



*We are Disciples of Christ,
a movement for wholeness
in a fragmented world.*

**Gayton Road Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
Ministers: Every Believer
Pastor: Jonathan Kruschwitz**



*As part of the one body of
Christ, we welcome all to
the Lord's Table as God
has welcomed us.*

December 23, 2018

Fourth Sunday of Advent



*Please use the Narthex for conversation, gathering and visiting,
so that the Sanctuary may be used for quiet reflection and preparing for worship.*

GATHERING

Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

*“What good is it for me that Christ was born a thousand years ago in Bethlehem,
if he is not born today in our own time?”*

(Meister Eckhart, 1260-1328)

PRELUDE

“Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella”

Christopher Uehlein

LIGHTING THE CANDLES OF HOPE, PEACE, JOY, AND LOVE

We have lit three candles, for hope, peace, and joy. Today we light the fourth candle, the candle of love. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, but that we recognize in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires, stronger than grief or despair, stronger even than death. We love, because God loves us.

RESPONSE

“Creator of the Stars of Night”

Plainsong, Mode IV

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

(Luke 1:39-55)

Let our hearts magnify the good Mystery,
Let our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!
For look! The One behind it all
Is making eyes at us!
The Almighty and All-merciful
Is doing something new!

Lifting us up where we are lowly,
Bringing us down where we are powerful;
Filling us where we are empty,
Ruffling us where we are full of ourselves—
Loving us.
Yes, thank God. Loving us. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN 148**

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

ADESTE FIDELES

***OPENING PRAYER**

(Luke 1:39-55)

**God of holy hearsay,
Whose rumored coming
Stirred up divine trouble
Among two ordinary women—
Empty yourself into our humdrum world.
Show us the strange beauty and topsy-turvy wonder
Of your love.
Through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come.
Amen.**

ANTHEM "What Sweeter Music" John Leavitt

SCRIPTURE Micah 5:2-5^a

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (SPOKEN)

SCRIPTURE Luke 1:39-55

SERMON "When Love Is Born"

*HYMN OF AFFIRMATION 130

"My Soul Gives Glory to My God" MORNING SONG

During this song, all are welcome to come forward to become members of Gayton Road Christian Church by transfer of membership or baptism.

Deacons gather in the back of the sanctuary to prepare for the offering.

OFFERING INVITATION (Luke 1:39-55)

OFFERTORY "In the Bleak Midwinter" Raymond Haan

*DOXOLOGY 46 "Praise God" OLD HUNDREDTH

*OFFERING BLESSING (Luke 1:39-55)

**God of good news,
We wonder
At the reach
Of your love:
May these gifts
And our lives
Bear it
In undreamed-of ways.
Amen.**

CONFESSION (Luke 1:39-55)

Lord, you bring our feet into the light of love. Christ, you promise healing for the earth. Lord, you come near in the vulnerable word made flesh.

When we prefer to hide in the shadows:

When we turn our backs on our common world:

When we worship distant idols of celebrity and power:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Luke 1:39-55)

THE PEACE

(Luke 1:39-55)

The peace of Christ is born in unexpected places.

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

COMMUNION HYMN 124 “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

PICARDY

(Elders and Deacons gather in the back of the Sanctuary to prepare to serve)

Communion is celebrated each Sunday. As a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation, we practice an open table where all are invited to the table. There is no barrier that prevents participation in the Lord’s Supper. The bread and the cup are taken in unison; hold each in your hands until you are signaled to partake. This communion bread is gluten free.

You are invited to bless the bread and the cup for your neighbor. As you pass the element, you may say, “The body of Christ, broken for you,” and, “The blood of Christ, shed for you.”

PRAYERS OF THE ELDERS

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION

*CLOSING HYMN 143

“Joy to the World”

ANTIOCH

*BENEDICTION

(Luke 1:39-55)

**May the dream of God,
The love of Christ,
And the surprise of the Spirit—**

**Be born in us today
In a world-changing way. Amen.**

*RESPONSE

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ST. LOUIS

*O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our God, Emmanuel.*

POSTLUDE

“Fantasy on ‘Joy to the World’”

Evan Copley

*Please stand if able.

