

WORSHIP CELEBRATION

Fourth Sunday of Advent - Christmas Sunday

December 19, 2021

10:00 a.m.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

INTROIT "Open Wide Your Heavens"

Insert

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Out of little Bethlehem comes the one who is to rule Israel.

All: He shall be great to the ends of the earth.

One: Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior.

All: God's mercy extends from generation to generation.

One: Holy is God's name!

All: Holy is God's name! Alleluia. Amen.

*HYMN "People, Look East"

No. 161

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE

The Candle of Love

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:13-20

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So, they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

**If you are able to do so comfortably, please stand.*

POINSETTIAS

The Poinsettias which have graced our sanctuary this holiday have been dedicated to the glory of God and given in loving memory of:

Rosemary Dubiel, by Gloria Cady
Dorothea Laughlin, by Gloria Cady
Stanley O. Foster, beloved father & grandfather, by
Chris & Andrew Foster

Marion Kent, by Sylvia Janes
Family Members, by Ted & Sylvia Janes
Dorothea F. Laughlin, by Cora Laughlin Rose
Richard D. Laughlin, Jr., by Cora Laughlin Rose
Doreen Laughlin, by Cora & Manny Rose
Derrick M. Rose, by Cora & Manny Rose
Betty Jean (Thomas) Russell, by Lori Russell
Leon & Edna Wilcox, Arthur & Gloria Wilcox & Richard L. Patt, by
Carol Salisbury & Ginny Martins & families
Loved Ones, by The Tonoles
Milton & Peg Alexander, by Bob & Judy Wood
Seth & Frances Wood, by Bob & Judy Wood



An additional poinsettia was given in honor of Hope Congregational Ministry, by Chris & Andrew Foster

A donation toward decorations was made in loving memory of Loved Ones, by Rick Bushnell & Paula Perkins.

Additional donations toward decorations were made by:
Gloria Cady Lori Russell

The White Poinsettia is given in loving memory of all deceased members of Hope Church.



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Hymn (Sung to tune of “Away in a Manger”)

*The candle of love tells us what we are worth:
God loves us so much, He sent Jesus to earth.
An angel brought news of a child who would be
The One who would save us and set us all free.*

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

God our Savior, we ask for your mercy. Though we have heard Mary’s song, we still seek security in pride and power and possessions. Though we know your story, we resist the costs of following you. We pass by those considered lowly in this world. We turn away from hungry people who still wait to be filled. Forgive us, we pray. Help us to work for the justice you intend. Make us messengers of the peace you bring. As we wait for you, turn our apathy into acts of love and service. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Friends, God is for us and not against us. For this very reason, God sent the Messiah into the world - not to condemn the world, but to reconcile it to the Creator. Believe the Good News: in Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

All: Thanks be to God!

*GLORIA PATRI

No. 734

SCRIPTURE

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

CONTEMPORARY READING

An excerpt from "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens

Adapted by J. Ryder

SERMON

"Embracing Ebenezer"

*HYMN

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

No. 188

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pastoral Prayer (including prayer concerns)

Time of Silent Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father Who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, Your 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

yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Prayer Response "Jesus, Name Above All Names" No. 177

DELIGHTING IN GIVING

(The offering plates are at the back of the sanctuary.)

Invitation to Present Our Offerings

Offertory "Were You There on that Christmas Night?"

Kim Kuda, Andrew Foster

*Doxology "Give Thanks" No. 359

*Prayer of Dedication (Unison)

You deliver us, O God, from exile, separation, and despair into communion with each other, with you, and with your good news. We thank you for all that draws us close together, astounding us with lives transformed into gratitude. Accept our gifts as signs of our gratitude for what you give us every day, and as honor to your presence in our world; for the sake of those who stand in need, and Jesus Christ, who redeems us. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN

"Soon and Very Soon"

No. 523

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

GUEST PASTOR - Jonathan Ryder

MUSIC DIRECTOR - Kim Kuda

DEACON & LAY READER - Donna Hassell-Winter

MUSIC TEAM - Andrew Foster, Sangho Nam, Kim Kuda

NEWS AND NOTES

1. **Christmas Eve Service with communion, Friday, December 24 at 5:00 p.m.** Please plan to join us for a special service filled with beautiful Christmas music and lessons.
2. **2021 Annual Reports are due to the office by January 7th.** Please email them to the church office if possible.
3. **Annual Meeting - Sunday, January 23, 2022** after worship
4. Hope Church is open and ready to welcome any members of the community who are in search of a warm and friendly place to worship. **Please invite your friends and neighbors to join us in worship.**

In light of the emerging contagions with the Omicron strain of the virus, we are asking/encouraging people to wear masks, even if vaccinated, during worship. Everyone will also be expected to sign in on our contact list.

If you are unable to attend the regular worship service of Hope Church in person on any given Sunday, the following is the information needed to livestream the service on YouTube or any time after and to get the Sunday bulletin to follow along with the service. A link to this week's livestream service and bulletin as well as those from past weeks is available at: hopecongri.org/?page_id=90. You can click on the "plus" mark for that week.