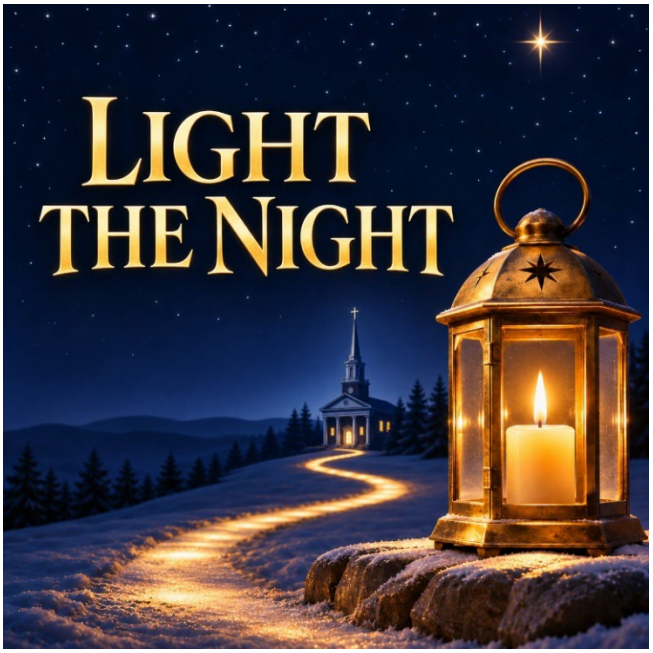
Armstrong Chapel Worship Resource—November 29, 2026



A journey through the dark spaces of our world and our lives, exploring how God's presence illuminates our fears, guides our steps, and restores our hope. "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned."—Isaiah 9:2

HOPE IN THE SHADOWS

First Sunday of Advent

PRELUDE

WELCOME

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

inspired by Isaiah 64:1-9 and Mark 13:24-37

Leader: The sun is darkened; the moon does not give light.
People: Come, Lord Jesus.
Leader: In those days the stars will fall from heaven; keep awake.
People: Come, Lord Jesus.
Leader: Tear open the heavens and let your Light shine; save us from our sin.
People: Come, Lord Jesus.

***HYMN** *People, Look East*
#202, UMH

People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength
The seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim,
one more-light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels announce with shouts of mirth
him who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon (1928)
Music: Martin Shaw (1928)
Harm. © Oxford University Press. From "Oxford Book of Carols" 1928

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** *The Apostles' Creed #881*

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;**

**And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Universal

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SCRIPTURE Mark 13:24-31 (NIV)

24 "But in those days, following that distress,
"'the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light;
25 the stars will fall from the sky,
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

26 "At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. 27 And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

28 "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. 29 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. 30 Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

The Word of God for the People of God.
Thanks be to God.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

SINGING OUR FAVORITE HYMNS—8:20AM

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN—9:40AM

HYMN *Joy Comes with the Dawn*
#2210 FWS, refrain only

Joy comes with the dawn;
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb and scatters the night with her song, joy comes with the dawn.

Words & Music: Gordon Light
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CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER
Adapted from *The Call to Worship Resource*

Great God, no one knows the hour of your return, yet we await your arrival, trusting that it will come.

There is a sense of urgency in our waiting. We await the birth of Jesus, but we watch for so much more, anticipating all that your incarnation means in a hurting world.

Teach us to keep alert, that we may not become complacent or convinced that we have time. Show us how to hurry up and wait, to enact our expectation by sharing love, offering forgiveness, and living according to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

Restore us, O God of hosts. Let your face shine, that we may be saved. Save us, O Lord, from traps of our own creating:
from fear that blocks the way of love,
from worry that blocks the way of joy,
from isolation that blocks the way of relationship,
from structural injustices that keep the world bound.
Forgive us, O God of hosts, until the stars fall from heaven and we live as people transformed.

In the name of Jesus, we pray:

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.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST**
Offer the peace of Christ by saying:
The peace of Christ be with you.
Respond: **And also with you!**

HYMN *Joy Comes with the Dawn*
#2210 FWS, refrain only

Joy comes with the dawn;
joy comes with the morning sun;
joy springs from the tomb and scatters the night with her song, joy comes with the dawn.

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GIVING

***RESPONSE** #95, UMH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

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SCRIPTURE Isaiah 64:1-9 (NRSVUE)

1 O that you would tear open the heavens and come
down, so that the mountains would quake at your
presence—
2 as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
3 When you did awesome deeds that we did not
expect, you came down; the mountains quaked at
your presence.
4 From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
5 You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
6 We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
7 There is no one who calls on your name
or attempts to take hold of you,
for you have hidden your face from us
and have delivered[c] us into the hand of our
iniquity.
8 Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
9 Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

The Word of God for the People of God.
Thanks Be to God.

MESSAGE *Enlarged in the Waiting: A Prayer for God to Come*
Rev. Brandon Long

***HYMN** *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*
#196, UMH

Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley (1744)
Music: Rowland H. Prichard (1830)

BENEDICTION
Adapted from 2 Peter 3:8–15

All things in heaven and earth belong to God,
who is coming in glory to reveal a new creation.
Let us offer our lives to the Lord. Let your Light shine in us.
In the name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.
AMEN.

***POSTLUDE**

**Stand in body or in spirit*

Liturgist at 8:20 – Carol Ney
Lighting the Advent Candle at 8:20 – Larry and Elizabeth Brott

Liturgist at 9:40 – Rev. Steve Hoard
Lighting the Advent Candle at 9:40 – Adam, Jennifer, Weston, and Noelle Miller



Gather for coffee and treats in the Atrium following the 9:40am service!

REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE

ONLINE GIVING

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Poinsettia ORDERS

Poinsettias will decorate the Sanctuary starting in mid-Advent. You may purchase a plant in honor of or in memory of loved ones. $25 per plant. You may take your poinsettias home with you on Christmas Eve. Orders are due by Monday, December 14.

Online order form: https://bit.ly/45uhV6G; write a note on the back of your Connect Card; or mail a note to the church office: include your payment = $20 per plant, and who you'd like a plant in memory or in honor of (attn: Joy, 5125 Drake Rd, 45243).

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A Welcoming Community Alive in Serving Christ

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Rev. Brandon Long, Director of Discipleship
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