

**First Sunday of Advent
December 1, 2024**

Gathering
God invites us to enter His presence

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Preparation for Worship (*Time for Silent Preparation*)

 **Call to Worship** (*Responsively*)

Susan Obenschain

Rejoice in the Lord always.
I will say it again: Rejoice!
Let your gentleness be evident to all.
The Lord is near.
We rejoice in the hope of Christ's coming.
Let us worship God!
—based on Philippians 4:4-5, NIV

 **Invocation**

Susan Obenschain

Lord God Almighty, King of glory and love eternal, you are worthy at all times to receive adoration, praise, and blessing; we praise you now for sending your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, for whom our hearts wait, and to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, be honor and dominion, now and for ever. **Amen.**

 **Opening Hymn 124**

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Advent Candle Lighting

Chris Adler & Hadley Chambers

Reader: Today, is the first Sunday of Advent where we celebrate the Hope we have in the coming of our Lord!

Reader 2: "The People walking in darkness have seen a great light; a light has dawned on those living in the land of darkness." (Isaiah 9:2)

Reader: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ. (Light 1st Candle)

All: Advent means coming. We are preparing for the full coming of God's Kingdom.

Response: O Come, O Come Emmanuel (Verse 1)

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.*

Confessing
God invites us to be honest with Him

Call to Confession

Susan Obenschain

Prepare the way of the Lord! Let us make our confession to God.

Prayer of Confession (*Responsively*)

Susan Obenschain

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,
and do not remember our iniquity forever.
**Restore us, we pray, through the coming of our Lord Jesus,
in whom we place our hope and trust. Amen.**

—based on Isaiah 64:1-9, NRSV

Time for Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Susan Obenschain

Leader: This is the Promise of the Lord
All: Thanks be to God!

! Passing of the Peace

Leader: The Peace of the Lord be with You

All: And also with you

Offering

Thankful of the gifts God has given us, we offer ourselves to Him

Invitation With thankfulness we give in gratitude and joy.
With prayerfulness we give in sacrifice and love.
With hopefulness we give in commitment to God.

Offering

Offertory *I Can Do All Things* *Hernandez*
Hadley Chambers, Andrew Latham, Lila Steingra
Rejoice in the Lord Always
John Steingra (Piano)

! Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. A-men.

! Prayer of Dedication

God of hope, you gave your Son to free a lost world.
You give your Spirit to comfort and encourage. You give us hope for
a future free of pain, sorrow, and tears. You promise us a future with
you. In gratitude, we bring you our time, talents, and tithes. May our
gifts be used so that many others will taste and see the goodness of
knowing you. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Proclaiming

God speaks to us through His Word

! Preparation Hymn 155 *Once in Royal David's City*

Scripture Reading *Isaiah 9:2-7*

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
a light has dawned on those living in the land of darkness.
³ You have enlarged the nation and increased its joy.
The people have rejoiced before you as they rejoice at harvest time
and as they rejoice when dividing spoils ⁴ For you have shattered their
oppressive yoke and the rod on their shoulders, the staff of their

oppressor, just as you did on the day of Midian. ⁵ For every trampling boot of battle and the bloodied garments of war will be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶ For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

Sermon

"Songs of Hope"
Rev. Tim Latham



Hymn of Response 141 *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

Sacrament of Communion

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God!

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise!

Invitation to the Table

Leader: For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes Again!

People: Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again!

Responding

We respond to God's Word



Profession of Faith *(In Unison)*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and buried;
He descended into hell;
The third day he rose from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic church,

**The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

God of the future, you are coming in power to bring all nations and all peoples under the rule of your lordship through Jesus Christ. We know about, believe in, and hope for that future advent of the kingdom because we know about, believe in, and find as the source of all hope your first advent in Bethlehem. As we enter into this new season today, help us to be expectant people. Bend our thoughts and aspirations beyond the moment, beyond what we can see in front of us at any given time. Although we want to do our daily tasks well and to your glory right now, help us to be people who also look ahead, who peer around various cosmic corners, and who know that the ultimate things of existence in this universe are the things that have been secured for us through Jesus and that are real already now in the kingdom he established.

In Advent we sing about our having open hearts for you to enter in. May we, by the grace of your Spirit, be open indeed, Father. Make us open to the ways your kingdom can influence our decision making at work, at school, and at home. Make us open toward others, enabling us to see each and every person we meet as Jesus in our midst. Make us open to opportunities to serve others, to serve your whole creation out of devotion to you and to your Son, who showed us what true service is all about when he came down into a virgin's womb to salvage the universe you fashioned in the beginning.

As people whose hearts are open indeed, we make petition this morning for your needy world. This Advent season sees once again a world of war and rumors of war, a world of violence and terrorism that strikes the unsuspecting. It is easy, O God, for us to see why this world needs saving, but sometimes it is not so easy to believe that in Christ it has already been saved. Beyond the glitter and goodwill and cozy warmth of the Christmas season, Father, help us as Christians to find in Jesus' birth long ago a true reason for hope in this present moment. And then lead us to be workers for peace, bearers of shalom, agents of healing in this world gone mad.

Here in this place, you see the needs and hurts of our members during this new holiday season. Stand close to anyone here this morning who struggles. Be with the college student who is worried about exams or who frets about various issues that may crop up when he or she travels home for Christmas. Be with the parent here today who has real cause for alarm over the course a child's life seems to be taking. Lift the clouds of depression from those who wrestle so mightily with their emotions. Minister to those who have chronic pain and give them some relief, we pray. Lead to a better time those who are unemployed right now, who are worried about family finances, and who wonder what the new year may hold. Grant that the coming weeks and months will hold new and good and wonderful things for those seeking a meaningful outlet for the gifts you have given to them.

You alone see us as we are, Lord God, and so we beg for you to nurture us according to our needs, to minister to us according to our hurts, to heal us in all those places where you see that we are broken or sick.

But despite whatever happens in our lives or whatever is going on at this Present moment in our various hearts and minds, still we do adore you, God of wonder and God of glory. We worship you; we lay our hearts open before you. So as we come to you at your table in a little while, come also to us by your Spirit. Our hearts are open. Be born in us anew this day so that every day we may spread the increase of your peace. In Jesus, the Prince of Peace, we pray. **Amen.**

Commissioning
God sends us out into the world as His witnesses

 **Commission Song** *Come, Light Our Hearts*

Come, Light Our Hearts

McCracken

Chorus

For You, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.

For You, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.

Truly our hope is in You.

Truly our hope is in You.

Verse 1

O Lord of life, our only hope,

*Your radiance shines on all who look
to You in the dark.*

*Emmanuel come,
come light our hearts.*

Chorus

Verse 2

*O joy above all other loves,
in You we find more than enough.*

*We come as we are;
O heal and restore,
come light our hearts.*

Chorus

Tag

Truly our hope is in You.

 **Benediction & Blessing**

 **Postlude**