



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AKRON

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – PRAISE
DECEMBER 13, 2020
11:00 AM

[Advent] is a time of quiet anticipation.

If Christ is going to come again into our hearts, there must be repentance.

*Without repentance, our hearts will be so full of worldly things that there
will be “no room in the inn” for Christ to be born again. . . .*

We have the joy not of celebration, which is the joy of Christmas, but the joy of anticipation.

John R. Brokhoff

PRELUDE

Wachet Auf
(Translation: *Awake*)

J.S. Bach

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

HYMN

One Candle is Lit

Tune: CRADLE SONG

**Come surely, Lord Jesus, as dawn follows night, our hearts long to greet you, as roses, the light.
Salvation, draw near us, our vision engage. One candle is lit for the hope of the age.**

**Come quickly, shalom, teach us how to prepare for a gift that compels us with justice to care.
Our spirits are restless till sin and war cease. One candle is lit for the reign of God’s peace.**

**Come, festively, sing while awaiting the birth, join angels in dancing from heaven to earth.
Wave banners of good news, life high, thankful praise. One candle is lit for the joy of these days.**

**Come, wander where lion and lamb gently play, where evil is banished and faith takes the day,
A babe in a manger to fool the world’s eyes. One candle is lit for God’s loving surprise.**

**Come, listen, the sounds of God with us ring clear, and where signs of a cross in the distance
appear.**

The Word once made flesh, yet the Word ever near. One candle is lit for the Christ birthday here.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

SUNG RESPONSE

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Anna Laura Page

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

THOUGHTS FOR THE YOUNG

ANTHEM

The Holly and the Ivy

arr. Alice Parker and Robert Shaw

INVITATION TO PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*please use the language most familiar to you*)

**Our Father, which 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.**

READING FROM THE EPSITILE

Philippians 4:4-8

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

READING FROM THE GOSPEL

Luke 1:39-45

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

SERMON

Leaping for Joy!

HYMN

Of Eternal Love Begotten

Tune: (DIVINUM MYSTERIUM)

**Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
Christ is the Alpha and Omega, he the source, the ending he!
Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore! Amen.**

**O ye heights of heaven sing praises; angels and archangels sing!
And on earth let all the faithful now your joyous anthems ring,
Ev'ry tongue Christ's name confessing, countless voices answering.**

Evermore and evermore! Amen.

**Christ, to thee with God Creator, and O Holy Ghost, to thee,
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and unwearied praises be:
Honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory,
Evermore and evermore! Amen.**

OFFERING

A Cradle for a Lamb

Penny Rodriguez

*Please visit www.akronfcc.org/donate to support
the vital and ongoing ministries and missions of First Church
or mail your donation to 292 East Market Street, Akron OH 44308*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN

Blessed Be the God of Israel

Tune: MERLE'S TUNE

**Blessed be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free,
Who visits and redeems us, and grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill the promise to bring our people peace.

Now from the house of David, a child of grace has come,
A Savior who will lead us to our eternal home.
Before him goes the herald, forerunner in the way,
The prophet of salvation, the harbinger of day.

On all by death imprisoned the sun begins to rise,
The dawning of forgiveness up on the sinner's eyes,
To guide the feet of pilgrims, along the paths of peace;
O bless our God and Savior with songs that never cease.**

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Rejoice and Sing

Anna Laura Page

POSTLUDE

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came Down

arr. Anna Page

LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. Nanette Pitt, Senior Minister

Rev. Antigone Lowery, Associate Minister

Julie Lehman, Choir Director and Organist

Amanda-Joyce Abbott, Tim Borham, Nicholas Campagna, and Stephanie Corbin, Instrumentalists and Vocalists

Jay Hershey, Advent Candle Lighter and Reader