs ... so as not to notice Christ Child who comes and knocks at the door of our hearts, asking for acceptance, asking for a 'yes' like Mary's."

~ Jorge Mario Bergoglio aka Pope Francis

PRELUDE Hark the Glad Sound by Broughton

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

WORDS OF WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Pastor Chris Solimene

Name tags and name tag stickers are located in the narthex. **Large Print** hymnals, and hearing amplifiers are available from an usher. **We welcome children in worship**. Special activity sheets are available. Our Nursery is open Sunday mornings until after worship. **If you're visiting today**, we're delighted you're here! We invite you to help us know you better by filling out a pew card and dropping it in the offering plate. Please join us for coffee & snacks following the service in our Fellowship Hall.

CENTERING OUR MINDS AND HEARTS ON WORSHIP

*CALL TO WORSHIP Gail Alvord

**Please rise in body and spirit as able*

One: Today Christians around the world begin the Advent season.

Many: And so we too begin our Advent journey.

One: We begin our waiting for the Christ. We begin our journey toward the very center of this season's meaning, and we live in the hope for the reconciliation of God's people to one another and also to the heart of God.

All: O God, as we begin this Advent season, help us to discover new gifts for our journey, ever aware that You travel this road to Bethlehem with us. Let us worship You now, knowing that in You we find our hope. Amen

*GATHERING HYMN "People, Look East" (vs. 1 & 4) Red Hymnal #202

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES: HOPE Wendy & Emily Iscove

One: Today is the first Sunday of Advent and this morning we light the candle of Hope as a reminder that God's vision is more than we can see and as a proclamation of the promise of life for our winter world. Hope is like a light shining in a dark place. As we light this candle, we celebrate the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 11: 1-2
The prophet Isaiah spoke words of hope to Israel: "There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him."

UNISON PRAYER:
Gracious God, how grateful we are for the light of hope that pierces even the greatest darkness. As we prepare for Christ's coming, help us to share our hope with others. May this candle stand as a witness to our belief in Your faithfulness, the very source of our hope. Amen.

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

*SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE *TUNE: STILL, STILL, STILL*

Hope, Hope Hope, the light of Christ is hope.
In all our darkness Christ is shining, Leading upward, faith refining.
Hope, hope, hope, the light of Christ is hope.

During our sung Blessing, children are invited to Church School

LISTENING FOR THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:26-38 New Testament Page 56-57

SERMON "The Desire to be Delivered" Rev. Chris Solimene

Gabriel's Message

The angel Gabriel from heaven came;
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
'All hail,' said he, 'thou lowly maiden, Mary
Most highly favored lady.'
Gloria!
'For known a blessed mother thou shalt be.
All generations laud and honor thee.
Thy son shall be Emmanuel.
Most highly favored lady.'
Gloria!
Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head.
'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said.
'My soul shall laud and magnify His Holy Name.'
Most highly favored lady.
Gloria!
Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn.
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
'Most highly favored lady.'
Gloria!

Arr. by Jim Clements for VOCES8
Gifted in Memory of Anna Lalama & Elvira Curti

RESPONSE OF GOD'S PEOPLE

INVITATION TO SHARE

OFFERTORY ANTHEM "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" ES IST EIN ROS

Verse One Sung by Choir

I-sa-iah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior, when half spent was the night.

O Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
Dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.
True man yet very God,
From sin and death now save us, and share our every load.

*DOXOLOGY ADESTE FIDELIS

O come lets us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord! Amen

*UNISON DEDICATION

In this moment of giving we hear Your call again, O Lord.
And we offer You ourselves – all that we have and all that we are in order to touch the world with the Advent message: God is love. God is with us. God will never leave us. Amen

SHARING OUR JOYS & CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

"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

(* Traditional translation, but please feel welcome to use alternatives such as "God," "Creator," or "Mother," as seems fitting for you!)

GOD SENDS US TO SERVE

*CLOSING HYMN "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" Red Hymnal #196

*A SUNG BENEDICTION "Child of Our Dreams" Marty Haugen

Holy Child of poverty, so lowly is your birth;
sharing our humanity, embracing all the earth;
Every nation, every race, every person wears your face;
Come anew, O Child of our dreams.
Come anew, Emmanuel.

POSTLUDE *Baroque Trumpet* by Young

Please join us for refreshments immediately following Worship in our Fellowship Hall

We offer much gratitude for our choir singers today including:
Sopranos : Haley Stoliker and Jessica Moss
Altos: Kelly St. Denis and Helena Sun
Tenors : Aaron Scott and Paul DiMauro
Basses Carl Delmolino and Karmen Paley

All are Welcome joyfully and unconditionally!
As an open and affirming church, we welcome with pleasure all who chose to worship with us today.

Feeling lonely, have a spiritual question, looking for a prayer partner or listening ear? For pastoral care, home or hospital visits, prayer or theological conversation, Pastor Chris is available by phone or email.

Flowers are given today by Trudy and Leslie Desmangles to celebrate the new season and all the hope and joy that it brings!

