

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
3 Gray Road, North Yarmouth, Maine 04097
Organized in 1806



Second Sunday of Advent
December 5, 2021 ~ 9:30 a.m.

The Second Sunday of Advent
December 5, 2021

Prelude

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme J S Bach

“A Place at the Table (Peace)”

Second Sunday of Advent

Sung: *God welcomes all! Strangers and friends!*

God's love is strong! And it never ends!

Words: John L. Bell, Music: South African traditional,
transcribed by John L. Bell at the Sunrise Hospice, Themba

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Welcome and Announcements

We Open the Door

When God is a Child

Words: Brian Wren (1936-)

Music: John Carter (1930-)

Words ©1989, Music ©1998 Hope Publishing Company

**When God is a Child there's [peace] in our song.
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
And none shall be afraid.**

**Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
Giving a promise of safety and worth.**

**When God is a Child there's [peace] in our song.
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
And none shall be afraid.**

Reader(s):

Today we offer the Light of Peace to illumine the Door of Welcome.
May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our church.
May Peace awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater hospitality.
There *IS* room in this Inn, a House for the Holy.

**When God is a Child there's [peace] in our song.
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
And none shall be afraid.
Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
Giving a promise of safety and worth.
When God is a Child there's [peace] in our song.
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
And none shall be afraid.**

The Peace

**The Peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you!**

As we rise in body or spirit for our opening hymn, I invite you to pass a "wave" of peace to the people around you (and the people worshipping at home)!

Opening Hymn/Song

"People, Look East!"

Chalice 142

Words: Eleanor Farjeon, 1928

Music: Traditional French carol; harm. Martin Shaw, 1928

**People, look east, the time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east: Love, the Guest, is on the way.**

**Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east: Love, the Rose, is on the way.**

**Stars, keep the watch.
When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosting weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People look east: Love, the Star, is on the way.**

**Angels announce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east: Love, the Lord, is on the way.**

Time for All Ages

First Reading

Baruch 5: 1-5 (CEB)

Anthem *"The Yearning"*

Second Reading

Philippians 1:3-11 (CEB)

Message

Rev Nancy J White

Prayers of the People

"Lord, you left your throne"

Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown, alt

Author: E.S. Elliot (1864)

Tune: Margaret (Matthews)

**Lord, you left your throne and your kingly crown,
When you came to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem's home was there found no room
For your holy nativity.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
Make peace in my heart for you.**

In this moment we open the doors of our hearts to honesty before God

...

Let us breathe out this regret... *[pause to breathe out]*
and breathe in the life-giving, for-giving Spirit of God... *[pause to breath in]*
and out again with the Peace of Christ... *[another breath out]*.

**Lord, you left your throne and your kingly crown,
When you came to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem's home was there found no room
For your holy nativity.
O come to my life, Lord Jesus,
Make peace in my life for you.**

In this moment we open the doors of our lives to the call of the Spirit,

...
Let us breathe out our fear... *[pause to breathe out]*
and breathe in the courage of the Spirit of God... *[pause to breath in]*
and out again, with the Peace of Christ... *[another breath out]*.

**Lord, you left your throne and your kingly crown,
When you came to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem's home was there found no room
For your holy nativity.
O come to our church, Lord Jesus,
Make peace in our church for you.**

In this moment we open the doors of this church, filling it with
the compassion...
We remember and pray for...

.....

We pray this in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

**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.**

A Story of Innkeeping: Offering

Leader: Some scholars have wondered if “The Inn” and its “Keeper” were part of Joseph’s family—after all, he went back to his hometown for the census. Or perhaps Joseph’s own family did not or could not make room for them and they had to look elsewhere for a place to lay their head. As many of us know, family can be complicated. We’ll never know the real circumstances of Joseph’s family relations but the story can help us gain deeper compassion for what we DO know—too many people experience rejection, even from family. What if we endeavored to BE family to those who need it most, to “house the Holy” in ways we have not yet imagined?

***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. Amen.**

Celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion

Hymn

For Everyone Born vs 1,3,4

Words: Shirley E. Murray, 1931, Sp. Tr. John Glaser, 1961; Fr. Tr. Ervelyne Bernard 1973

Music: Brian Mann, 1979-

*For everyone born, a place at the table,
for everyone born, clean water and bread,
a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,
for everyone born, a star over-head,
and God will delight when we are creators of justice
and joy, compassion and peace,
Yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice, ... justice and joy!*

A Communion Prayer

The Holy One be with you

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts

We lift them up to our God.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,

...

a place of opening and welcoming,
doors for the Spirit of Life that you breathed into us.

*For young and for old, a place at the table,
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled,
for young and for old, the right to belong,
and God will delight when we are creators of justice
and joy, compassion and peace,
Yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice, ...justice and joy!*

We have not always understood ourselves as sacred creation,
a place for the dwelling of the Holy inside of us.

...

And so,
with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

In the midst of a time of despair, oppression, division, and fear,
your gestation in the house of a holy womb—

...
When the Lord Jesus ascended,
he promised to be with us always,
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

***For everyone born, a place at the table,
to live without fear, and simply to be,
to work, to speak out, to witness and worship,
for everyone born, the right to be free,
and God will delight when we are creators of justice
and joy, compassion and peace,
Yes, God will delight when we are creators of justice, ...justice and joy!***

The Words of Institution

...
And so,
in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Open our hearts in and through this act,
stripping away any excuse or fearful hesitation,

so that we will open our doors to the world
as the body of Christ, redeemed by his love.

Sharing God's Feast with All of God's People
The Bread of Life and the Cup of Blessing.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.**

**Through your Son Jesus Christ
with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God,
now and forever.**

Amen.

Closing Carol

Leader: For today's closing carol we sing "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear," a carol written by Edmund Sears and one of the earliest social gospel hymns written. Sears was writing from Boston in the years just before the Civil War began and this hymn emphasizes the message of the angels, "peace on earth, goodwill to all." You can hear this clearly in a stanza missing from some hymnals:

"But with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And we at war on earth hear not
The tidings that they bring:
O hush the noise and cease the strife,
And hear the angels sing!"

Let us remember that in true peace, all can hear the love-song of the angels. Let us offer our own love-song now.

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

Chalice 153

Words: Edmund H. Sears, 1849 Music: Richard W. Willis, 1850

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**

**And you beneath life's crushing load whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way, with painful steps and slow,
look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!**

**For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever circling years shall come the time foretold;
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.**

Benediction

May God's Door of Welcome
swing open in your heart and in your life.

May Christ's humble first dwelling
remind you of the plenty you already know.

And may the Spirit lead you into
more possibility and hospitality than you can imagine,
making room in The Inn for all.

May it be so for you.
May it be so for us.
May it be so for this church.
Amen.

Postlude

People, Look East setting by Roberta Rowland-Raybold

Worship Notes: "The Inn" worship series by Worship Design Studio. Adapted, used, livestreamed with permission.

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Due to the Corona Virus-Covid-19, this service was held in-person and live streamed on YouTube with all CDC protocols in place.

If you are not receiving church emails and would like to, please send an email to nyarmouthccucc@gmail.com asking to be added to the list. Like the NYCC FB page and you will be notified of what is happening there, too!

Offering can also be made online through Tithely at

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=1301940>



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