**Welcome!**

We are glad you are worshiping with us today! Since our founding in the 1950s, we at Little River United Church of Christ (UCC) have been called by God to celebrate diversity, independent thought, and faithful action. This call led us to become racially integrated in the segregated Virginia of the 1950s. That same call led us in 2001 to become open to and affirming of LGBTQ+ folks, including full access to the rites of ordination and marriage. Today, we build on our heritage of proclaiming God’s radically inclusive love to our congregation, neighborhood, and world by nurturing individual and congregational spirituality, serving our community, and advocating for all God’s creatures and creation. We’d love to have you join us in these sacred tasks! You may make your presence known by emailing us at office@lrucc.org. Welcome!

**Worship and Meeting Changes in Response to Coronavirus**

We are excited to start welcoming members and friends back to the sanctuary for in-person worship. Remember for in-person service to observe social distancing and masks are required for everyone at all times. There will be no congregational singing or in-person coffee hour. Coffee hour socializing will continue to occur online via Zoom. Worship will also continue to be offered online via Zoom.

**NOTE:** Children’s Sunday School is now being offered outside on the back patio for children from kindergarten through fifth grade during the 10 am worship service. Be sure to dress your children for the weather—it can get chilly in the shade. Please check with an usher for the location of the class if the weather is not conducive to be held outdoors.

**Service Credits**

The liturgy for today is adapted from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2012* and the United Church of Christ Book of Worship. Today’s hymns are used with permission, reprinted under Onelicense.net A-715105.

**Communications at Little River UCC**

Little River UCC produces a weekly e-newsletter, *Current Tidings*, and periodically sends out *Alerts* (emails with significant, time-sensitive information). All submissions for the weekly Bulletin, *Current Tidings*, and online *Currents* should be submitted to the office by Wednesdays at noon. We also send out a monthly print newsletter, *Current Reflections*. To receive any of these communications, please send an email to currents@lrucc.org or call the church office to give us your contact information.

**Staff and Partners**

Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr., Interim Senior Pastor (619) 948-1777 | pastorart@lrucc.org
Craig Stapert, Director of Music and Communications craig@lrucc.org
Ashton Streavig, Children and Youth Choir Director ashton@lrucc.org
Kathy Heyman, Office Administrator kathy@lrucc.org
John Davis, Sexton/First Friday Coordinator john@lrucc.org
Yris Saenz, Liana Berbichasvili, Child Care Providers office@lrucc.org

Rev. Dr. Verne Arens, Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Hubert S. Beckwith, Founding Pastor
SERVICE OF CELEBRATION AND WORSHIP

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Prelude

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Goldie Gao Woods, harp

Welcome & Announcements

Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Ashton Streavig and Family

We gather around the Advent wreath today knowing that we are not perfect—
that we all make mistakes and do bad things.
Only Jesus obeyed God fully.
Jesus helps us to live as God wants us to live.
Jesus gives us peace.

Candle Lighting Ritual

from Isaiah 9:6–7

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
Authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
From this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Ritual Candle Lighting of Peace

We light this candle to proclaim the coming of the light of God into the world.
With the coming of this light there is peace, for Christ is called the “Prince of Peace.”
Christ’s name is also Emmanuel, “God with us.”
The presence of Christ with us gives us peace day by day.

Lighting of the Peace Candle

Prayer

Eternal God, we thank you that through all the years
you have given peace to your people.
Help us to have your peace in our lives.
We pray that, in this Advent season, we may, by what we do,
show your presence to the sick, to the hungry, and to the lonely,
so that they too may have peace. Amen.
CALL TO WORSHIP
Drew Nettinga

One: Righteous one! Equitable one!
All: Refining one! Delightful one!
One: Blessed one! Redeeming one!
All: One-of-flesh to save all flesh!
One: Emmanuel, One with Us — We praise your coming!

* Hymn
Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
STUTTGART
(SEE BACK OF BULLETIN FOR MUSIC INSERT)

Invocation
Drew Nettinga

Great and wonderful God, you poured yourself into your son, Jesus.
He came to live among us mere humans. We long to know you better.
Have mercy on us for our disbelief. Draw us closer to you and guide our path.
Show us your way so we will not stumble or fall short.
Grant unto us wisdom, humility, patience, and kindness.
In this hour, inspire us to go into the world and bring light and joy to people we meet.
Help us to embody love and goodness.
We worship you because you are God alone.
Have mercy on us. Amen.

*Passing of the Peace
Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr.

In Person: You may stand if you are able and offer a wave or a peace sign—please
maintain social distancing.
Online: Please type your words of peace in the chat box. We will not unmute at this time.

