



Rockway and First (North Pelham) Pastoral Charge

Sunday November 27, 2022

**Worship at Home
First Sunday of Advent**

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Our sincere thanks to **Rev. Paul Shobridge**
for leading us in worship today.

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The light shines in the darkness,
All: We come to worship, seeking the light of Christ once again.
One: Shine into our lives and into your world this Advent.
All: Renew us with fresh hope.

First Sunday in Advent: HOPE

Reader 1: We are people of hope.
Reader 2: God longs for a day when weapons will be replaced with tools for rebuilding.
People: We see your goodness and signs of new life all around us.
Reader 1: The first candle of Advent reminds us that we are called to live as people of hope.
Reader 2: We light this candle to remind us to see God's hope shining in our world.
(Light the candle of hope)
Reader 1: Let us pray:
People: Holy One, help us to walk in the light of God. May our lives reflect the warmth and wonder of this flame.
Make your church a place of hope in our community.
Amen.

HYMN # 119 Hope is a Star vs 1

OPENING PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION

Almighty and everlasting God,
You hold all our days in your hands,
and embrace us in your everlasting arms.
In a tired and violent world, you are hope.
In a hectic and busy world, you are peace.
In a cold world, you are comfort.
In Jesus Christ, you bring love into this world,

and call us to embody his love in all we do and say.
 In our worship this day,
 we offer you our love and loyalty,
 Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
 Make us one in worship and service,
 so that the world will see your hope at work in us and through us,
 making all things new. Amen

Prayer of Confession

**God of hope,
 we confess that we often prefer
 accepting half-truths and pleasing ideas,
 rather than your challenging word.
 We praise our own cleverness rather than your wisdom.
 We have exploited others for our benefit
 and used the earth without a thought for its wellbeing.
 In your mercy,
 forgive what we have been,
 help us amend what we are,
 and direct who we shall be through the mercy of Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Assurance of Pardon

Receive the Good News in hope. With great mercy, God forgives what we have confessed and offers us new life in Christ. Trust in the hope that you are forgiven and that, with God, new things are possible.

HYMN # 110 Come thou long expected Jesus

Prayer for Understanding

God of hope and healing, we turn to your Word to hear your will and your wisdom for our times. Open our hearts and minds by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit so that we might hear what you are saying to the church through Christ, your Living Word.

Scriptures:

Responsive Psalm 122

122 I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.
 2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.
 3 Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together:
 4 Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.
 5 For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.
 6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.
 7 Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.
 8 For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.
 9 Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.

Old Testament Isaiah 2: 1-5

2 This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:
 2 In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.
 3 Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
 4 He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.
 5 Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

New Testament Matthew 24: 36-44

36 "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son,[a] but only the Father.
 37 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.
 38 For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark;
 39 and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.
 40 Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.
 41 Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.
 42 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.
 43 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.

44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

Romans 13: 11-14

11 And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

13 Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.

14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

SERMON OUTLINE:

“Always love God, others, and yourself with the utmost fear and respect!”

Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.
Deuteronomy 6:5

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."
Matthew 22:37

Friends,

It's always easier for us to say things; however, to follow up our words with action is often another story!

Why is that?

Well, we say we love God and that's great! Now, how to back up our statement with action, as mentioned earlier, is another story. The point is surely God knows we are sincere in our intentions and motivations and in our own minds we're doing the best we can.

We know there are various kinds of love we express in our lives such as our love for our family, friends, food, etc. but surely God is asking us to love Him in a special way.

Simply put, do the Scriptures not teach us to always love God? That's a tall order in itself!

Nonetheless, I want to submit to you this morning that it is absolutely imperative to:

1. Always love God first; so,
2. We have the power to love others; and,
3. We wind up loving ourselves because we are doing, hopefully, what God has asked us to do with all our heart, mind, and soul!

As we enter the Advent season in preparation for celebrating Jesus's birth, will we respectfully and fearfully increase our love for God with all our heart, mind, and soul?

Wisdom from the Psalms, Isaiah, Matthew, and Romans lead us forward.

Come, listen, and do with the Lord in Advent's hope, peace, love, and joy!

HYMN # 118 Hark the glad sound

Offering Invitation

This Sunday we celebrate the Advent of Hope, coming to us in Jesus Christ. Think of your gifts as seeds of that hope which we can plant in the world God loves for Christ's sake.

Doxology – Give Thanks

Give thanks with a grateful heart
 Give thanks to the Holy One
 Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son

And now let the weak say, "I am strong"
 Let the poor say, "I am rich"
 Because of what the Lord has done for us

Give thanks, give thanks

Prayer of Dedication

God, our hope and our help, receive our gifts as seeds of gratitude for your gift to us in Christ Jesus. Bless these seeds with growth so that hope will sprout in people who struggle with despair, and places trying to rebuild after devastating loss. Be their hope and their help, through Christ our Lord.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and for the People

Surprising and Steadfast God,
 In the anticipation of your coming,
 keep us awake so that we will see you at work in the world.
 We give you thanks for moments of joy and celebration in our lives,
 for times of excitement and surprise.
 for love given and received,
 for friendships that furnish our life with meaning and happiness,
 and for family who reflect your unconditional love.
 In all our relationships and encounters,
 allow us to see you in one another.

Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

We pray for the coming of your kingdom week by week.
 Today we pray for the nations,
 and for all those who frame laws and shape society,
 who are charged to keep the peace and administer justice.
 We thank you for leaders and governors who are faithful to their responsibilities.
 And we pray for places where justice is twisted in the interests of the powerful,
 and innocents suffer as a result.

Move in the hearts and minds of leaders for the sake of justice and generosity,
 so that people everywhere will experience freedom and have hope for their futures.

Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

We pray for those who are suffering this day,
 for those who are ill, for those who mourn,
 and for all fear who the future and what it may bring.
 Surround them with your love,
 support them with strength,
 and inspire the hope they need to face another day.

Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Eternal God, all souls are precious to you;
 the dead, as well as the living, are in your care.
 We thank you for your saints of every generation.
 and for those dear to our own hearts,
 who have entered into your heavenly presence.
 Keep us in communion with them,
 and bring us with them at the last to dwell in your light.

And hear us as we offer prayers in silence for all those on our hearts this day:

Lord in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Joining our voices into one, we pray as Jesus taught:

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

HYMN # 122 Oh come, oh come Emmanuel

BENEDICTION

Go in hope this day and keep awake! Watch for signs of God at work around you and within you. Look for opportunities to serve others in Jesus' name.

And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE- Go Now In Peace

<p>We acknowledge that we meet on the traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe</p>

Next Sunday worship will be at North Pelham at 10:00 am with Mark Smith

Rockway will have a Mitten Tree up from November 27 to December 11. All donations go to West Lincoln Community Cares.

Willing Workers Meeting – Tuesday Nov 29 @ 2:00 pm

We are saddened to share the passing of one of our former minister's, Reverend Mary Whitson – Mary passed on November 3rd at the age of 85 – funeral has taken place.