

WORSHIPPING GOD
November 29, 2020

The First Sunday of Advent

Advent Worship Theme: "Do Not Be Afraid"

*Please stand if able

Chiming of the Hour.....Kim Miller

*Three chimes are sounded, awakening us to the presence of God,
alerting us to the voice of Christ, centering us in the embrace of the Spirit.*

Lighting of the Candles.....Kim Miller

Preparing for Worship.....Kim Miller

"“Creator God, tell me of another world,” I said. “A world where bodies don’t fail and all are born healthy. A world where grief sets its prisoners free and heartbroken hearts find relief. Tell me of the end of war. Tell me of a church whose walls become windows, and whose faith becomes a magnet—drawing people in with love’s pure pull. Tell me again about the lion and the lamb. Tell me of another world,” I said. Then God replied, “Child, my child. You are my world. You are my heart, and you are my Church. What you speak of is hope. I just need you to keep watching for the hope you seek.” (Sarah Are)

Prelude.....Lo, How a Rose E’re Blooming.....Geistliche Kirchengesang

Joan John, Piano

Welcome.....Dan Koger

*Invitation to WorshipLaura Flick

You alone, our Lord, are God.

Come down, God!

You have done wonderful things in the past.

Come down, God!

We need you here with us now.

Come down, God!

We wait for you.

We wait with hope.

*Opening Prayer.....Laura Flick

God, come to us in our need. Like a shepherd, you care for us. Like a potter, you shape our lives. Faithful God, we are waiting for you. Come down to us. Light our spirits with your eternal love. Shape us with your hands, that we may be vessels fit to receive your presence. We are waiting, Holy One, and place our trust in your love. Amen.

*Hymn..... “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Robin Duncan Family

*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.*

Lighting the Candle of Hope.....Jake and Ariel Koger and Family

If ever there was a year we needed Advent, this is the year. We hardly know how to describe the year we have lived through. All we know is that nothing seems right, nothing seems like it used to be, nothing. We need Advent!

So, on this first Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of hope. Isaiah gives us a vision of a kingdom yet to come where everything has been made new and where creation is at peace.

“A shoot will grow up from the stump of Jesse; a branch will sprout from his roots. The Lord’s spirit will rest upon him, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of planning and strength, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord.”

Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.

So today we light the candle of hope as a prayer, a protest, and a reminder that darkness will not win.

Cancer will not win. Death will not win. Bigotry will not win. Racism will not win. Terrorism will not win. Hate will not win.

Love will win.

For, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”

Today, we say out loud – to each other and to our world – do not be afraid to hold hope.

Congregational Response – “The Candle of Hope”.....LYONS

(Sung to the tune of "O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!")

*The candle of hope we light in this hour
Proclaims that the Lord is coming in power.
We wait for a future, now hidden from view,
when Christ in his glory will make all things new.*

Prayer for Illumination.....Dan Koger

Amid much confusion, signs leading away from you, we seek your truth.

As we listen, open our hearts to the wonders of your work and the wisdom of your word. Amen.

Gospel Lesson (Luke 1:26-45).....Kim Miller

When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said, "Do not be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?" The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God's Son. Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled 'unable to conceive' is now six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible for God." Then Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Mary got up and hurried to a city in the Judean highlands. She entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. With a loud voice she blurted out, "God has blessed you above all women, and he has blessed the child you carry. Why do I have this honor, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. Blessed is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill the promises he made to her."

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Musical Reflection – "Hope Beyond All Hope"

Meditation "Do Not Be Afraid to Hold Hope".....Dan Koger

Pastoral Prayer.....Dan Koger

*Hymn..... "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

Robin Duncan Family

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the son of God appear.*

Refrain:

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

*O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.*

*O come, Desire of nations, bind all people in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.*

*Blessing.....Dan Koger

Go now and remember.

In the Goodness of God you were born into this world;
by the Grace of God, you have been kept until this very hour;
by the Love of God, fully revealed in the face of Jesus,
you are being redeemed. Go in peace. Amen.

Postlude.....Postlude for Advent.....Joseph Haydn

Joan John, Piano

Opportunity for Giving