



First Reformed Church, Schenectady

Those worshipping in person must wear masks, social distance, and not sing.

First Sunday In Advent

November 29, 2020

Liturgist: Daniel Carlson

Preacher: Lynn Carman Bodden

Church Musician: Max Caplan

Special Music: Rachel Rose & Kate Rose

Prelude: John Norton

Ushers: Christina & Matt Jones,
George Trimarco

PRELUDE

G# Minor Prelude

Bach

GREETING AND CALL TO WORSHIP

CALL TO WORSHIP

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

In our church and homes we gather around wreaths to pray our lost hopes, broken peace, limited joys, and love so hard to find and share in this season of coronavirus. We affirm that our candles mean we claim the power to call this season Advent when God's light comes into the world and nothing can overcome it.

We light the candle of hope in the face of increasing cases of Covid-19, hurricanes and wildfires, precarious business forecasts, socially distanced holidays, and not being able to sing together.

God's hope shines on hopelessness,
and brightens the path toward peace.

**Emmanuel, God with us, God coming among us,
in the week to come kindle the wick of our lives with hope,
so that we may shine within your world. Amen.**

*OPENING HYMN

Watcher, Tell Us of the Night

#20 vs 1-2

Watcher, tell us of the night, What its signs of promise are.
Traveler, o'er yon mountains height: see that glory-beaming star.
Watcher, does its beauteous ray Aught of joy or hope foretell?
Traveler, yes; it brings the day, Promised day of Israel.

Watcher, tell us of the night; Higher yet that star ascends.
Traveler, blessedness and light, Peace and truth its course portends.
Watcher, will its beams alone Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveler, ages are its own; see, it bursts o'er all the earth.

*OUR NEED FOR GOD (*unison*)

**God of darkening days and coming light, You call us to “advent”
our lives: to be disturbed; to wait and wait and wait and wait;
to keep awake, alert, uneasy, alive for what we cannot yet see.
It is so hard for us. When we grow impatient, when we fall
asleep, when we are hopeless, restless, unloving, joyless, have
mercy. Forgive us. Try us again. Amen.**

*GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE (*hummed to tune #1*)

By your own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By your all sufficient merit raise us to your glorious throne.

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*Our Song of Hope*)

**In each year and in every place
we expect the coming of Christ's Spirit.
As we listen to the world's concerns,
hear the cry of the oppressed,
and learn of new discoveries,
God will give us knowledge,
teach us to respond with maturity,
and give us courage to act with integrity.**

**Come, Lord Jesus:
We are open to your Spirit.
We await your full presence.
Our world finds rest in you alone.**

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST (*spoken and signed*)

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC

Laudamus te

Antonio Vivaldi

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCRIPTURE

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 64:1-9

SECOND LESSON

Mark 13:24-37

SERMON “*Hope in the Face of Falling Stars*”

MUSICAL OFFERING

Where is the Savior?

John Purifoy

Where is the Savior and where is our King? Where is the song that our hearts long to sing? When will we see him, the long promised one? Come now Emmanuel God's only son.

His reign will never end. Where is the Savior, the one who will show Mercy and kindness his people to know? What shall we bring him, our love to impart? If we but meet him, we'll give him our heart.

Hope for the hopeless, help of the helpless
Bread for the hungry rest for the weary,

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*unison*)

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

*CLOSING HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

#9 vs 1-2

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O Come, Thou Day spring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here; Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

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Prayers of the People

We pray regularly for those who are ill, those who serve, those who hunger, and those who are our enemies. As part of our prayers this morning, we remember with thanksgiving members of our church who entered eternal rest in previous years about this time:

Virginia Cain
Rev. Edwin McLane
Harvey Schadler
Jean Sands Brown
Donald Lemon
Maurice B. Tracy
Eulia Arnds
Edgar Pitzer
Mary Frances Case
Robert S. Crandall
Robert Clark
Robert Bruce Crandell

COVID Safety Protocols

As part of our COVID Safety protocols, our doors are open for specific times to allow entrance to worship, Jazz Vespers, the lunch program and other events, and they are only open for a short period after the events begin so that everyone can be checked in and health screenings filled out if necessary.

Doors are open for:

- Sunday morning worship from 9:30am until 10:10am. (Julia Etkin can admit you if you arrive later.)
- Jazz Vespers from 4:45pm until 5:10pm
- Wednesday Lunch from 12:00pm until 1:00pm.

