

ZION'S REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Rev. June Boutwell, Senior Pastor
Lori Seinar-Roknick, Director of Music Ministries

November 29, 2020

First Sunday of Advent
Hanging of the Greens

10:30 a.m.

*Where the past and the future with Jesus Christ are celebrated
so the present can be lived abundantly.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vikki Young, Lector

Today is the first day of Advent. This year we are focusing on the themes of Church, next week on Home and then the City and lastly Open Spaces or Fields. We will have a special banner for each week as we reflect on how the places in our lives are touched by the holy and the activities of our days. As we focus today on church and the person of Zechariah, the priest, let us prepare this space for the coming of the King in a service of the Hanging of the Greens.

THE SOLEMN DECLARATION

And now may we become quiet and prayerful as we are gathered in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE RINGING OF THE CHIMES

THE ENTRANCE OF LIGHT

Iris Wentling, Acolyte

THE PRELUDE Starlight from First Calls "An Evening in December" Thomas/Johnson
(CCLI#609620)

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP Luke 1:5-23

Glenn Sadler

⁵In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. ⁶Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. ⁷But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

⁸Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

¹¹Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. ¹³But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. ¹⁴He will be a joy and delight to you, and many

will rejoice because of his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. ¹⁶ He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

¹⁸ Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”

¹⁹ The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. ²⁰ And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.”

²¹ Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple. ²² When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

²³ When his time of service was completed, he returned home.

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

Glenn and Arlene Sadler

In the presence of God, we are in awe. Overwhelmed by God, we are speechless. Graced by God, we are thankful.

Lighting the “Church” Candle

CALL TO CONFESSION

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We are humble before you, O God. We are in your place, in your time, in your presence, and we confess our awe before you. How can we stand before your power? How can we boast in the presence of your imagination? How can we claim wisdom before your foolishness? Everywhere we go, you stun and surprise us. All the world is your sanctuary, O God. Keep us ever mindful and meek.

A MOMENT OF SILENT CONFESSION AND PRAYER

SONG OF ASSURANCE

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND 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.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

Evergreen Wreath
Cedar Boughs
Holly & Ivy
The Crèche
The Star

HYMN “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (verse 1 only) (bulletin page 4)

Lights
Candles
Bells
Mistletoe
Poinsettias

*HYMN “Away in a Manger” (verses 1 and 3) (bulletin page 5)

OUR OFFERING TO GOD

*The Doxology

**To God, all glorious heavenly Light,
To Christ revealed in earthly night,
To God the Spirit now we raise
Our joyful songs of thankful praise.**

THE BENEDICTION

TAKING CHRIST’S LIGHT OUT INTO THE WORLD

THE POSTLUDE “Worship the King” Smiley/George/Johnson (CCLI#11964)

Meditation: Eugene Peterson, *The Message* (Romans 8:24-25)

“Waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.”

*O Come, All Ye Faithful

Latin: John F. Wade, 1751

Tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841, and others

ADESTE FIDELES Irregular

John F. Wade's Cantus Diversi, 1751

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
3. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing,

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!
Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry given;

Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

Away in a Manger

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Anon., United States, 1885; st. 3, 1892; alt.

Luke 2:7

F B \flat F

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed, the
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the poor ba - by wakes, but
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close

C7 F

lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head. The
 lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I
 by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless

F B \flat F

stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the
 love you, Lord Je - sus; pro - tect me, I pray, and
 all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care, and

C7 F B \flat C7 F

lit - tle Lord Je - sus, a - sleep on the hay.
 stay by my side un - til night turns to day.
 fit us for heav - en to live with you there.

This anonymous United States carol is often misattributed to

Tune: AWAY IN A MANGER 11.11.11.11.