



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CANTON CENTER, CT

December 12, 2021 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
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www.cantoncenterchurch.org

An Open and Affirming Church

ORDER OF WORSHIP

All who are able, please stand. **Bold denotes unison voice.*

CHIMES

Karen Needham

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Brief announcements from the congregation are welcome. **Those wishing to make an announcement** are asked to be in the front pews at the start of the announcement period.*

***Prayer request cards** may be found on the tables at the back of the church.*

***Offerings** may be placed in the marked boxes on the tables at the back of the church.*

PRELUDE *The Angel Gabriel*

Basque Carol arr. John R. Howell

CALL TO WORSHIP

Friends, as we journey deeper into Advent, let us hear its holy promise:

that those who walk in darkness will see light,

that those who hope in God will see justice,

that sorrowing hearts will be touched by joy.

Wherever our spirits are in this moment,

let them awaken to the God already among us.

Let us welcome the gift of this day and the gift of this season,

the gift of our faith and the gift of our gathering.

*HYMN

One Candle Is Lit

Chalice (blue), 128

Verses 1,2 & 3

*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 'til 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, lift high thankful praise.
One candle is lit for the joy of these days.*

***GATHERING PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**God of Advent, your people gather once more
and ready our hearts for your truth.
Speak to us again through sacred story,
that it might reach us, move us, inspire us.
Stir us away from devotion to things that do not matter,
and help stay committed to all that does:
hope and peace, joy and love,
justice, compassion and faithfulness.
Help us awaken to Advent's light in all we are,
and carry it into the world in all we do.
This we ask in Christ's name and spirit, as we also pray together:**

**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.**

***SUNG RESPONSE** *Gloria*

The musical notation consists of two staves of music in 6/8 time, written in treble clef. The first staff contains two measures of music. The first measure is marked with a circled '1' and has chord symbols Dm, Gm, C, and F above it. The second measure is marked with a circled '2' and has chord symbols Dm, Gm, C, and F above it. The lyrics 'Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!' are written below the notes. The second staff also contains two measures. The first measure is marked with a circled '3' and has chord symbols Dm, Gm, C, and F above it. The second measure is marked with a circled '4' and has chord symbols Dm, Gm, C, and F above it. The lyrics 'Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!' are written below the notes.

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE: JOY

Kendall Rees & Mitchell Buckley, confirmands

Today we light the third candle of Advent.

We remember the first candle, for hope, and the second, for peace.

Today the light increases: hope and peace add joy.

Through the church's long tradition of Advent, the pink candle on the third Sunday reminds us that in the midst of our waiting,

joy is already visible, we glimpse it ahead of time.

We remember that even in times of uncertainty, worry or struggle,

God's joy can find us.

Isaiah says it this way: "The Lord sends comfort to all who mourn, good news to the poor and broken-hearted, joy and gladness instead of grief, a song of praise instead of sorrow."

Joy is persistent, joy is contagious.

**It opens us to seeing good and seeing God,
to welcoming the spirit of Christ.**

The first three candles are lit.

ANTHEM *The Holly Tree Carol* trad. English arr. Donald Moore
 Senior Choir

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES Karen Needham

Following this, children may go out to church school.

READING FROM SCRIPTURE Luke 1:26-38

SERMON *On the Way*

DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS

God of every goodness, may your spirit bless all the offerings we make, that they might become love, compassion & justice in our world. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Joys & Concerns, Pastoral Prayer

***HYMN** *People, Look East* Chalice (blue), 142

*People, look east, the time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the heart & set the table.
People, look east, and sing today: 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 and sing today: 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 frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today: 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 and sing today: Love, the Lord is on the way.*

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE** *People Look East and Sing Today*
Senior Choir

***POSTLUDE** *Every Valley*

John Ness Beck

*Thank you to Karen Needham,
who has loaned a beautiful crèche for us to use this Advent / Christmas season.
We'll be adding to it next Sunday.*

WELCOME

We're glad you've joined us for worship today.
Please know that whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!
Questions? Please feel free to ask the pastor, or call the church office during the week.

*The flowers this morning are given by Curt and Holly Johnson
in remembrance of beloved Richard C. Johnson, Sr. and Sally S. Johnson.
Also in gratitude for family and friends.*

HO, HO, HO! TIME'S RUNNING LOW! - Today is the last day to place a Scrip gift card order and ensure delivery in time for Christmas. Stop by the Scrip table in the parish hall during coffee hour to peruse the list of available retailers and place your order. Get all your shopping finished and support the church at the same time. A Merry Christmas for all!

NEXT SUN., DEC. 19 – A SPECIAL SERVICE FOR ADVENT 4 - As our sanctuary is adorned with poinsettias, our service will be filled with special music by the senior and handbell choirs, men's quintet, solo by Bill Thomas and the assembling of a crèche in our chancel (children present will get to help). There will also be some simple family-friendly Advent/ Christmas crafts for all to enjoy at coffee hour. Join us!

REMINDER: 2022 PLEDGES DUE IN ASAP, as our Trustees & Church Council plan for the coming year. *Thank you for your faithful support of our church!*

POINSETTIA PLANTS FORMS DUE TODAY- Please find the order forms on the table near the kitchen if you would like to order poinsettias for our December 19 & 24 services. Please return forms to the red box on the table this morning with checks payable to Canton Center Church. Please leave your poinsettias until after the Christmas Eve Service.

SHARE A CHRISTMAS GREETING – PUT A CARD ON THE TREE! -We're reviving a past tradition of our church, and inviting our members & friends to share Christmas greetings with our whole congregation by placing a Christmas card on our sanctuary tree. Bring one in; a hole-puncher and twist-ties or ribbon, that you can use to attach it, will be right near the tree.

THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE IS COLLECTING HATS AND MITTENS ON THE CHRISTMAS TREE in the sanctuary. We ask that you put the items in a Ziplock bag so they can be placed within the branches of the tree without getting pine needles stuck in them. Thank you!"

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We gather as a welcoming community in worship, learning, service and fellowship, to embody Christ's message of love, compassion and justice. Joining faith with action, both within and beyond our church, we strive to build a community that serves all.

An Open and Affirming Congregation.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



December 24 ~ 7:00 pm

Sunday 12	Monday 13	Tuesday 14	Wednesday 15	Thursday 16	Friday 17	Saturday 17
Worship 10 am	Sr. Choir 5 pm Trustees 7 pm ACA 7 pm	AA 7:00 pm	Council Zoom 7 pm	Choir 7 pm		AA 11 pm

