

***Welcome**

Call to Worship

One: It has been said by some that hope is a foolish endeavor.

All: But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:31)

One: When we look to our forefathers and mothers, we see that their hope laid the foundation for our current reality.

All: For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

One: As we begin our journey towards Christmas, we dare to live boldly and bravely in the hope found in Jesus Christ!

All: For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for

We Hail You God's Anointed

James Montgomery, 1821; alt.

1. We hail you God's a-noint-ed, the long-a-wait-ed One!
Hail in the time ap-point-ed, your reign on earth be-gun!
You come to break op-pres-sion, to set the cap-tive free;
to take a-way trans-gres-sion, and rule in eq-ui-ty.
2. You shall come down like show-ers up-on the fruit-ful earth;
and joy and hope, like flow-ers, spring in your path to birth.
Be-fore you on the moun-tains shall peace, the her-ald, go,
and righ-teous-ness, in foun-tains, from hill to val-ley flow.
3. The wise shall bow be-fore you and gold and in-cense bring;
all na-tions shall a-dore you, and praise all peo-ples sing;
To you shall prayer un-ceas-ing and dai-ly vows be said,
your realm is still in-creas-ing, with you, O Christ, as head.
4. O'er ev-ery foe vic-to-rious, you on your throne shall rest;
from age to age more glo-rious, all-bless-ing and all-blessed:
The tide of time shall nev-er your cov-e-nant re-move;
your name shall stand for-ev-er, your change-less name of Love.

Ps. 72

what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. (Romans 8:24-25)

Hymn #104..... “We Hail You God’s Anointed”

Profession of Faith

One: No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey you are welcome here! Today we celebrate the first Sunday of advent as we anticipate the hope of Christ’s birth!

All: Blessed Lord, as we move in this world, help us to hold fast to your hope. Hope is standing in the tension of what will be, while living in the present tense. Grant us your peace, your patience, and your strength. Forgive us for the times we complain that things aren’t moving on our timeline, for your timing is perfect. Be with us in the waiting and the hoping. Amen

Confession Response 🎵 Hymn #133, V 4

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!

Words of Reassurance

One: Beloved community, our hope is found in Jesus Christ! The Messiah! Our Savior! The one who has come to save us!

All: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)

Response to Words of Assurance: 🎵 Hymn #125, Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath- Hope

Telisa Raymond, Ellie, and Abel

Today we celebrate the first Sunday in advent and light the candle of Hope! The apostle Paul wrote that hope is the destination of our faith; "Faith is the reality of what we hope for, the proof of what we don't see." First

Thessalonians chapter 1 verse 3 calls us to remember that our hope is found firmly planted in our faith in Christ. "We remember before our God and father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus gives us hope for the journey and hope for a future in which everyone born has a place at the table, and enough to eat.

One: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Many: Indeed, our faith was passed down to us by the people who taught us hope and love.

One: By faith we understand that the world was prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

All: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ this Advent season!

The candle of hope we light in this hour
Proclaims that the Lord is coming in power.
We wait for a future, now hidden from view,
When Christ in his glory will make all things new.

Scriptures

Cindy Dannenhower

Reading 1: Matthew 24:36-44 (Page 800)

Reading 2: Hebrew 11:1-3 (Page 979)

Congregational Response 🎵 (aka prayer for grace)

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Children's Message

Sermon: Hope

Rev. Becky Sausser

Hymn #102..... "O Shall I Receive You"

(Note: Ushers will collect "Prayer Cards" during this time. Prayer cards are in the pews.)

Morning Prayer 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.

Prayer Response 🎵 Hymn #124 Verse 3

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay

Close by me forever and love me, I pray.

**Bless all the dear children in your tender
care, And fit us for heaven to live with you
there.**

Chancel Choir

“Walkin in the Light”

Kathleen Thomerson

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Announcements

Jeff Rissell

Offering

Offertory **“An Advent Meditation”** David Lasky

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* Doxology 

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heav’nly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

* **Hymn #110...“Now Bless the God of Israel”**

* Commission and Blessing

O How Shall I Receive You

Paul Gerhardt, 1653

Transl. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, and others; alt.

1. O how shall I re-ceive you, how meet you on your way,
blessed hope of ev-ery peo-ple, my soul's de-light and stay?
O Je-sus, Je-sus, give me now by your own pure light,
to know what-e'er is pleas-ing and wel-come in your sight.
2. Love caused your in-car-na-tion; love brought you un-to me;
your thirst for my sal-va-tion pro-cured my lib-er-ty.
O love be-yond all tell-ing, that led you to em-brace
in love, all love ex-cel-ling, our lost and fall-en race.
3. You come, O Christ, with glad-ness, in mer-cy and good-will,
to bring an end to sad-ness and bid our fears be still.
In pa-tient ex-pec-ta-tion we live for that great day
when a re-newed cre-a-tion your glo-ry shall dis-play.

Now Bless the God of Israel

Ruth Duck, 1985

1. Now bless the God of Is-ra-el,
who comes in love and power,
who rais-es from the roy-al house
de-liv-erance in this hour.
Through ho-ly proph-ets God has sworn
to free us from a-larm,
to save us from the heav-y hand
of all who wish us harm.
2. Re-mem-ber-ing the cov-e-nant,
God res-cues us from fear,
that we might serve in hol-i-ness
and peace from year to year;
And you, my child, shall go be-fore
to preach, to proph-e-sy,
that all may know the ten-der love,
the grace of God most high.
3. In ten-der mer-cy, God will send
the day-spring from on high,

our ris-ing sun, the light of life
for those who sit and sigh.
God comes to guide our way to peace,
that death shall reign no more.
Sing prais-es to the Ho-ly One!
O wor-ship and a-dore!

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Luke 1:68-79; Ps. 18:1-3; Isa. 9:2-7

*** Refrain #161**

Amen, Amen

Music to Go Forth “Comfort, Comfort Now
My People” William Ringhamn

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UCC.***

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In emergencies, please use exits found to
the left and right of the altar, to the right of
the front pew, and at the rear of the
sanctuary. Follow **EXIT** signs

**No matter who you are or where you are
on life's journey, you're welcome here.**

God is still speaking, ...

Serving St. John's...

Rev. Becky Sausser.....Pastor
Lois Mease... Music Director and Organist
April Riddick.....Custodian
Jim Saylor.....Sunday Sexton

And too many volunteers to list!

Office Hours

Sunday: 9am-2pm

Monday-Thursday: 9am-3pm

Closed on Fridays and Saturdays