

Sunday, December 1, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT — The Sunday of Hope

TODAY'S FOCUS: During Advent, we will look at the birth story through the lens of each of the four Gospels. Today, we take Matthew's journey to, through, and beyond the birth of Jesus.

PRELUDE — Scott Anderson

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — Rev. Lin Cheek

***PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST** — Lin

***CALL TO WORSHIP** — Bonnie Clark

One: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the eternal Christ?

Many: With evergreens, to signify life everlasting through Christ.

One: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of our Savior?

Many: With the cross, to tell of his passion, death and resurrection.

One: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the Son of Man?

Many: With a crèche, to remind us that he came as a child, the Word made flesh.

One: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the Lamb of God?

Many: With garlands and wreaths that represent his sacrifice and God's never-ending love.

One: How shall we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Son of God?

Many: By hearing again the words of the prophets, who foretold the saving work of God.

One: For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

Many: Glory to God in the highest!

One: How do we prepare for the coming of Jesus, the Light of the World?

Many: By lighting the Christmas tree!

THE BLESSING OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE — Bonnie Clark

As we prepare for the coming of Jesus, the Light of the World, we light the Christmas tree.

During this Advent, wherever we see a lighted Christmas tree, let it call to mind the One who brings light to our darkness, healing to our brokenness, and peace to all who receive him. Will you all join me in the Blessing Of The Christmas Tree found in your bulletin?

All: Holy Lord, may this tree, arrayed in splendor, remind us of the life-giving cross of Christ, that we may always rejoice in the new life that shines in our hearts. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

UMH #196 "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free,
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

2. Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH — Rev. Lin Cheek

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH — Mike and Debra Rowley

HYMN

TFWS #2233 "Where Children Belong"

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE — Sharon Goldade

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1:18-2:23

Narrator: Bonnie Clark, Angel: Suzanne Gallagher, Prophets: Eric Presnall, Herod: Lin Cheek

MESSAGE

"Christmas According to Matthew"

Rev. Lin Cheek

RESPONSIVE HYMN UMH #213 "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates" (verses 1-2)

1. Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; Behold the King of glory waits;
The King of kings is drawing near; the savior of the world is here.

2. Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.

OFFERTORY — Anneke Toomey

DOXOLOGY

UMH #94

PRAYER OF DEDICATION — Bonnie Clark

All: God of the Advent, accept these offerings, given to bring hope to the hopeless and shine your light in the world. Take our gifts and bless them to your miraculous work. Use them so others might be blanketed with the warmth of your unconditional love, like a newborn baby wrapped in the loving arms of a parent. Amen.

COMMUNION THANKSGIVING — Lin

One: The Lord be with you

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them up to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Many: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: Let us pray: God of our Hope, ... we pause to consider the hope we have in Jesus,

Many: Holy are you God. Holy is the babe we await, the child expected by Joseph and Mary, the baby Jesus. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is this child of Hope.

One: Blessed are you, O Lord, ... as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Many: Christ was and is the King of kings, the Lord of our hearts, and will come to claim us in his time.

One: So, we await your new day, ... we pray as Christ taught us to pray, saying:

All: 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

INVITATION — Lin

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

In the United Methodist Church, all are welcome to share in Communion, and all means all. Please come forward when invited by the usher and eat the bread, then drink the cup. For the convenience of all, we use non-alcoholic grape juice and also provide gluten free wafers. When you return to your seat, please take time to pray for those on the prayer list in the bulletin. If you would prefer to receive communion in the pew, please let the usher know and the elements will be brought to you.

SHARING HOLY COMMUNION

One: The Bread of Life, broken for you.

Many: Amen.

One: The Blood of Life, poured out for you.

Many: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION — Bonnie Clark

All: Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

UMH #204 “Emmanuel, Emmanuel” (2x)

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.

God with us, revealed in us. His name is called Emmanuel.

***BENEDICTION — Rev. Lin Cheek**

POSTLUDE — Scott Anderson

Prelude/Postlude—Scott Anderson	Accomp.—Anneke Toomey	Offertory—Anneke Toomey
Song Leader— Bonnie Clark	Special Music — N/A	Organ — Betsy Foushee
Liturgist — Bonnie Clark, Suzanne Gallagher, Eric Presnall, Lin Cheek		
Children’s Message— Sharon Goldade		Violin — Rae Ann Norell