Anthem
In the Bleak Midwinter
Holst/arr. Fickle
Goldie Gao Woods, harp

Prayer for Illumination
Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr.

In the light of Christmas, we long for your love to shine on and through us.
Give us courage to let our lights shine brightly.
Open our hearts to feel the wholeness of humanity.
Open our eyes to see your reflection in the faces of our sisters and brothers.
Come, Holy One, and inspire us to bring compassion, love, and comfort
to those who are lonely, alone, and afraid.
Let our lights shine so we can see you in all the faces of those we meet. Amen.

Scripture
Malachi 3:1–4
Luke 3:1–6

Sermon
“Make Ready”
Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr.
You can give your offering to Little River UCC by mailing a check to the church or by visiting the Donate Online page on our website. Thank you.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host.

If you have a prayer concern or thanksgiving to celebrate, we encourage you to share with the congregation at this time. Those worshiping in person may come to the floor microphone one at a time. Those worshiping on Zoom may type their prayer in the chat box for a deacon to share in the service on your behalf. Please add your name to the prayer request so we will know from whom the request is coming. If you do not wish to share your prayer concern with the congregation, you may always email Pastor Art at pastorart@lrucc.org.

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.
  Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
  Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

For those worshiping online, please have your own bread and juice, or whatever elements you would like, ready to share in communion together.
* Benediction

Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr.

Let us now go into the world and bring light where there is darkness.
Let us offer love to those whose hearts are vacant and are left wanting.
Let us leave this sanctuary and deliver a word of peace and kindness to those we meet. Let us go now unafraid, unashamed, and unapologetic.
Let us go and be audacious, bodacious, and courageous in Jesus’ name.

Amen.

Choral Amen

Postlude

Toccata on “Veni Emmanuel”

Adolphus Hailstork

Sanctuary flowers were given today by Mike Nagy in memory of his wife, Gayle Nagy.

* Those who are able are invited to stand.

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TODAY

Coffee Hour and Fellowship

11 a.m.

All are welcome to stay on the worship service Zoom to share thoughts, reflections, and fellowship.

Guest Harpist

Goldie Gao Woods is a 15-year-old freshman at McLean High School. Since the age of seven, she has studied harp with Ms. Melissa Tardiff Dvorak, M.M., B.M. Some of the harp activities in which Goldie has participated include: the Haycock Elementary School Chamber Orchestra; the Longfellow Middle School Chamber Orchestra; Master Classes with Brandee Younger and with Alexander Boldachev; and study under Senior Master Sergeant Eric Sabatino at the New England (Maine) Music Camp. She has competed in the 2018 Young Artist’s International Harp Competition (1st place, Preparatory Division), 2020 Christopher Newport Harp Virtual Competition, and the 2021 Midwest Virtual Harp Competition, and she is currently Level 8, American String Teachers Association, Certificate Advancement Program. In addition to playing harp, Goldie enjoys sports and plays on the Varsity Volleyball Team at McLean High School.

Advent Spiral Walk

December 5, 4–6 p.m.

During this time of demanding challenges, we need ways to refresh our souls, quiet our minds, and open our hearts to God’s mercy. Advent offers us this space in a multitude of ways. One of these will be an opportunity to walk the Advent Spiral, an indoor labyrinth, on Sunday, December 5, from 4 to 6 p.m. in the sanctuary. Participants will come in shifts and are asked to sign up in advance on Sign Up Genius: https://bit.ly/LR-Spiral. You may still walk the spiral if you have not signed up. Masks are required. For more information, contact WMT@lrucc.org.
Giving Tree Gift Tags and Donations
The Little River UCC Christmas tree stands in the atrium to express the Christmas hopes of young children from low-income families served by ACCA Child Development Center, Main Street Child Development Center, and the Shaw Community Center. Share God’s love with a child this Christmas season! Gift tags and a sign-up sheet are available in the atrium. You may also pick up a gift tag during church office hours Monday–Friday, 9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m. If you are unable to take a tag and purchase a gift, you are welcome to contribute funds toward gift cards by writing a check marked with “Giving Tree” in the memo line or donating online using the giving button on the LRUCC website.

If you take a tag and purchase a gift, the drop-off date for the gifts will be on Saturday, December 11 in the church parking lot from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. If you cannot drop off your gift on this date, please contact the church office at 703-978-3060 or email office@lrucc.org to arrange a time to drop off the gifts before Saturday, December 11.

