

First Congregational Church
Our Church in Worship

December 5, 2021 10:00 AM

Second Sunday in Advent

PRELUDE *The Shepherds at the Manger* – Franz Liszt/arr. E. Power Biggs Adam Peithmann

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Carolyn Keilig

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE *The Candle of Gratitude* Craig & Jeanine Finefrock

Reader: Listen! Prepare the Way! God sent messengers to prepare the way, messages that we have received as prophecy and prayer, hopes and dreams for a better world, one in which the reign of God is on earth as it is in heaven.

People: We give thanks this day for our own words and actions, mission and ministry that others may joyfully receive the good news that Christ is born anew in hearts and lives.

Leader: Listen! Pay attention! Be ready for what is to come. Not everyone will be happy when God makes all things new. Hear the loud voice of the one who cries in the wilderness, that you may receive the good news with gratitude.

People: In this season of Advent, we prepare for the reign of God, which is at hand, and also drawing near, by listening to the prophets of old and the wise among us.
(the candle is lit)

All: Lord of hosts, you are coming to purify our hearts and refine us so that we may be pleasing, living offerings to you. As we continue to wait with gratitude for the arrival of the Christ, your blessed gift for us, may we bring honor and glory to your name – and may we be ready to receive him. Amen.

ADVENT WREATH SONG *He Came Down*
He came down that we may have peace; hallelujah forevermore.
(the soloist sings first and then the congregation repeats)

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive) Rev. Barbara Papagian

Leader: Welcome today to this time of preparation.

People: We are prepared and grateful to receive God's good news.

Leader: Get ready. The Lord is bringing us hope and peace.

People: We are grateful for the Lord's message of hope and peace.

Leader: We open our hearts and let our spirits be quieted.

All: Come on Messenger of peace, we stand in need of your presence.

*OPENING HYMN NO. 153 *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*

OPENING PRAYER (Unison)

Blessed is the Lord, and blessed are God's people to whom God sends a savior, the Messiah, who is Christ the Lord. Blessed is our God, and blessed are God's gifts that grace us with forgiveness and every good gift. We are grateful to You, O God, for all the gifts you give to us. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Receiving the Sacrament of Baptism today is Kaelani Hope Pagan,
daughter of Nickyla J. Brown and Dwayne A. Pagan.

WELCOME AND ADDRESS Rev. Carolyn Keilig

PROMISES OF COVENANT

BAPTISMAL PRAYER AND ACT OF BAPTISM

WELCOME OF THE CONGREGATION (Unison)

We receive this child as a newly baptized person in Christ and welcome her into the family of faith. We enfold her in our love, seeking together to grow in unity of spirit and abundance of life in Christ. We join together with joy to proclaim the gospel of grace, so that, through our words and deeds, God's love might be made known in all corners of the world.

QUILT PRESENTATION

PRAYER FOR THE BAPTIZED

PASTORAL PRAYER

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

SILENT MEDITATION

OUR 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.

SERVICE OF COMMISSIONING FOR OUR SEARCH COMMITTEE Selma Naccach-Hoff

MUSICAL OFFERING *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* Elizabeth Blood, Carol Soucy,
(text from hymn # 160) & Adam Peithmann

SCRIPTURE READINGS Michelle Harrington

Malachi 3:1-4 and Luke 1:68-79

SERMON *Be Prepared* Rev. Barbara Papagian

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 150 *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*

BENEDICTION (Unison)

We go forth today with gratitude. We are grateful for God's good news of hope and peace, brought to us with the birth of God's son Jesus Christ. We go forth determined to impart this good news to all. We go in God's continuing presence, with the power to love and the strength to serve. Amen.

POSTLUDE *O Come, All Ye Faithful* – John A. Behnke

*You are invited to stand if you wish.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Luke 1:68-79

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

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