

**THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 5, 2021**

WE COME INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

PRELUDE *“Mazurkas Op. 17 No. 1&2” By F. Chopin*

Nenad Iovovic

MINISTER’S WELCOME

GATHERING HYMN Black Hymnal #743

“Be Still and Know”

Be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know that I am God.

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Awake, people of God, and stay alert for Christ’s coming. Grace to you and peace from God who sent Jesus to us.

People: **Make your ways known to us, O God. Show us once more your awesome presence.**

Pastor: We are all God’s people; no one is excluded. Come together as God’s family for worship and prayer.

People: **Let the mountains quake before you, mighty God. Let the nations tremble in awe and reverence.**

Pastor: Praise the One who grants us the gift of life. Give thanks for God’s continuing faithfulness.

People: **Heaven and earth will pass away, But the Word of God is true for all times and places.**

OPENING HYMN Black Hymnal #379

“Come, We Who Love God’s Name”

*Come, we who love God’s name, and let our joys be known;
Together God’s great love proclaim, and thus surround the throne.*

*Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God;
But we our thanks and praise will bring for love so deep and broad.*

*God’s grace on earth is found, the seeds of glory sown;
Celestial fruits on earthly ground from faith and hope have grown.*

*The hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets
Before we reach the heavenly fields, or walk the golden streets.*

*Then let our songs abound, and every tear be dry;
We’re traveling through Emmanuel’s ground, to greater worlds on high.*

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Amid threatening clouds of anger and selfish strife, come, O God to bring light. Into our days of worry and anxiety, send a confident hope and strengthen our faith. Enrich us with spiritual gifts that transcend disappointments and spill out in generous compassion for all your suffering children. Meet us today where we are so we may be equipped for trials yet to come and for joys yet to be revealed. In Jesus' name. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Chris and Jesse Hubbard

Scripture Isaiah 60:20 Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end.

Prayer (all) Emmanuel, Holy One, your face shines on our lives. We are filled with peace. As you lit the sky with angels who spoke words of peace so long ago, we call upon you to be the light of a world that still needs peace desperately. Shine peace on those who experience budget cuts and wintry weather. Shine peace on those who fear diagnoses, feel church upheaval, and dread international conflict. Shine peace on the refugee and the family cutting a Christmas tree. Shine peace on the caroler in the Alzheimer's unit and the couple who is unmaking a marriage. Let our faces reflect to others the peace you shine in us. Amen.

Pastor: O God, rejoicing, we remember the promise of your Son. As the light from this candle, may the blessing of Christ come upon us, brightening our way and guiding us by His truth. May Christ our Savior bring life into the darkness of our world, and to us as we wait for His coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord as we light this candle of peace.

Advent is a time of wonder—the wonder of the surprising and remarkable incarnation of God - with -us. On this second Sunday of Advent we light this candle for peace and we wonder,

“If God is with us, why is there no peace?”

We light this candle for peace and we wonder,

“God is with us even when there is no peace!”

We light this candle for peace

“and we know the wonder of the surprising and remarkable Incarnation, of God-with-us; who strengthens us to work for justice and promises us peace.”

Close: O King of all nations, Jesus Christ, Only joy of every heart, Come and save your people.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (using “debts”)

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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

HYMN OF PRAISE Black Hymnal #52

*“There Is a Name I Love to Hear”
There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth;
It sounds like music to my ear, the sweetest name on earth.*

**®O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus,
Whose love has first loved me.**

*It tells my Savior’s love for all; Christ died to set us free;
Whatever problems may befall, we’ll live in dignity.®*

*It bids me serve amid the wrath God’s people face each day,
And sheds along life’s troubled path bright sunshine on my way.®*

LISTENING FOR THE WORD

Old Testament	Isaiah 35:1-10	Al Jarvis
Psalms	Psalms 146:5-10	Al Jarvis

MUSICAL RESPONSE *“We Are One With You, O Lord”* By Jay Althouse
Choir Accompanied by Faye Chen

Gospel	Matthew 11:2-11	Rev. Hiram Brett
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SERMON	“What Then Do You Go Out to See?”	Rev. Hiram Brett
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Pastoral Prayer

Choral Prayer

**Hear our prayer, O God,
Hear our prayer, O God,
Incline your ear to us, and
Grant us your peace. Amen**

PRESENTATION OF OUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS

CALL TO CONFESSION

As a new year begins in the church, we seek to leave behind our past unfaithfulness. We remember our doubts and neglect, the empty times when prayer is forgotten and our focus is narrowed to petty concerns. God is waiting to hear from us. Let us pray.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Awesome God, we confess the sin of our separation from you. We have blamed you for hiding from us, rather than admitting we have failed to see you in the thousands of ways you are revealing yourself every day. We have not called on you, and we have not listened to your call to us. Without you, we have become tiny islands of self-concern. Our links with the rest of your children are stretched and broken. O God, we long for that loving community in which your reign is acknowledged and your purposes are served. Move us to that place, we pray. Amen.