Fair Trade Products for the Holidays
Fair trade products will be available for giving—and receiving!—this holiday season. Please support small-scale farmers around the world who grow and produce organic coffee, chocolate, and Palestinian olive oil products as you stuff stockings and give gifts. Contact Ann Lingo to make sure your Equal Exchange chocolate bars ($3) and regular ($7) or decaf ($8) coffee (whole bean or ground) will be available (ann.lingo@verizon.net or 703-425-9140). Palestinian olive oil is available in half-liter bottles (Nabali or Rumi oil @ $20) or one-liter tins ($30) and olive tapenade ($7). Contact Jan Curtis to ensure your needed olive oil products are on hand (janetscurtis@gmail.com or 703-503-8454). Fair trade products will be available during the Giving Tree gift drop-off on December 11 and after a holiday church service. Palestinian products are also available on Wednesdays (contact John Davis at the church office).

Christmas Poinsettias
Just a few remain! If you would like to sponsor the Christmas poinsettias for the sanctuary—and make sure you have one (or more!) to take home, please contact the church office. A limited number of 6-inch pots have been ordered and may be adopted on a first-come, first-served basis. Poinsettias are $17 each, and dedications (if desired) will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Email office@lrucc.org or call 703-978-3060.

This Week and Beyond - Events and Meetings

Christmas Eve Service 5 p.m. (In person and Online)
Holiday celebrations will conclude with our Christmas Eve celebration. Plan to join us in-person or online for a hybrid service beginning at 5 p.m.
**Bereavement Tea**  
**Saturday, December 11, 12 p.m. via Zoom**

Each year the Board of Deacons hosts a Bereavement Tea for members and friends who have lost a family member or friends in the past year. This year the tradition will continue in a virtual format, where we will share stories and a cup of tea with each other via Zoom. If you would like to attend, please contact office@lrucc.org or call 703-978-3060.

**Religious Studies Class**  
**Monday, December 13, 10 a.m.**

To jumpstart the resumption of the Monday Morning Religious Studies Class, we will gather Monday, December 13, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. to test the technology involved to hold an in-person class in Room 8 while also including and interacting with those on Zoom. In addition to catching up with each other, we plan to spend half the class viewing and discussing a lecture on the Book of Thomas and the other half discussing and, hopefully, selecting a lecture series to start in January 2022. For the Zoom link, anyone not on the Religious Studies class email list may contact Carrie Douglas at carriehdouglas@gmail.com to request the link. It will be great to meet again, and all are welcome either online or in person!

**Pilgrim Youth Fellowship (PYF)**

- Today, Sunday, December 5, **Sunday school for PYF** begins! Natalie Stapert and Amy Mireku will be holding weekly classes for our youth.

- Saturday, December 11. This will be the next outing to support PYF members in their activities. We will be going to watch Audrey Mireku skate in a winter show, with an open skate to follow. Details to come.

- Thursday, December 23, **Farolito/Luminaria.** The PYF will meet at the church to assemble the bags and candles for this annual Christmas Eve tradition.

- Friday, December 24. PYF are invited to assist John Davis in placing the farolito along the drive into the church prior to the first Christmas Eve service.

- The next PYF book club meeting will take place in January (date to be determined). The novel selected is *The Westing Game*, by Ellen Raskin.

Questions? Contact Sarah Wilbur at dhakamedic@hotmail.com.

**Meditation Group Meeting**  
**Sundays at 9 am**

The Little River Meditation Group meets **every Sunday** via Zoom Video Conferencing during this time of social distancing. All are welcome to join in at 9 a.m. as the group explores meditation as a contemplative practice that helps to quiet the mind. Meetings will end at 9:50 a.m., just in time for participants to make it to the online worship services. Questions? Contact Sallyanne Harper at Saharper1@verizon.net.

Join online: https://bit.ly/LR-Meditation
Helping Hands Needed - Being in Service

**Food Pantry Drop-offs**
Little River collects donations of non-perishable food items, toilet paper, paper towels, diapers, baby wipes, and feminine hygiene products for neighbors in need across Northern Virginia. **Items especially needed are:** fruit cups or canned fruit, peanut butter, canned vegetables, tomato sauce, dry pasta, dish soap, diapers, dry beans, rice, Maseca (corn) flour, powder milk. Donations can be dropped by the front door of the church on **Wednesdays before 5 pm.** If you would like to arrange a different drop-off time, please contact the church office at office@lrucc.org.

**Volunteers Needed to Teach Church School**
Email Emily Makos at ejmingus@gmail.com if you would be willing to teach Church School.

**Volunteer for New Worship Media Team**
If you are interested in helping our staff run Sunday service via Zoom, please volunteer for the Worship Media Team by emailing office@lrucc.org.

