

The Church of the Red Rocks  
United Church of Christ  
*Inspired by God's grace we love and welcome all, serve all and seek justice for all.*

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December 3, 2023 — The First Sunday in Advent  
Service of Word and Sacrament

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\*Congregation standing in body or in spirit

**TO PONDER AS WE GATHER:** When you think about *hope* what comes to mind? The biblical understanding of hope is more profound than *wanting* or *needing*. In difficult times, hope can grow dim. It has been said that one of the primary tasks of 'church' is keeping hope alive. What do you think?

### Gathering for Worship

**Prelude** "Canon de Noel" arr. Joseph Martin

**Greeting & Welcome** Pastor Len Silvester

One: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey...

**All: YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!!**

\***Gathering Hymn #110** "Now Bless the God of Israel"

**Lighting the Advent Wreath: Candle of Hope** – Sedona Winds Residents

Ringling of the Bell Peter Fish

One: Today the season of Advent begins... [*continues*] Judy Roubal

Lighting of the Candle Mitzie Andrews

**All: O God, in this church family's time of anticipation, we pray  
for the gift of trusting your Spirit to lead us through to a new day.  
Help us seek, and find hope in, what cannot fail. Open us so that we may think your thoughts and live as you  
would have us live. Confirm us Christ's hope-filled people.  
Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come! (...a time of silence...)**

**Advent Carol, verse 1**, choir first then all sing *Come Surely, Lord Jesus*

(1) **Come surely, Lord Jesus, as dawn follows night,  
our hearts long to greet you, as roses, the light.  
Salvation, draw near us, our vision engage.  
One candle is lit for the hope of the age.**

### Listening for Our Still-Speaking God

**Epistle Reading** 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Pam Moore

**Gospel Reading** Mark 13:30-37 Pastor Len

[seated] **Hymn of Preparation No. 122** "Come, O Long-Expected Jesus"

**Message** "Homeward Bound: Taking the Multi-Stop Red-Eye" Pastor Len

**Anthem** "Is There Room in Your Heart for a King?" Robert Lau

### Responding with Generosity, Prayer, and Sacrament

**Invitation to the Generosity**

**An Offering of Music**      “Gabriel’s Oboe”      Ennio Morricone      arr. Phillip Kereren

**\*Response** (sung by all)

**For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years comes round the time of gold;  
When hope shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world sends back the song which now the angels sing.**

**Communion** [all are welcome to partake]      Pastor Len

Invitation

Prayers of the People & Communion Prayer

Len: Lift up your hearts!

**All: We let them go, and they fly to God!**

Len: Let us give thanks to God!

**All: It is good to give God thanks and praise!**

Len: *[prayer continues]*

Sharing of the bread and cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving (together)

**God, source of hope, we are grateful for Christ’s presence in this simple meal. Our faith is renewed, and our courage is increased.**

**Go with us now and sustain us in hope!**

### Departing to Serve ... Hopefully

**\*Blessing**

Pastor Len

**\*Benediction** (sung first by choir, then by all)

*May You Run and Not Be Weary* (Murakami/Hanson)

**May you run and not be weary**

**May your heart be filled with song**

**And may the love of God continue**

**To give you hope and keep you strong**

**And may you run and not be weary**

**May your life be filled with joy**

**And may the road you travel always lead you home.**

**Postlude**

“On Our Way Home”

David Lanz

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***When our worship is over, our service begins.***

***Go and serve the world God loves.***

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**Welcome, all!** A special welcome goes to our guests and visitors. We hope you have felt at home and have experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit.

If you would like to receive information from CRR please be sure we have your e-mail address. Let us know how we may serve you.

**Welcome back, Pastor Len!** The Rev. Len Silvester was with us for three months two years ago. He returns to serve us in this “bridge” time until we select a new settled pastor. He is available full-time, but will be working remotely from his home in Scottsdale during the week.

**Godspeed, Carol and John:** Join us following worship in Painted Cliffs Hall for refreshments and the chance to show appreciation to the McDougalds, heading this week for their next chapter of life... in Ohio. We SO appreciate all that you have shared here so faithfully for so long. May God bless and keep you both.

**Purple Prayer Cards** are located behind each pew. Please feel free to fill one out and drop it in a basket or give it to one of the ushers. Prayer requests may also be added to the Church of the Red Rocks Prayer Wall at [www.churchoftheredrocks.com](http://www.churchoftheredrocks.com) under the heading <About Us>.

**Advent 'Question Box':** During Advent, Pastor Len invites your questions... on faith, life, church/interim time, his journey... whatever is on your mind. You may place your questions in the offering basket, mail them to him at the church office, or email them to [pastorlen.crrucc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorlen.crrucc@gmail.com). He will respond to our questions in his **sermon on December 31**.

**Special Church Meeting Next Sunday:** A special Congregational meeting is to be held December 10, 2023, after the worship service to vote on a recommendation by the Church Council and the Finance, Endowment and Administration Ministry, per a request from the Faith in Action Committee, to give \$25,000 to **Hope House** and \$25,000 to **Lago Gardens**. The funds would come from the Employee Retention Credit money that Church of the Red Rocks received earlier this year. We encourage you to join us in Painted Cliffs Hall around the tables for discussion and the vote. (Proxy ballots available in Painted Cliffs Hall and the church office)

**It's Game On! – Tomorrow - 1 to 3 pm:** Come and have lots of fun playing Pegs & Joker! Bring your own beverage and a friend. Contact Maureen Zdimal ([mfgzgowest@gmail.com](mailto:mfgzgowest@gmail.com)) or Bonnie McKeon ([sdmama@msn.com](mailto:sdmama@msn.com)) for questions.!

**Tomorrow: This month's community meal for the hungry:** Every first Monday we gather at St. Andrews Episcopal Church in West Sedona from 2:30 – 6:30 pm. Want to help? Speak with David or Pam Stabenfeldt. *New volunteers are welcome!*

**Saturday, December 16 - 5 pm – Festival of Lessons and Carols:** We are in for a special treat as The Sedona Academy of Chamber Singers (the Choir-in-Residence at CRR) leads us in the traditional Festival of Lessons and Carols. This is a deeply moving experience to which to invite your friends and neighbors.

**Sunday, December 17 - 5 pm – Worship in Music and Word:** We are in for a special treat as we are led in worship by our handbell choir, the CRR Singers, SACS, and a string quartet! Pastor Len will have a message, and we'll light the **Joy** candle.

**Christmas Eve – Sunday, December 24 --** We will have two services, at 9:30 am and 5 pm. We'll sing the great carols and share the Good News of Jesus' birth. Of course, we will light individual candles at the later service. And yes... of COURSE your friends are welcome!

**Yin Yoga on Fridays:** Join Bob Johnson in Painted Cliffs Hall from 9 to 10:30 am.

**The EDGE Study/Discussion Group:** We have begun Walter Brueggemann's Prophetic Imagination: A Theological Biography by Conrad Kanagy, available on Amazon. Join us via Zoom Fridays at 10:15 am.

***If you or someone you love is hospitalized or having surgery,  
please let the office know.***

**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesday – Friday: 9 am –3 pm.  
Pastoral Counseling by appointment—please call the office.

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Dr. Ryan Holder, Director of Music -- Suzanne Moore, Organist/Pianist  
NAU Choral Interns .... CRR Choir  
The Rev. Dr. George Ault, Pastor Emeritus