Prayers are requested for: Jennifer M., Dale Galbo, Harvey Anthony, Audrey Palmer, Theresa Bendell, Walt Rusczyk, Paul M., Phil G., Jim H., Linda Ellsworth, Karen Merkle, Melissa Cyr, Rob Rudewicz, Michelle Troconis, and Satiyaraj

Worship Volunteers: Reader – Gail Alvord, Trustee – Sue Crowther, Usher – Sally Albrecht, Videographer – Kate Rickson-McNally, Coffee Hour Hosts – Beth Ferrari, Coffee Hour Food – Kathy Hine

Birthdays: (Sunday, November 29 - Saturday, December 5) Nora Marston (Berggren)

Church Calendar

Sunday 11/29	10:00 AM	Advent One--HOPE
Sunday 11/29		Gifts of Love Collection
Sunday 11/29	6:00 PM	AA Open Meeting
Monday 11/30	6:00 PM	Greening of the Church and Pizza
Wednesday 12/2	10:00 AM	Coffee with the Pastor
Wednesday 12/2	5:30 PM	Hand Bells
Wednesday 12/2	6:30 PM	Choir
Thursday 12/3	10:00 AM	ANS Twoodles
Thursday 12/3	10:30 AM	Advent Bible Study
Saturday 12/5	9:00 AM	Salvation Army Bell Ringing--Walmart

Sunday 12/6		Advent Two--PEACE
Sunday 12/6	10:00 AM	Communion Worship
Sunday 12/6	11:00 AM	Hidden Treasures Open
Sunday 12/6	6:00 PM	AA Open Meeting

Announcements

Greening of the Church and Pizza - Monday, November 30 6:00 PM
Love to decorate for the season? Join us in "Greening the Church". We'll gather in the kitchen for pizza (free-will offering to cover expenses), then make merry as we put up wreaths, trees, swags and more!

Coffee with the Pastor will take place the 2nd through 4th (or 5th) Wednesdays, 10 am at the Coffee Trade (21 West Main St.) each month. Please note: there is no longer CWTP on the 1st Wednesday of each month, often when we are cooking for 1st Friday Dinners. **Come by for conversation and fellowship.** Pop in or stay for the hour. See you there!

Advent Bible Study, Library - Thursday, December 3, 10:30 AM
Join Professor of Religion, Leslie DesMangles, who will guide us through a side by side of the two Synoptic Gospels (Matthew and Luke) to glean from each the full story of Jesus' birth. We'll also look at other ancient extant writings, namely the Gospel of James to see what else we might add to our Advent reflection and preparation of Christ's birth.

Salvation Army Bell-Ringing - Jingle-jingle! Come ring the bells for Salvation Army on **Saturday, December 5th at Walmart!** Greeting shoppers with a cheery "Merry Christmas" is a fun and easy way to help those in need and 90% of the proceeds are used to support local residents! This is only a 1-hour commitment & no experience is necessary. You can bring a partner or we will find one for you, if you don't want to ring alone. Sign up in the hallway and Lynn Del Cegno will contact you with further details. Questions? Call Lynn Del Cegno: 860-690-9675.

Christmas Market in Fellowship Hall Opens - Sunday, December 6 - A selection of Christmas and Holiday décor, decorations, dishware and linens will be complimented by a smattering of unique and beautiful gift ideas for all you love! The market will be open during Fellowship Time following worship on each Sunday in Advent and during office hours of the church. Cash or checks payable to Avon Congregational Church.

Poinsettias in Honor and Memory of Loved Ones for Christmas.
Christmas Poinsettias add sacred beauty and help make our Advent and Christmastide celebration more meaningful. Would you like to provide one (or more) to grace our sanctuary? It is a wonderful way to remember or honor a loved one. Please fill out an order form and return with your money no later than Sunday, December 6th. Each plant costs $12.00. Include check or cash for the full amount with the order form. Forms are available in E-Tidings and the office. Make checks payable to Avon Congregational Church and return to the church office.

Our Statement of Inclusion

In keeping with the life and teaching of Christ Jesus, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome all people of any age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, ability or social or economic status into our community of faith. We affirm the humanity of all people as unique individuals made in God's image. We also affirm the special gifts that each person has to offer. We invite all to participate in the full life of the church and covenant of our Christian community.

Staff Contact List – Online Church Information

Rev. Chris Solimene, Pastor	pastor@avon-church.org
Karen Levan, Dir. of Music Ministries/Organist	music@avon-church.org
Jolene Tefoe, Dir. of Avon Nursery School	ANS@avon-church.org
Office Manager, Charry Salmon	office@avon-church.org
John Carlson, Finance Administrator	administrator@avon-church.org
Lenny Lebatique, Sexton	

Scan to Donate

Church Address: 6 West Main Street, Avon, CT 06001
Church Number 860-678-0488
Website: avon-church.org
Wifi PW: avonchurch

Steering Circle 2026 – 2027

Moderator – Jerry Humble; Treasurer – Bob Linderman; Clerk – Candace Doersch; Worship – Alex Harris and Kent May; Nurturing – Lee Egan and Joan Miller; Outreach – Lynn Del Cegno and Leslie Desmangles; Support – Kate Allen and Betsy VanLoon; Members at Large – Fran Festa and Kate Rickson-McNally