



## The Second Sunday of Advent

Everyone must come out of his Exile in his own way.

*Kindly silence cell phones and other devices during worship. All hymns are included on pages 6-8.*

Prelude      *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 599      Johann Sebastian Bach

Call to Worship

Psalm 85:8-13

One: Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people,  
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

**All:** Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

One: Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

**All:** Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

One: The LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

**All:** Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.

**Hymn 106** (p. 5)      *Prepare the Way, O Zion*      Bereden väg för Herran

## Prayer of Invocation

## Gloria (Unison)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

# A Liturgy for Advent

## Presentation of the Advent Banner

## An Advent Reading

*Isaiah 11:1-10.* A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. <sup>2</sup>The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. <sup>3</sup>His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; <sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the

earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. <sup>5</sup>Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

<sup>6</sup>The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup>They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. <sup>10</sup>On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

### **An Advent Litany**

One: There is one crying out in the wilderness!

**All: He brings news of the One who will deliver us.**

One: He comes to baptize with water,

**All: So that the people may be ready to be baptized with the Spirit.**

One: He tells us to be fruit worthy of repentance.

**All: Open our hearts, O God, and let us confess our sins to you.**

One: He shares his message so that we may be prepared for the Good News.

**All: Let us prepare ourselves for the Good News. Let us ready ourselves for God's New Creation. Let us prepare the way of the Lord. Let us make his paths straight.**

### **The Lighting of the Advent Candle**

#### **An Advent Prayer (*Unison*)**

Holy God, in this season of anticipation, help us to be patient. Loving God, in this time of watching, help us to see clearly. Healing God, in these weeks of preparation, make ready our hearts for the arrival of the Light of the World.

### **Words of Welcome; Our Ministry and Mission**

**Anthem**

*Never Weather-Beaten Sail*

Charles Wood

### **Children's Moment**

Today's Gospel reading is from the beginning of Mark's Gospel. Unlike Matthew, Luke, and John, there is no introduction, no back story in Mark. We just jump right into the story of Jesus' life. Which is a reminder that the really critical part of the Gospel is the Easter story. No passion, no death, no resurrection, and there's no reason to care about the birth. But oh, the reasons we've been given! So, Christmas counts. A lot.

**Hymn 114 (p. 6)**

*Return, My People*

Repton

## Scripture Lessons

*Isaiah 40:1-11.* Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. <sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. <sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. <sup>9</sup>Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" <sup>10</sup>See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. <sup>11</sup>He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

*Mark 1:1-8.* The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; <sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" <sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**Sermon**

"Cold Comfort?"

Stephen R. Silver

**Hymn 104** (p. 7)

*Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*

Psalm 42

## Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

*As we hold community members in prayer, please exercise care and discretion when sharing. Help keep our prayer list current by contacting Rev. Silver or the church office to add or remove names.*

Today we offer ongoing prayers for Pete, Arlene, Evelyn, Barbara, Gordon, Greg, Jan, Edith, Eileen, Waneta, Terry, Juanita, Travis, Garrett, Sue, Rick, Edward, Duane, Priscilla, Ron, Lauren, Brian, Micah, and Al.

O Holy God, it was Isaiah who told us that you said that you would comfort us. The prophet spoke at a troubled time, one when the future was unsettled, and yet he had

confidence of your steadfastness, of your faithfulness. We, too, look at a troubled world, and an uncertain future, but we know that you will be with us. We remember this as we observe Advent, and the promise of the Nativity.

We pray this, and all the joys and concerns we hold in our hearts, in the name of your Son Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

### **The Lord's Prayer** (*Unison*)

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.

### **Offering of Gifts**

*Remembering those who are without, who are in need, who are often ignored, we invite your support of our ongoing ministry in and for the community.*

**Offertory**                      *Behold a Star from Jacob Shining* (from *Christus*)                      Felix Mendelssohn

### **Doxology** (*Unison*)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise God, all creatures here below,  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Prayer of Dedication** (*Unison*)

O Holy One, who comes to us in Advent, bringing us good news of the one to come: As we await the Christ-child, let us use these gifts to help others, to make real the promise of your kingdom, to manifest your love for those whom the Gospel describes as the "least of these." In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

**Hymn 114** (p. 8)                      *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*                      Truro

### **Benediction**

**Postlude**                      *Noël sur les jeux d'Anches*                      Louis-Claude d'Aquin

\* \* \*

### *Leading Worship This Week*

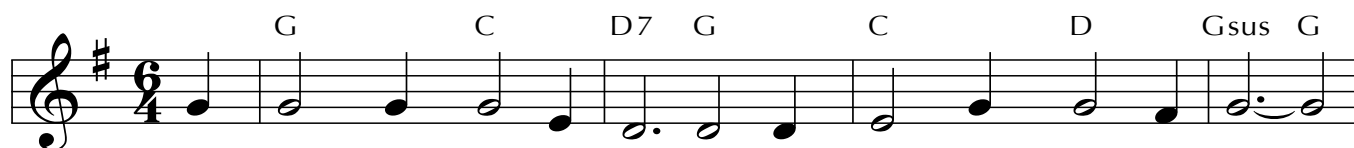
The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organ/Piano • The FCC Choir • Betsy Bowse, Liturgist

