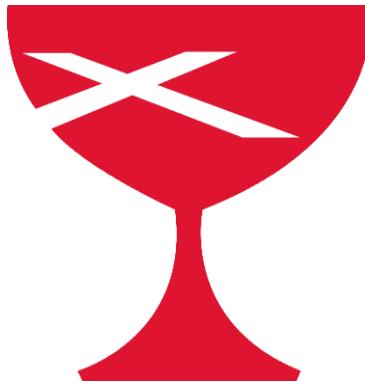


December 14, 2025
Third Sunday of Advent

Christmas Special Offering

(**Violet** is the color of this Day)

Welcome to everyone who is visiting with us today; we pray you will feel blessed as we share the love of Christ.



CARLISLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)
305 Market Street, Carlisle, IA 5004
515-989-0176
Email: carlislechristianc@gmail.com
Website: carlislechristianchurch.com
FB: Carlisle Christian Church – DOC
Reverend Kristin Pike
Organist: Justin Chastain
Greeters: Heather, Emily, Brian

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARY

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Soup potluck** is **TODAY** followed by **caroling**.
2. **TODAY** is the first Sunday to donate to the **regional Christmas Special Offering**. All gifts made stay here in the Upper Midwest, supporting the many ministries of the region, including supporting congregations in transition. Please indicate "Regional Christmas Offering" in the memo line of your check or indicate as such on the offering envelope provided in the pew.
3. We are hosting a **Blue Christmas** evening this Wednesday, **Dec. 17th 4-6:00p**. You are welcome to come anytime between these hours and stay as long as you'd like. This will be a quiet time to pause in remembrance, prayer, and lighting of candles. Please invite family and friends.
4. **CCA Spirit of Christmas program** - Our church will be adopting three families for Christmas supplying gift cards and grocery cards along with a box of fresh food. Your donations are very much appreciated! Checks may be made payable to the church with "Christmas families" on the memo line. Donations are due **TODAY**.
5. **Mitten Tree**-We would like to collect warm mittens, gloves, hats and socks for the Carlisle School District students. These will be donated to the school in mid-January. Items may be placed in the white donation box in the coat room or the back room on the table.
6. **Personal Care Bags** - We will be collecting personal care items to place in bags for the homeless to be donated at the end of January. Items needed include: shampoo, shower gel, soap, shower puff, toothpaste, toothbrush, dental floss, cotton swabs, deodorant, small tissue packs, band-aids, feminine hygiene products, etc. These items may be placed in the white donation box in the coat room or the back room on the table.
7. **Blessing Box** - We are requesting non-food items - personal hygiene items, paper products, cleaning and laundry supplies and will be discontinuing food items at this time. Thank you for your assistance.

PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR PRAYERS: (Please call the church office (515-989-0176) or contact an Elder/Deacon to add/remove names.)

Our friends in Care Centers: Gordy Kain Joe Lang Patsy Overton

Friends and family members: Cathie Berg Sandee Zirkelbach Randy Skoglund (Sandee Zirkelbach's brother)

REMEMBERING THOSE IN MILITARY SERVICE

Justin Miller (Okinawa)

Tara Wesner (IN)

Joshua Wesner (IN)

COMING UP

Board Meeting @ 5:30p
Advent Study @ 10:00a CCC; 6:30p CUPC
Blue Christmas 4-6:00p
Getting to Know Your Bible @ 6:00p
Sunday School @ 9:00 a.m.
Fellowship @ 10:00 a.m.
Worship @ 10:30 a.m.
Greeters: Diaconate Team #3

Monday, Dec 15th
Tuesday, Dec 16th
Wednesday, Dec 17th

Sunday, Dec 21st

**Please stand if you are able

LET US WORSHIP TOGETHER AND PRAISE GOD!

**Hymn of Praise #162

"What Child Is This?"

** Call to Worship

L: We gather together in this place:
P: **prophets and dreamers, singers and poets,**
L: we who dare to imagine a world renewed;
P: **we who dare to dream God's dream.**
L: We sing with Elizabeth and Mary.
P: **Our spirits rejoice in God, our savior!**
L: We bless the God of justice and joy,
P: **who lifts up the lowly and vulnerable.**
L: God's mercy is upon us all,
P: **from generation to generation.**
L: Come and worship, all you who dream and wait.
P: **We have come to wonder and praise.**

**Opening Prayer

God of surprises, you interrupt our world with joy and hope beyond our wildest dreams. When we feel forgotten or despair, bless us with your holy joy. When our world feels barren, bless us with the gifts of possibility. We pray as people of deep faith, entrusting ourselves and our world to the holy unknown, brought to birth in Jesus, our light and life. Amen.