**Volunteers Needed for Sunday Front Door Greeters**
The sign up sheet for Front Door Greeters for Sunday worship services is located on the bulletin board in the atrium. Please sign up for a Sunday. Arrive at 9:20 a.m. with a smile on your face and greet the people coming for the service. There are no meetings, just a smile is needed! For questions or more information contact Bunny Jones, 703-218-9888 or mkbjones@cox.net.

**Volunteers Needed to Help with Worship Services**
The Board of Deacons invites members and friends to assist in leading worship by volunteering to be a greeter, liturgist, usher, or Thanksgiving and Concerns reporter and/or note taker during Sunday worship services. **Sign up here!** (https://bit.ly/LR-WorshipVol)

**Flower Donation**
If you would like to give flowers on the Sunday of your choice, email office@lrucc.org. Please include the date you would like to give flowers, and a dedication you would like listed in the bulletin. If you would like a certain type of flower, you can contact Ruth Duncan at 703-944-4874. Flowers typically cost $75–$100; the amount of your check is at your discretion. Make your check payable to Little River UCC and designate “Flower Fund” on the memo line.
Finance Committee: End-of-the-Year Financial Reminders
Thinking of making a year-end contribution to Little River UCC? To be credited as a contribution for 2021, please be advised that: cash or checks must be delivered to and accepted by the church office before the office is locked at close of business on December 31, or mailed to the church with a postmark of December 31 or earlier. Credit/debit card transactions made through the on-line giving portal on the website must be made by midnight on December 31. If you want to know where you stand on your 2021 pledge, please email accountant@lrucc.org.

Have any outstanding 2021 expenses or reimbursements related to LRUCC? All remaining expenses and reimbursements chargeable to the 2021 operating budget need to be processed by Monday, December 27. To avoid a last-minute paperwork crunch, please submit all vouchers for the payment of such expenses and reimbursements no later than Monday, December 20.

Call for Annual Reports
As we prepare for the Annual Church Meeting in late January, we request that committees and other groups submit their reports for the Annual Report. Please submit them electronically to office@lrucc.org. Submissions before December 31 are much appreciated; the absolute final deadline is Sunday, January 9.

Events of the Week of December 5, 2021

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday, December 5</th>
<th>9:00</th>
<th>Meditation Group Meeting - via Zoom</th>
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<td>10:00</td>
<td>Sunday Worship Service</td>
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<td>11:00</td>
<td>Coffee Hour – via Zoom</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>Intentional Interim Task Force</td>
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<td>4:00-6:00</td>
<td>Advent Spiral Walk - Little River UCC</td>
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<td>Monday, December 6</td>
<td>5:00</td>
<td>Boy Scouts Meeting</td>
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<td>Tuesday, December 7</td>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Office Staff Meeting</td>
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<td>7:00</td>
<td>Deacons Meeting</td>
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<td>Wednesday, December 8</td>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>Greenspring Ministry Program</td>
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<td>7:00</td>
<td>Church Council</td>
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<td>Thursday, December 9</td>
<td>7:30</td>
<td>Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal</td>
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<td>Friday, December 10</td>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Finance Meeting</td>
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<td>Saturday, December 11</td>
<td>9:30-11:30</td>
<td>Giving Tree Gift Drop Off at Little River</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Bereavement Tea via Zoom</td>
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Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley, 1744

Melody by C. F. Witt, 1715 (later form)

STUTTGART, 8.7.8.7

Descant, st. 4, by John Wilson

1. Come, thou long-expect-ed Je-sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2. Is-rael's strength and con-so-la-tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
3. Born thy peo-ple to de-liv-er, born a child and yet a king,
4. By thine own e-ter-nal Spir-it, rule in all our hearts a-lone;

4. by thine all-suf-fi-cient mer-it raise us to thy glo-ri-ous throne.

1. from our fears and sins re-lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
2. dear de-sire of ev-'ry na-tion, joy of ev-'ry long-ing heart.
3. born to reign in us for-ev-er, now thy gra-cious king-dom bring.
4. by thine all-suf-fi-cient mer-it raise us to thy glo-ri-ous throne.
On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

1. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh;
2. Then cleanse every Christian breast, and furnish for so great a guest!
3. For thou art our salvation, Lord, our refuge and our great reward;
4. To heal the sick, stretch out thy hand, and bid the fallen sinner stand;
5. All praise, eternal Son, to thee, whose advent sets thy people free,

1. Come then and hearken, for he brings glad tidings from the King of kings!
2. Yea, let us each our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.
3. Once more upon thy people shine and fill the world with love divine.
4. Shine forth, and let thy light restore earth's own true loveliness once more.
5. Whom with the Father we adore, and Holy Spirit evermore.