Deb and Jon Scott, Ushers • Barb Jones, Zoom Greeter

*If you wish to have a joy, concern, or prayer request lifted up in the service, or if you know of someone who may need special prayers, a card or phone call, or some other form of pastoral care, please email [prayer@fccleb.org](mailto:prayer@fccleb.org) or speak with Rev. Silver directly.*

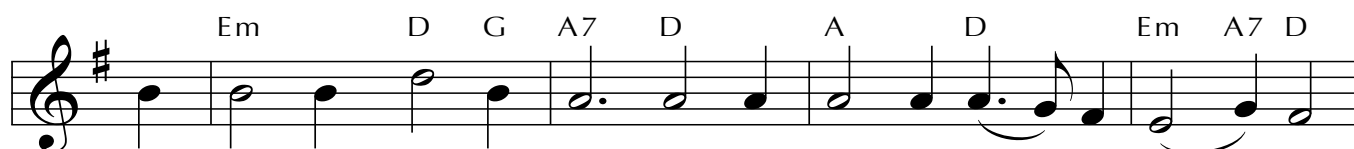
# Prepare the Way, O Zion 106



1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!  
 2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.  
 3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sav - ior's rule em - brace,



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.  
 His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.  
 and ti - dings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.  
 Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.  
 All lands will bow re - joic - ing, their ad - o - ra - tion voic - ing.

*Refrain*



O blest is Christ who came in God's most ho - ly name.

*Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.*

This engaging Advent text based on Isaiah 40:3–5 and Psalm 24:7–10 has been in use in the Church of Sweden for almost two hundred years. It is set to a version of an even older Swedish tune, which in turn seems to be derived from a German folktune that spread to Scandinavia.

TEXT: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1812, rev. 1819; trans. Augustus Nelson, 1958;

adapt. Charles P. Price, 1980, alt.

MUSIC: *Then Svenska Psalmboken*, 1697; arr. *American Lutheran Hymnal*, 1930

Text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

7.6.7.6.7.7 with refrain



## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES AT FCC

*In the Sanctuary and on Zoom*

**Family Service with Pageant, 5:00 PM**—Our beloved service for families and the young-at-heart, with a nativity pageant and living creche! All are welcome to attend; if you or your children are interested in participating, please contact Rachel Silver at [rachelsilver@live.com](mailto:rachelsilver@live.com).

**Service of Lessons and Carols, 8:00 PM**—The story of Christ's birth in Scripture and traditional carols. Steve Silver will preach and our choir will sing, as we gather at the manger together.

*Joel 2:12-23; Isa. 11:1-12**James F. D. Martin, 1981; alt.*

1 Re - turn, my peo - ple, Is - ra - el, with pen - i - ten - tial tear;  
 2 Fear not, be - lov - ed, hear - ken now: our God has done great things!  
 3 Then to the faith - ful of the earth the call of God rings clear:

just as the proph-et did fore - tell the ad - vent of Em-man-u - el,  
 Your vin - di - ca - tion shall pour down like rain up-on the bar - ren ground,  
 "Re - turn, my peo - ple, claim your worth, pre-par - ing for your Sav - ior's birth;

God's reign on earth is near! God's reign on earth is near!  
 glad tid - ings to you bring, glad tid - ings to you bring.  
 my reign on earth is near. My reign on earth is near."

*This new Advent text by United Church of Christ minister James Martin is set to a tune by British composer Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, who is also known for his symphonies, organ works, and cantatas.*

Tune: REPTON 8.6.8.8.6.6.  
 C. Hubert H. Parry, 1888  
 Alternate tune: REST

## Comfort, Comfort Ye My People


Based on Isaiah 40:1-8

Johann Olearius, 1611-1684



Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, *all.*

PSALM 42 8.7.8.7.7.8.8.


"Genevan Psalter," 1551




1 Com - fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, Speak ye peace, thus saith our God;  
 2 Hark, the voice of one that cri - eth In the des - ert far and near,  
 3 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed, Make the rough - er pla - ces plain;


Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness Mourn - ing 'neath their sor - rows' load.  
 Bid - ding all men to re - pent - ance Since the king - dom now is here.  
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, As be - fits his ho - ly reign.




Speak ye to Je - ru - sa - lem Of the peace that waits for them;  
 Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;  
 For the glo - ry of the Lord Now o'er earth is shed a - broad;

Tell her that her sins I cov - er, And her war - fare now is o - ver.  
 Let the val - leys rise to meet him And the hills bow down to greet him.  
 And all flesh shall see the to - ken That his word is nev - er bro - ken. A - men



## 114

## Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Based on Psalm 24

Georg Weissel, 1590-1635

Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878

TRURO L.M.