As a courtesy to other worshippers, please silence phones. Bibles (electronic or book) are most welcome!

“What Sweeter Music”

(Words: Robert Herrick)

*What sweeter music can we bring, Than a carol, for to sing
The Birth of this Our heavenly King? Awake the Voice! Awake the String!*

*We see him come, and know him ours, Who, with His sunshine and His show’rs
Turns all the patient ground to flow’rs, turns all the patient ground to flow’rs.*

*Dark and dull the night, fly hence away, And give the honor to this day,
That see December turned to May.*

*If we may ask the reason, say The why and wherefore, all things here
Seem like the springtime of the year?*

*The darling of the world has come, And fit it is, we find a room
To welcome him, the nobler part of all the house here, is the heart.*

*Which we will give him and bequeath, the holly, and the ivy wreath,
To do Him honor; who’s our King, And Lord of all this reveling,
To do Him honor; who’s our King.*

Scheduled to serve today:

- PastorJonathan Kruschwitz
- Director of Music..... Jack Fox
- Intern Emily Croxford
- Advent Candle Team Debbie Cook, Emily Croxford,
..... Ryder Croxford, and Ben Croxford
- Lay Leader David Koerner
- Children’s Message Amanda Carlton
- Elders.....Teresa Campbell and Cinda Caiella
- Deacons Radek Larew, Kathy Habib,
..... Bill Malla, and Alexa McFarlane
- Nursery Darrah Davis

Welcome to Worship: *Whether you are a member, friend or visiting with us today, may God bless you during worship this morning. You ARE welcome and we’re very blessed that you are worshiping with us today!*

Communion is celebrated each Sunday.

GRCC NEWS AND OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Blessing Warriors Christmas Outreach: This Christmas season, we are partnering with Rhonda Sneed and the Blessing Warriors to share our love and support with the homeless in our city. We are contributing the following items: hot chocolate packets, noodle cups which need only hot water, insulated gloves, thick scarves, thick blankets, portable radios and flashlights (with batteries). Monetary donations are also welcome. Please bring all donations to the card table in the narthex.

If you would like to make your donation **in memory or honor of** a friend or family, there will be forms in the narthex that you may fill out.

Christmas Offering: Today, we will receive a Disciples Christmas Offering that will contribute to the ministry of the Region of Virginia. This special offering equips leaders for serving in various regional ministries, encourages congregations in a variety of ways, and helps to build relationships among congregations and other regional groups.

Bites, Brews, and Big Questions: If Jesus went missing, where would you look for him? According to the gospels, tables with food and drink and questions would be a good place to start. Join us this **January** as our gatherings resume around tables with food, drink, and questions. We will meet next on **Monday, January 7** at Rico's Mexican Grill on 2316 John Rolfe Pkwy at **6 pm** (same mall as Publix Market, at the far right end).

In this BBBQ installment, we will discuss a recurring question from our summer series: Just what is God's job description? As a guide for our conversation, we will be using James Bryan Smith's *The Good and Beautiful God*.

The church continues to collect used eyeglasses and hearing aids to help children learn and parents maintain their jobs; tab tops from drink cans, soup cans, & cat/dog food cans, etc. to support Ronald McDonald house; and box tops found on cereal boxes, soup cans, Kleenex, etc. to support our educational system. The collection boxes are in our narthex.

Lectionary Scripture

Micah 5:2-5^a

Psalm 80:1-7

Hebrews 10:5-10

Luke 1:39-55

Thank you for the generous love offerings. We are deeply grateful for your love and support!

