

The Church of the Red Rocks

United Church of Christ

A Stephen Ministry and Open and Affirming Faith Community

*Inspired by God's grace we love and welcome all,
serve all and seek justice for all.*

December 10, 2023 — The Second Sunday in Advent

*Congregation standing in body or in spirit

TO PONDER AS WE GATHER: When you think about *peace* what comes to mind? The biblical words translated as 'peace' are way more than the absence of strife. Can you think of a time when you experienced a lively sense of peace? What were the components? Could that happen even now as we worship?

Gathering for Worship

Prelude “A Christmas Berceuse” Joseph Martin

Greeting & Welcome Pastor Len Silvester

One: Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey...

All: YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!!

***Gathering Hymn #104** “We Hail You God's Anointed”

Lighting the Advent Wreath: Candle of Peace

Ring of the Bell Peter Fish

One: Today the season of Advent deepens... Joyce Bethune

Lighting of the Candle Andrew Bethune

**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 the peace
beyond our comprehension. Open us so that we may think your thoughts and live as you would have us
live. Confirm us as your peace-living people.
Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come! (...a time of silence...)**

Advent Carol, vs. 1 & 2 “Come Surely, Lord Jesus” (Away in a Manger)

- (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.**
- (2) **Come quickly, shalom, teach us how to prepare
for a gift that compels us with justice to care.
Our spirits are restless till sin and war cease.
One candle is lit for the reign of God's peace.**

Listening for Our Still-Speaking God

Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures Isaiah 40:1-11 Penny Beers

***Gospel Reading** Mark 1:1-8 Pastor Len

[seated] **Carol** No. 116, vs. 1, 2 & 5 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Message “Homeward Bound: A Whiff of Baguette” Pastor Len

Anthem “The Peace Carol” Bob Beers

Responding with Generosity and Prayer

A Time of Prayer

Response No. 131, v. 3 (sung by all) – “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

**And you beneath life’s crushing load whose forms are bending low
Who toil along the climbing way, with painful steps and slow,
Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.**

A Time of Generosity

Invitation Pastor Len

Offering of Music “Let There Be Peace on Earth” arr. Mark Hayes

*Doxology, chorus No. 125 – “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Glooo-ria, in excelsis Deo! Glooo-ria, in excelsis Deo!

*Prayer of Thanksgiving (together)

**Your giving has changed our lives, O God, and we
respond with gratitude, and with these symbols of
our transformation-in-process.**

Departing to Serve ... Peacefully

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

Postlude “Go Now in Peace” Joseph Martin

***When our worship is over, our service begins.
Go and serve the world God loves.***

Welcome! 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. Please join us for refreshments and conversation following the service.

Requests for prayer may be made on the purple cards in the pews or on the Church of the Red Rocks Prayer Wall at www.churchoftheredrocks.com under the heading <About Us>.

Special Church Meeting Today after worship. Purpose: 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 rebate. Your voice and vote matter.

Stephen Ministry Special Meeting/Brunch: Join us this Thursday (14) at 10am at the home of Joyce Matheson (3470 Navoti Drive in West Sedona). Please bring a spouse or a friend and a dish to pass. We will have brunch and share the joy of Christmas.

Interested in becoming a member/associate member? Let the office know!

Advent 'Question Box': On January 31st, Pastor Len will respond to your questions on faith, life, church/interim time, his journey... whatever is on your mind. Submit them in an offering basket, or in the church office, or email them to pastorlen.crrucc@gmail.com.

What's Going On Here?

TODAY – 2nd Sunday in Advent

9:30am Worship service

10:30am Special meeting of the congregation

MONDAY – Office closed

10:00am DAR meets

1:00pm Knitting into the Mystery

TUESDAY – Office open 9am-3pm

11:00am Bible study at Sedona Winds

1:00pm PEO Meeting

WEDNESDAY – Office open 9am-3pm

1:30pm Worship and Music Ministry meeting

5:00pm Barbershop singers

THURSDAY – Office open 9am-3pm

10:00am Stephen Ministers' @ Matthesons

12:30pm Bible study at the church

2:00pm Pastoral Search Committee

3:30pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal

FRIDAY – Office open 9am-3pm

9:00am Yin Yoga in Painted Cliffs Hall

10:15am The EDGE study/book discussion (on Zoom)

SATURDAY

5:00pm Annual **Festival of Lessons and Carols** presented by the Sedona Academy of Chamber Singers (SACS)

NEXT SUNDAY – 3rd Sunday in Advent

9:30am **Worship in Music and Word** with handbell choir, SACS, CRR singers, and a string quartet

Christmas Eve – Sunday, December 24 -- Services at 9:30 am and 5pm.(candlelight). Reach out and bring a friend!

The Church of the Red Rocks UCC

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Suzanne Moore, Organist/Pianist
CRR Choir
The Rev. Dr. George Ault, Pastor Emeritus