Thomas Williams', "Psalmody Evangelica," 1789

1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; Be - hold the  
 2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; Make it a  
 3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide My heart to  
 4 So come, my Sov - ereign; en - ter in! Let new and

King of glo - ry waits! The King of kings is  
 tem - ple, set a - part From earth - ly use for  
 thee; here, Lord, a - bide! Let me thy in - ner  
 no - bler life be - gin; Thy Ho - ly Spir - it

draw - ing near; The Sav - ior of the world is here.  
 heaven's em - ploy, A - dorned with prayer and love and joy.  
 pres - ence feel; Thy grace and love in me re - veal.  
 guide us on, Un - til the glo - rious crown be won. A - men.

## Christmas Carol Sing and Potluck at the Parsonage

Next Sunday, December 17, 12:00-2:00 pm—15 Kimball St, Lebanon

All are warmly invited to our annual congregational Christmas party! We'll gather round the fireplace for festive fellowship and favorite carols. *Bring a favorite dish or holiday treat to share.*

## THE CHRISTMAS FUND

We invite you to consider a donation to the UCC's Christmas Fund, also known as the Fund for the Veterans of the Cross or Emergency Fund. This program offers compassionate, grateful support for retired clergy and their families with pension, healthcare, and emergency assistance.

*Please give as you're able, either by check to FCC (memo "Christmas Fund") or at [www.pbucc.org](http://www.pbucc.org).*



**Bel Canto Chamber Singers: Wintertide—Saturday, Dec. 9, at 7:00 / Sunday, Dec. 10, at 4:00**

Jane Woods leads Bel Canto in a seasonal selection of choral music with strings, flute, and piano. They'll sing Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Messe de Minuit*, as well as Ola Gjeilo, John Rutter, French carols, and traditional spirituals. *Adults \$15, students \$10, under 13 free; for more, visit [belcantosingers.org](http://belcantosingers.org).*

**The Anonymous Coffeehouse—Fridays, December 15, January 12 and 26, all at 7:30 pm**

Our comfy community venue for live folk music is thriving in its fourth season! Come and go as you please; food and drink available. *Free admission. For performers and more, visit [anoncoffee.org](http://anoncoffee.org).*

**Upper Valley Music Center Messiah Sing!—Next Sunday, December 17, at 3:00 pm**

Our annual performance of G. F. Handel's beloved oratorio, with student soloists. All welcome to join the chorus (scores available!) or just listen. *Suggested \$20 donation; more at [uvmusic.org](http://uvmusic.org).*

**A Christmas Concert Spectacular!—Saturday, December 23, at 7:00 pm**

Pianist Elizabeth Borowsky gathers her family of virtuosi—mother Cecylia Barczyk (cello) and siblings Frances (cello) and Emmanuel (violin)—and numerous musical friends for this special program of Christmas gems. **And don't miss ice sculptor Tony Perham's demonstration that afternoon in the front yard of the church!** *Free-will donation for UV Haven; more at [88keys.my.canva.site/christmas23](http://88keys.my.canva.site/christmas23).*



### *"Poinsettia Fund" for Advent and Christmas* **TO BENEFIT THE OPEN DOOR MINISTRY**

For many years our congregation has offered poinsettias for the Sanctuary in honor or memory of family and friends. Rather than purchasing individual plants for each dedication, we invite you to honor your loved ones at Christmas with a **modest contribution in support of the increasingly urgent needs of our OPEN DOOR MINISTRY for community assistance.**

If you would like to offer a dedication in honor or memory of someone, please complete this form and return it either by mail or offering plate, with a contribution (\$5 minimum, payable FCC, memo "Poinsettia Fund"). Dedications received by Friday, December 15, will be listed in worship bulletins the following Sunday and Christmas Eve.

Given by \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_



**First Congregational Church of Lebanon**

PO Box 230  
10 South Park St  
Lebanon NH 03766

**Weekly Worship Resources Enclosed!**

*DATED MATERIAL—Please Deliver Promptly*

***Do you use email? Contact [church@fcclleb.org](mailto:church@fcclleb.org) to receive this and other communication by email.***

***Welcome!***

We are a Christ-centered community that celebrates the love of God. Although we are of varied minds, with varying measures of belief and unbelief, we are one body, bound together in Christ. We recognize the uniqueness of every individual as God's beloved child. We seek to respond faithfully to God's call for justice for all creation. We strive in word and deed to be faithful to Jesus' model of loving acceptance. We seek to create a sanctuary where all will know they are welcome and included.

No matter your age, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, race or ethnicity, physical or mental ability, or economic circumstance, you are invited into the full life and ministry of First Congregational Church of Lebanon, including its worship, sacraments, and rites.

***Join us as we grow together in God's love.***

**First Congregational Church of Lebanon**

**The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor**

**Ernie Drown, Organist and Choir Director • Brian Clancy, Church Administrator**

**Jon Scott, Chair of Church Council • Linda Gerlach, Chair of Deacons • Barbara Jones, Moderator**

*Church Office Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9:00-12:00 (or by appointment as needed)*

**603-448-4281 • [church@fcclleb.org](mailto:church@fcclleb.org) • [prayer@fcclleb.org](mailto:prayer@fcclleb.org) • [music@fcclleb.org](mailto:music@fcclleb.org) • [www.fcclleb.org](http://www.fcclleb.org)**