

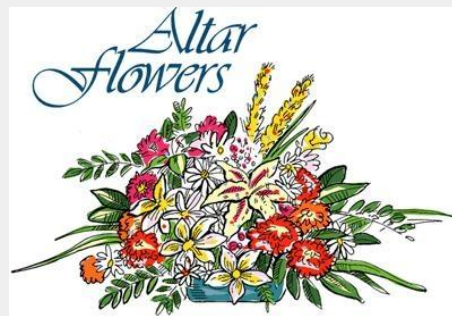
# Lakewood Congregational Church United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation  
1375 West Clifton Boulevard, Lakewood, OH



## First Sunday of Advent November 30, 2025 · 10:00 AM

Liturgy and Cover Images are from our Advent worship series:  
*Insisting on Hope* | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



*The flowers on the altar are  
dedicated to the  
Glory of God  
in loving memory of  
**Donald Shultzaberger**  
from Robert Paraska*

## Announcements and Welcome

### Prelude

### Lighting of the First Advent Candle: Hope

The Wills Family

- A: *In a world full of fear, where do you see hope?*  
B: I see hope when I look to the next generation. I feel hopeful when we gather together. I know hope, deep in my bones, when we dream of a better world.  
A: *You are right. Even in a fearful world, hope is all around us.*  
B: Today we light the candle of hope as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that we have reason to hope.  
A: *Thanks be to God! Amen.*

### \*Call to Worship

- One: On Sundays and Mondays,  
**Many: on good days and bad days,**  
One: early in the morning and very late at night,  
**Many: here in this room, and out in the world,**  
**God, we long for you to break in.**  
One: Meet us in this space.  
**Many: Surprise us with your presence.**  
One: Fill this room with your good news.  
**Many: With hope, we sing, we worship, we pray. Amen!**

## Hanging of Angel Tree Ornaments

Nicky Wills

### \* Opening Hymn

#119

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

## Faith Formation

*Pre-K thru 12th graders and their leaders can leave at this time for their faith formation classes for the rest of the service.*

### \*Prayer of Invocation (in unison)

God With Us, in the time of Moses, you spoke through water in the desert and a pillar of smoke. In the time of the judges, you spoke through the prophets. In the time of Herod, you spoke through angel choruses and unlikely miracles. In every time you are speaking. So today, in our time, we ask that you would break through the chatter and the distraction of our weary minds and speak to us once more. With hope we pray, amen.

## Anthem

James MacMillan

*O Radiant Dawn*

LCC Chancel Choir

## A Time of Prayer

### Invitation to Prayer

#### Pastoral Prayer

#### The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

## Prayer Response

*We Thank Thee*

## A Time of Sharing

### A Call to Offering

### Offertory

Michael Card

*I Will Bring You Home*

Charlotte Petrie, soprano

Adam Sampson, piano

### \*Doxology (in unison)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;**

**Praise God, all creatures here below;**

**Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts;**

**Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

### \*Prayer of Dedication (in unison)

God of hope, in a world that says there's never enough, we dare to believe your light will shine. Take these gifts and use them to break through despair with hope, through loneliness with connection, through fear with love. Amen.

## The Reading of God's Word

Earl Melvin

### Luke 1:5-13

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was

praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John.”

### **Lamentations 3:55-57**

I called on your name, O Lord,  
from the depths of the pit;  
you heard my plea, “Do not close your ear  
to my cry for help, but give me relief!”  
You came near when I called on you;  
you said, “Do not fear!”

### **Reflection**

Rev. Joanna D’Agostino

*We Long for God to Break In*

### **\*Closing Hymn**

#484

*We’ve a Story to Tell the Nations*

### **\*Advent Benediction**

Wherever you are on life’s journey,  
may you look for God’s spirit.  
May you reach for each other’s hands.  
May you choose courage whenever you can.  
And in all things, may you remember  
that good news is louder than fear.  
In the name of the one who calls,  
the one who sends,  
and the one who journeys with—  
go in peace and  
be not afraid.  
Amen.

## **Postlude**

***Our Mission Statement proclaims our common goal.***

*We strive to be a welcoming,  
worshiping community of faith,  
helping people discover and deepen  
their relationship with God, growing as  
disciples of Christ, and reaching out in  
faith and loving service.*

***In keeping with the spirit of our Mission Statement,  
Lakewood Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is an Open  
and Affirming congregation. Wherever you are on life’s journey, we  
welcome you and all people of every sexual orientation, age, ability,  
gender identity and expression, and ethnic, economic, and racial  
background into the full life and ministry of our church. We declare this  
in the everlasting grace of the Still-Speaking God.***