



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AKRON

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – PRAY  
DECEMBER 6, 2020  
11:00 AM

*Advent, like its cousin Lent, is a season for prayer...  
Since it comes at winter time, fire is a fitting sign to help us celebrate Advent...  
If Christ is to come more fully into our lives this Christmas, if God is to become  
really incarnate for us, then fire will have to be present in our prayer.  
Our worship and devotion will have to stoke the kind of fire  
in our souls that can truly change our hearts.  
Ours is a great responsibility not to waste this Advent time.*

Edward Hays, A Pilgrim's Almanac

PRELUDE

*O Little One Sweet*

Jan Maulder

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

HYMN

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

Tune: VENI EMMANUEL

**O come, O come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.**

*Refrain: Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!*

**O come, thou Dayspring come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, death's deep shadows put to flight. *Refrain***

**O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things, far and nigh;  
to us the path of knowledge show, and cause in her ways to go. *Refrain***

**O come, Desire of nations, bind all people in one heart and mind;  
bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace. *Refrain***

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

SUNG RESPONSE

*Prepare the Way of the Lord*

Anna Laura Page

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

## THOUGHTS FOR THE YOUNG

### ANTHEM

*The Wexford Carol*

arr. Robert Wetzler

### PASTORAL PRAYER

### READING FROM THE EPSITILE

1 Timothy 2:1-6

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings should be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all —this was attested at the right time.

### READING FROM THE GOSPEL

Luke 1:5-25

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense-offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.' Zechariah said to the angel, 'How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.' The angel replied, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.'

### SERMON

### HYMN

*Christians All, Your Lord is Coming*

Tune: PLEADING SAVIOR

**Christians all, your Lord is coming, drawing near in holy birth.  
Ring the bells and sound the trumpets, let your music fill the earth.  
Dance and move to show God's glory; kneel and pause to hear God's word.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Rise and let your songs be heard.**

**Christians, all your lord is coming, he will rise up from the dead.  
Lift the cup, of sin forgiven; bless the host and eat his bread.  
Mend the ways where peace is broken, give yourselves to true Shalom.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Dwell as one in church and home.**

**Christians, all your lord is coming, hope for peace is now at hand.  
Let there be no hesitation, walk in faith where life demands.  
Bear the word that God has given; share the birth that stirs your soul.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ will come and make you whole.**

OFFERING

*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

Gustav Holst

*Please visit [www.akronfcc.org/donate](http://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*

OFFERING PRAYER

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

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

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Prayer of Consecration and the Lord's Prayer (*please use the language most familiar to you*)

**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.**

Sharing the Bread and Cup

*We celebrate an open communion table; everyone is welcome to participate.*

*Gather juice and bread to celebrate Communion at this point in the service.*

*If you are gathered with others, you may serve one another saying: "The bread of heaven" and  
"the cup of new life."*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

HYMN

*Hail to the Lord's Anointed*

Tune: SHEFFIELD

**Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!  
Hail in the time appointed, his reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression, to set the captives free,  
To take away transgressions, and rule in equity.**

**He comes with justice speedy to those who suffer wrong,  
To help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong,  
To give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light,  
Whose souls, condemned and dying, are precious in his sight.**

**He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth.  
Love, joy, hope, like flowers, spring in his path to birth.  
Before him, on the mountains, shall peace, the herald go,  
And righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.**

BENEDICTION

SUNG BENEDICTION

*Rejoice and Sing*

Anna Laura Page

POSTLUDE

*People Look East*

arr. Kristina Langlais

### **LEADING WORSHIP TODAY**

Rev. Nanette Pitt, Senior Minister

Rev. Antigone Lowery, Associate Minister

Julie Lehman, Choir Director and Organist

Christine Allison, Handbell Choir Director

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

Paula and Kevin Speight, Advent Candle Lighters