

United Church of Christ, First Congregational
Norwich, New York
November 29, 2020
First Sunday of Advent - HOPE

A TIME OF GATHERING AS WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE *Unto Us a Child is Born*
Bob Oehme, organ

by Gordon Young
Based on a Traditional German Carol

WELCOME (Pastor John)

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Linda Oehme)

CALL TO WORSHIP (Lilit Danielyan and John Kolb)

O that God would tear open the heavens
and come down!

Of that day or hour, no one knows,
The time is drawing near:

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ,
the Son of God.

CANTICLE *O God of Love*

words by J. F. Connolly
Tune: HESPERUS

O God of Hope, to You we pray;
In You we place our trust this day.
Be now our guide, show us Your light.
And lead us through the deepest night.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES (Jessica and Melodie Posner)

OPENING HYMN *Come, O Long Expected Jesus* #122

Charles Wesley, 1744
Word adapt. Ruth C. Duck
Tune: STUTTGART

CHILDREN'S TIME (Linda Oehme)
The Lord's Prayer

MESSAGE OF PEACE

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 (Lilit Danielyan and John Kolb)

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶ just as the testimony of ^[b] Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸ He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

SPECIAL MUSIC *Veni Emmanuel*
Cheri Oakley, flute and Jason Handy, piano

Arranged by John Purifoy
Tune: 12th Century Plainsong

SCRIPTURE Mark 13:24-37 (Judy Smith)

²⁴ “But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,

and the moon will not give its light,
²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶ Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then he will send out the angels,
and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸ “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. ²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly I
tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but
my words will not pass away.

³² “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Beware,
keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and
puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵ Therefore, keep
awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at
dawn, ³⁶ or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷ And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

SERMON

INTERLUDE *He Shall Feed His Flock* (from The Messiah)
Bob Oehme, organ

G. F. Handel
Arranged by Carol Kumler

PASTORAL PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN *O Little Town of Bethlehem* #133

Phillips Brooks, 1868
Tune: ST. LOUIS, Lewis H. Redner, 1868

BLESSING

May God strengthen us to the end;
Christ draw near to our very gates;
and the Holy Spirit awaken our spirits;
until, with eager longing,
we greet the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

POSTLUDE *Masters in This Hall*
Bob Oehme, organ

By Gordon Young
based on a traditional French Carol

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The words for the Advent Lighting are primarily adapted from *Faithful Families for Advent and Christmas* by Traci Smith.
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