

First Congregational Church
Our Church in Worship

December 1, 2019 10:00 AM

First Sunday in Advent

PRELUDE *Chorale Prelude* – Dieterich Buxtehude Adam Peithmann

WELCOME Rev. Kevin Pleas

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TIME OF SILENCE

RINGING OF THE STEEPLE BELL

THE SERVICE OF CANDLE LIGHTING

Pat and Karen Long

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

LEADER: Rejoice in the Lord always.

PEOPLE: **I will say it again: Rejoice!**

LEADER: Let your gentleness be evident to all.

PEOPLE: **The Lord is near.**

INTRODUCTION

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF HOPE

ADVENT PRAYER (Unison)

O God, we thank you that Jesus brought hope into our world. By the good news of the Bible you are still bringing hope to people. Help us to be ready to welcome Jesus Christ so that we may think good thoughts and do good deeds and so that we may be a people of hope in our world. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN NO. 125 *Come, O Long-expected Jesus*

TIME WITH GOD'S CHILDREN

Led by Kelda York

To celebrate the beginning of the Advent season, this morning, the children will be decorating the Christmas Tree with ornaments made at the Advent Family Workshop. Afterwards, as a congregation, we will sing *Silent Night, Holy Night*. This morning, as you leave the sanctuary, we encourage you to participate in the celebration by hanging an ornament on the tree.

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS Barbara Papagian

LEADER: God, in your mercy

PEOPLE: **Hear our prayer**

SILENT MEDITATION

PASTORAL PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

CHORAL RESPONSE

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel. God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

OUR MORNING OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY – To the tune of “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts; Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)

God of hopeful waiting, we give thanks for all of the ways in which you reveal yourself to us. Help us to clear away the many distractions of this season and offer our whole lives as gifts to you. May these offerings nurture all of the ways in which your promise is breaking into the world in acts of compassion and justice. May these gifts nurture your rule of peace. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Matthew 24:32-36, 42-44 Vicki Tinsley

SERMON: A Thief in the Night Rev. Kevin Pleas

THE SERVICE OF COMMUNION

All are welcome to receive the sacrament, members and visitors.

We serve non-alcoholic grape juice, bread and a gluten-free alternative, usually rice cakes.

*CHORAL ANTHEM *In Remembrance of Me* – R. Courtney/arr. R. Douglass Chancel Choir
(text is from hymn no. 403)

INVITATION

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Almighty God, you caused light to shine out of darkness in the advent of Jesus our Christ. You continually open to us the ways we are to prepare. We confess our unwillingness to see the light and to walk in your ways. We have not always opened our eyes to the needs of others, and our feet have wandered from the paths of justice and peace. We ask that the Spirit of Christ be born anew within us, that our hearts

may be stirred to glorify his nativity with acts of compassion and service. As we approach our communion table, may your blessing rest on these elements of bread and wine, that we might take them into ourselves and so partake of the living reality of your Son, Jesus Christ, who is the true gift of this season, and the light for which our world hungers. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 142

People, Look East

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Praeludium in C, BuxWV 137 – Dieterich Buxtehude

*You are invited to stand if you wish.

SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 24:32-36, 42-44 (New Revised Standard Version)

Pew Bibles: New Testament page 25

From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

508 Union Street ▪ Manchester, New Hampshire

FCCManchesterNH.org ▪ 603-625-5093

You are welcome here! ▪ We are an Open & Affirming Congregation