(silent prayers and confessions)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God's grace has come to us in Jesus Christ. God restores us to right relationship with the eternal that we might rightfully value ourselves and all persons. Spiritual gifts are ours to claim. God is faithful and will strengthen us to face all circumstances. Praise God, the source of all things!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Song of the Spirit (Please remain seated)

**Spirit of the Living God,
fall afresh on me
Spirit of the Living God,
fall afresh on me
Melt me, mold me,
fill me, and use me,
Spirit of the Living God,
fall afresh on me!**

INVITATION

We have been enriched and strengthened in so many ways by the gifts of God. Now we have the privilege of sharing God's Word with the world. Our offerings enable our church's witness in this community and a caring outreach around the globe. Let us give as we have been blessed.

DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING:

During this season when we are deeply conscious of the health and safety of our worshipping community, we will not be passing plates for the offering. Instead, we invite you to place your offering today in one of the plates located by the entrance doors of the Church, and we thank you for your generosity and support. And for those of you that are not able to come physically to the church please continue to send your generosity.

God, you bless us every day with material gifts, but most importantly the gifts of the Spirit that gives us guidance on how you would wish us to share the gifts you have given us, to further your message of peace and love, not in only in word but also in deed. We bless these offerings and the good they will do.

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God for all that love has done
Creator, Christ and Spirit One**

Prayer of Dedication

Gracious God, we give our best to you, not out of guilt or fear, but with gratitude and faith. You have been our support in times of need. Every breath we take is a gift from you. We would be awake and watchful for opportunities to make a difference, to help others be alert for your presence, to value life in all its fullness, and to learn to care. We dedicate these symbols of thankfulness and all the days of our lives to these purposes. Amen.

COMMUNION SERVICE

*All are welcome to take part in the Sacrament.
(Please be seated.)*

COMMUNION HYMN Black Hymnal #330

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

*Let us break bread together on our knees; let us break bread together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, My God, have mercy on me.*

*Let us drink wine together on our knees; let us drink wine together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, My God, have mercy on me.*

*Let us praise God together on our knees; let us praise god together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, My God have mercy on me.*

INVITATION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to God.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

SANCTUS

Leader:...Therefore, with the entire company of saints in heaven and on earth, we worship and glorify you, God Most High saying.....

All ---Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High, Blesses in the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

(Please take the bread when received and hold the cup to drink together.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

All: Gracious God, we give thanks for having gathered us to share this holy meal; reminding us of your faithfulness to those who have come before us, to those who are yet to come and to us in our own time. May the time we spent together at this table strengthen our hope in your future so we might live faithfully today. This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and our Savior.

Amen.

GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

CLOSING HYMN Black Hymnal #485

“O Love That Will Not Let Me Go”

*O Love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in you;
I give you back the life I owe, that in your ocean depths its flow may swell with ardor true.*

*O Light that follows all my way, to you I yield my flickering flame;
Renew my spirit's feeble ray, that from your brilliant sunlit day it may new brightness claim.*

*O Joy that seeks me through my pain, to you I cannot close my heart;
I trace the rainbow through the rain, and know the promise is not vain that you will ne'er depart.*

*O Cross that raises up my head, from you I dare not seek to flee;
Life's glories wither and are dead, but from the ground there blossoms red,
life that shall endless be.*

BENEDICTION

Go forth, following as the Holy Spirit leads you, moving in love and compassion, pursuing justice and mercy, and trusting in the God of peace. For the source of all life and love is as close as your very breath. Breathe deeply. Amen.

RESPONSE

Threefold Amen

Nenad Iovic

POSTLUDE

Nenad Iovic

Please be in prayer for the family and friends of **Griffith Bedworth**, a long-time church member, who passed away at the age of 101 on Monday, November 22 at the VA Veterans Medical Center in West Haven.

Upcoming Events/News – Mark Your Calendars!

Christmas Poinsettias

We invite donations for poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. Order forms are available in the office. Please return to the church office by Friday, December 10.

Christmas Stocking Project

George and Donna Taylor, representing Christian Service, are working with Lieutenant Colon in nearby New Haven to provide new clothing, toys, and books for children. If you would like to bring the joy of Christmas to a child, please stop by the parish hall any Sunday after church or Monday through Friday from 9-2 to pick up the stocking bag. The bags are due back at the parish hall by December 12. Thank you in advance for your participation!

December 18 - Memorial Service

A memorial service will be held for Wilson H. Kimmach on Saturday, December 18 at 2 pm.

December 27 – Service of Remembrance

A service of remembrance for the life of Jerry Langelier will be held on Monday,
December 27 at 2 pm.

Guest Ministers Scheduled

December 12 ~ Rev. Karl Duetzmann
December 19 ~ Rev. Janice Touloukian
December 24 ~ Rev. Walter Pitman
December 26 ~ Rev. Raquel Irizarry

January 2 ~ Rev. Hiram Brett
January 9 ~ Rev. Walter Pitman
January 16 ~Rev. Walter Pitman
January 23 ~ Rev. Janice Touloukian
January 30 ~ Rev. Raquel Irizarry

If you would like to donate flowers for the church on a particular Sunday, please call the church office at (203)389-2119.

Please sign up in the Parish hall to read Scripture and to host the coffee hour.

We need and appreciate your help!