

# Living Table

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Tuesday, December 22, 2020

## This Week with Living Table UCC



### Message from Pr. Rachael

Christmas is in just a few days. It's hard to believe in so many ways. As long as this year has been, it's also moved fairly quickly. As you know, I haven't been out in the world so I don't know what it is like this year. Is there a rush for last minute shopping? Are the stores crowded or are people trying to be safe? Is there pressure to pretend that this Christmas is like every other year? I honestly don't know. I hope everyone is acknowledging that Christmas during pandemic is different.

Maybe without the usual expectations of parties and shopping and other holiday activities, there has been more time for reflection on what Christmas is or is not. Maybe you've had time to think about Christmas in years past - the good, the great, and the disappointing. Maybe you are overwhelmed with grief this year and it just doesn't feel like Christmas and you aren't expecting any joy or hope or peace or love to break into your life this season.

The good news is that Christmas will come no matter what is happening in our lives. If we are anxious and depressed, Christmas will come. If we are sad and lonely, Christmas will come. If we are grieving the loss of a loved one or all that pandemic

has taken away, Christmas will come. If we are despairing for the state of our country or our world, Christmas will come. Fortunately for us, God's love is not dependent on our circumstances or emotions. God's love never ends, not even during pandemic.

I encourage you to find a way to share the love the Christ-child brings into the world. Do something different this year to honor all the challenges this year brings. The important thing is to take time and remember that this day is about God's Love breaking into the world, filling our lives with possibilities, dreams, visions, promises... If the gifts you sent were delayed in the shipping, it'll be okay. If your Zoom connections are flawed, it'll be okay. If the grocery order doesn't work out, it'll be okay. Why? Because God's Love showing up in the world isn't dependent on what we do or don't do.

Find a moment or two in the next few days to give thanks for all the ways God shows God's love - through the people in your life, through the beauty of nature, through the promise of a vaccine, through this community, through art, through music... and so much more. Take some time to celebrate Love however it shows up in your life.

Be safe.  
Be well.  
Merry Christmas!  
Pr. Rachael

## Calendar

All Living Table events are Virtual, see All Things for Online Church for Zoom Links:  
<http://www.livingtable.org/all-things-for-online-church.html>

### Wednesday:

10 am Virtual Tea with Pastor Rachael  
5 pm Centering Prayer Group  
6 pm GA Meeting (Rental)

### Thursday:

 Christmas Eve, both services use regular worship link

5 pm Intergenerational Service  
11 pm Candlelight Service

### Friday:

Christmas Day

### Saturday:

8 am Morning Bible Study Group reading 2 Samuel

### Sunday:

9:15 am Adult Sunday School  
10:30 am Worship

View the full calendar in the [Calendar](#) tab on our website.

All Things for Online Church

**Reader Needed!**

We need readers for both Christmas Eve services. Both Christmas Eve services will use our regular worship link and passcode. The first service is at 5:30 pm and the second is at 11 pm.

If you plan to attend the 11 pm service, we need 1 reader. You will receive a script for the service so you will know exactly when to read. These readings vary a bit in length so you can say whether you'd like a shorter or longer reading.

It's important to know ahead of time as these readings are not in the bulletin. Please email Pr. Rachael if you are willing to read at either service.



## **Daily Advent Mini Service** 5 pm Central – Every Day Until Christmas

*Please read on for some trouble-shooting based on our first few mini services. You do not need to log in to anything to watch this brief daily service, but you do need to log in to participate in the text chat. This is encouraged, at startup to say hello, and during the brief service, to share your prayer requests for the closing shared prayer time. Daily Advent Mini Service will start at 5 pm Central each day, and it will go for about 5-10 minutes. It will usually be closer to five minutes, but may go as long as 10 minutes on days with longer readings and/or many prayer requests. Ten minutes is about the maximum time.*

### **To participate via Facebook...**

Go here: <https://www.facebook.com/rachael.keefe>.

Every day will have a public post that says, "Rachael Keefe plans to go live" and then, at 5 pm on that date, the live mini service will begin. Facebook will give you ways to invite your Facebook friends too – please do this. Share the live video, invite friends, etc. Use the text chat on the video to say hi and to share your prayer requests for the day. Share prayer requests early, for the closing shared prayer time. For the first few days of services, we have had about 12 people join us on Facebook live, and another 100+ viewers within the hour.

### **To participate via YouTube...**

Go here: <https://www.youtube.com/c/RachaelKeefeUCC>.

Every day at 5 pm the channel will go live. Log in to YouTube with your Google (gmail) account so you can participate in the text chat during the live mini service. Subscribe to the channel and click on the "bell" to get notifications in advance, and a

direct link each day in your notifications. This is one good way to make sure you're in the right place. Ideally, you can join the event early, watch the countdown timer, and then the event will just start a few seconds after 5 pm. That's the way it is supposed to work.

Some folks unfortunately were in the event on Monday, and found that "it did not start" for them automatically. This is because your browser did not reload to show you the live feed. I promise you that it is there, and the delay is only about 10 seconds. So, if it's ten seconds past 5 pm and you do not see the live feed yet, reload or refresh your browser. Alternatively, click back to the channel page, and look for the video with the red and white "LIVE" label on it, and click your way in. Basically, YouTube should refresh your page for you, so that you see the live feed. If your browser does not do that for you, you need to help it out by refreshing your browser, either on the event page, or back out on the channel's main page, where you will find the live feed in progress and then click to join it. So you know, Rachael is making the first 60 seconds of the service be "small talk" so that everyone can get in, and overcome these little barriers.

Okay? Hopefully, it will work for folks pretty well. Thanks for hanging in there with technology. For the first few days of services, we only had a few people join us on YouTube live, and another 20 or so views within the hour.

### **To join without logging in to anything...**

Just watch on YouTube each day here, at 5 pm, look for the red and white "LIVE" video and click to join it: <https://www.youtube.com/c/RachaelKeefeUCC>

## **Help Beacon Take Action**

Thank you to the six people who came to the Rent Day action this week. Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative would like help from all of us during the 2021 legislative session. It needs us each to do one or more of these things: write an e-mail, write a letter, make a phone call, or attend a virtual meeting with our own legislator. If you can do one of these, please use the link below to go to the action pledge on Beacon's website. When you fill in the pledge, Beacon can alert you when help is needed. We all know that housing is important. Let's support Beacon's efforts to increase support for housing and to get a state rental subsidy. The link is [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeyX4msdTadj7ldwQujHIYGO6Zm6sa\\_Xm\\_v31DAIW9XFVmt4g/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeyX4msdTadj7ldwQujHIYGO6Zm6sa_Xm_v31DAIW9XFVmt4g/viewform)

## **UCC Special Offering**

The final UCC Special Offering is called the Christmas Fund (formerly Veterans of the Cross). It goes to retired pastors with low incomes, who often served when ministers were not well compensated and therefore don't get much Social Security. The pandemic has been especially hard on them. The fund helps with emergency grants and health premiums, and it sends small Christmas "Thank You" gift checks in December. We will collect for this offering the rest of this month.

## **Church Council**

Here are the minutes from the Dec. 10 Church Council meeting: [Download here.](#)

## **Zoom Passwords Required**

All Zoom meetings now require a passcode. Thursday's Table talk contains all the meetings and passcodes for Living Table. If you cannot find what you need, please

contact Pr. Rachael. They will not be shared on our website. You, however, are free to share them with anyone interested in attending Living Table activities.

All Things for Online Church

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Living Table is a compassionate community drawn together in Christ to embody love, seek justice, and invite healing

