



First Reformed Church, Schenectady

In-person worship has been placed
on pause. While you worship at home,
feel free to sing!

Fourth Sunday In Advent December 20, 2020

Liturgist: Daniel Carlson

Preacher: Lynn Carman Bodden

Church Musician: Max Caplan

Video: Dave Pizzolo; Sound: Nathan Schied

PRELUDE

Gratitude

Edvard Grieg

GREETING AND CALL TO WORSHIP

The grace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

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 candles of hope, peace, and joy.

**We now light the candle of love
even when many things dim our sparkling:
intolerance against those we love, fear of who we are,
judgment about how people look or speak,
discrimination against our age or ability.**

God's love illuminates hatred and a compassionate heart
and brightens the path to the birth of Christ.

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

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
 From tender stem hath sprung!
 Of Jesse's lineage coming,
 By faithful prophets sung.
 It came, a flowret bright,
 Amid the cold of winter,
 When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
 The rose I have in mind:
 With Mary we behold it,
 The virgin mother kind.
 To show God's love aright
 She bore to us a Savior
 When half spent was the night.

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 *Melodie* Grieg

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCRIPTURE

FIRST LESSON *2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16*

SECOND LESSON *Luke 1:26-38*

SERMON *"Love Seeking a Home"*

MUSICAL OFFERING *At the Cradle* Grieg

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*

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 thee, O Israel.

O Come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, 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 our church members who entered eternal rest in previous years about this time:

Sandy Moynihan, John Young,
Robert Brown, Clarence Gillespie,
Shirley L. Rochelle

Church Offerings

As we worship virtually, we continue to welcome your offerings to support the ministry of First Reformed Church! All types of church offerings, including this year's Christmas Offering to Center for Community Justice, may be made online at 1streformed.com, dropped off during office hours or mailed. Thank you!