Advent Candle Lighting

Justin and Andred Chastain

The birth of Jesus has been told and retold a thousand times and in a thousand ways. Its impact cannot be contained in any one perspective. The element of the story we focus on changes how we hear it, how we imagine it, and how we experience it. We light the candle of hope because hope creates a path for a new, unknown story to unfold. We light the candle of peace because peace requires us to pay attention to the needs of those around us.

Two cousins are embracing and sharing life-changing news with one another. One, an older woman, who knew the physical risks of bearing a child late in life. The other, a not-yet-married young girl, who was aware of the social stigmas in her society. Yet each chose joy over fear. When Elizabeth shares her surprising news with Mary, her joy doubles upon hearing that Mary is also pregnant. The two women sing of joy as they sense, literally, in their bodies that change is coming. A joy that good news perseveres even in the most difficult of circumstances. From Isaiah to Mary and Elizabeth, from biblical times to the present, joy can be found. Joy is not denial of harm that is happening; it is a refusal to let injustice define all reality. A joy that moves from personal experience to communal transformation in the song that Elizabeth and Mary proclaimed, and we proclaim today. A joy our world needs to experience this season, not to hide from what is wrong, but to strengthen God's people to bear a world that is so uncertain. Today, we light the candle of joy because joy sustains us in the midst of uncertainty.

**Hymn of Gratitude (on the screen)

"While We Are Waiting, Come"

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Luke 1:39-55

Norman Rice

Sermon

Rev. Kristin Pike

Affirmation of Hope

Let us affirm God's gift of life-giving and justice-seeking joy:

We believe joy is the justice we give ourselves. Because God's joy dwells with the humble and is rooted in justice, we find its warmth and light shine brightest through shared witness and sacred disruption. We believe joy grows through blessing others and fostering authentic relationships. We believe joy is more than a feeling or the things we possess. Joy is our faith made visible and something we share by choosing

connection. We believe joy is truth and truth-telling. We believe joy is active resistance, Spirit-filled solidarity, and the bringing of God's dream. We believe true joy is not the opposite of heartache, but lives right within the swirl of our grief and hardest emotions. We celebrate the depth of God's joy and how it can hold our pain. When we are filled with this kind of joy, we celebrate what God is birthing now, even amid a world where so much appears to be ending. We believe joy is freedom and healing, redemption and return. We believe joy comes from knowing God is close, even when life is hard. God's joy shows up not just in breathtaking beauty but in moments we hurt so much we can't breathe. We choose justice. We choose love. We choose each other. We choose joy.

Special Music

Rev. Bob Zirkelbach

Joys and Concerns

Moment of Silence for Meditation

Pastoral Prayer followed by the Lord's Prayer (use debts and debtors)

Service of Communion

If you believe Jesus is the Christ, our risen Savior, come to the Table

Communion Hymn: Canticle of the Turning

Eric Pike

Prayer for the Elements

Rev. Kristin Pike

Please come forward to collect the elements and return to your seat so we can partake together. If you are unable to come forward, please ask someone to bring the elements to you.

Offering Meditation

Sharon Bittner, Elder

****Doxology** (pg 46)

****Prayer for the Gifts**

Sharon Bittner, Elder

****Hymn of Invitation #153**

"It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

**Charge

Rev. Kristin Pike

There is joy in centering the voices of those typically unheard. So go forth from this place with ears to hear, and believe the cries of women, immigrants, elders, and all who are vulnerable and silenced. May we be strengthened not just to hear and believe, but to act, for there is no greater joy than ensuring that all God's children need not cry out any longer.

**Benediction

Rev. Kristin Pike

You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you are, God has put you there. God has a purpose in your being there. Christ lives in you and has something to do through you wherever you are. Believe this and go in the grace, and love, and power of Jesus Christ. Amen.

****Closing (on the screen)**

"O Sing a Song of Bethlehem"