Darrah, John, Jack, and Jonathan

CALENDAR

TODAY

Sunday School @ 9:45 am
Worship @ 11 am (Bring Your Own Poinsettia)

THIS WEEK

12/24 Christmas Eve Service @ 7 pm

COMING UP

1/2 Choir Rehearsal @ 7 pm
1/6 Elders Meeting (after Worship)
1/7 Bites, Brews, and Big Questions @ 6 pm
1/8 Symphony Manor Memory Care Gathering @ 10:30 am
1/9 Girl Scouts @ 6 pm
Choir Rehearsal @ 7 pm
1/14 Bites, Brews, and Big Questions @ 6 pm
1/16 Choir Rehearsal @ 7 pm
1/21 Bites, Brews, and Big Questions @ 6 pm
1/23 Girl Scouts @ 6 pm
Choir Rehearsal @ 7 pm
1/28 Bites, Brews, and Big Questions @ 6 pm
1/30 Choir Rehearsal @ 7 pm

LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER...

Our GRCC family: Mollie Caiella, Stuart Wilkinson, Ivan and Julie Round, Tom and Candice Nguyen, Marion Paitsel, Ben Croxford, and Jeff Wilber.

Those who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis: Jim Harris, Stuart Wilkinson, Anna Lee Werner, June & Bubba Galbraith, and Marion Paitsel.

Friends of GRCC:

Carol Sharp, mother of Julie Round
Lillie May Slaven, grandmother of Julie Round
Joan & Doug Borden, parents of Jeremy Borden
Valerie McCarry, sister of Jeremy Borden
Don Campbell, father of Cliff Campbell
Keel Family (esp. Hunter), friends of June and Bubba Galbraith
Donna Bell, sister-in-law of Barbara Chapman
The Allen Family, friends of Barbara Chapman
Ken and Liz Carpenter and family, friends of Anne Waring
Andy Hrabovsky, friend of the Wingo family
Linda Albimino, sister of Debbie Cook
Dale Garrett, cousin of Debbie Cook
Elizabeth Reich, sister of Kathy Moran
Amanda Stiverson, family of Debbie Cook
Kathleen McGinnis, mother of Rob McGinnis
Barbara Pietschman and family, friends of the Wingo family
Sandy Row, friend of the Wingo family
Family of Cherie Holberg, friends of Daniela Larew
Lillian Stewart, aunt of Debbie Cook
Bernadette McCabe, friend of Carl Schluter
Don, friend of Amanda Carlton
Jerry Galbreath, brother-in-law of Virginia Taylor
Drudy Carlton, sister of Paul Carlton
Doug Cramer, friend of Jeff Wilber
Gene Thompson, friend of Lu Roberts
Terri Kenner, daughter of June and Bubba Galbraith

We extend our deepest sympathy and prayers to Cinda Caiella and her family upon the passing of her aunt, Kathleen Barr.

*During the month of **December**, please be in prayer for these Mission Personnel of the Global Ministries for our church.*

Dec 2-8: Nikotemo Sopepa, Fiji
Dec 9-15: Mary Kathryn Ball, Ecuador
Dec 16-22: Larry and Deborah Colvin, Ghana
Dec 23-29: Eleazar Fernandez, Philippines
Dec 30-Jan 5: Phyllis Byrd, Kenya

For more information and weekly prayers for these specific areas please visit www.globalministries.org

*Together with other churches in Richmond **this December**, we pray for the families of metropolitan Richmond.*

For the week of December 23, 2018: We pray for an end to child abuse; for healthy relationship between children and their caregivers; for families going through divorce; and for all in the midst of life transitions.

(www.metroprayrva.org)

**People listed in bold added this week.
Please email or call the church with updates.**

**Gayton Road Christian Church
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Intern: Emily Croxford
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Elder Chair: Debbie Cook
Phone: 804-360-0565
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GAYTON ROAD CHRISTIAN CHURCH

“Where everybody is welcome”

Gayton Road Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is a family of friendly, accepting, God-centered people. With our come-as-you-are attitude and non-judgmental philosophy, we believe we are called to love and care for one another and share the Good News of God’s love and grace with the community through our words and actions.