

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The First Church in Belfast

United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

December 2, 2018

10:00 a.m.

WE ARE GATHERED IN

WELCOME TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

PRELUDE “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”
arrangement by Mark Hayes

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT

OPENING SEQUENCE

Invitation to Creation’s Advent

One Voice “Creation’s Adventide” tune: CAROL
words by Rev. Kate Winters, 2018

A Story of the Advent Turtle Valerie Haskins
(adapted from *All Creation Waits* by Gayle Boss)

Advent Candle Litany

On this first Sunday of Advent,
we call upon the example of the painted turtle.
**As the weather cools, let us take a deep breath
and dive down into our hearts.**

We pass by the noise and chaos of the season
and take shelter there.

We bury ourselves in God’s rich soil and become still.

In the heart of our stillness, we summon up trust,
the trust that the world will warm again,
and with it our life will be vibrant and new.

Let us light a candle that calls us to shelter.

Let us light the first candle knowing
that God has great plans for us.

Lighting the first Advent Candle

ALL Sing “Creation’s Adventide”, vs. 1

The cold December is growing dark,
as night has stolen the sun.
The earth has frozen tender roots,
the harvest season is done
Come now, good people, and gather in!
The season has offered us rest.
Within creation’s Adventide,
The deep and dark is blessed.

YOUNG PEOPLE’S MESSAGE AND MINISTRY

The Annual Visit of Brother Advent

***GREETING OF PEACE**

*Dona nobis pacem, pacem.
Dona nobis pacem.*

CALL FOR PEACE

-silence-

CHORAL ANTHEM

“All Earth Is Hopeful”
by David Cherwien & Alberto Taulé

WE HEAR THE WORD

FIRST READING Jeremiah 33:14-16 Dick Smith

GOSPEL READING Luke 21:25-36

ADVENT MESSAGE *“There Will be Signs”*

WE LIVE THE WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord’s Prayer

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.

INVITATION TO GIVE

Music O Come, O Come, Emmanuel arr. Gilbert Martin

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God for all that love has done.

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, one.

(Note: The First Church honors the diverse languages of faith. Please sing with words that are meaningful to you. Other versions of the Doxology are found in our hymnal, #776-781.)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We thank you, God, for this season of gifts. May we take joy in our giving and know gratitude in our receiving. Let us share with those who are in need of physical and spiritual sustenance. We pray in the name of the Christ child, who was dependent upon the welcome of strangers, and can be seen in the face of the poor. Amen.

*HYMN “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” vs. 1&2 #345

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Come to the open table! **Here we receive gifts of love.**
Here we consume the food of spirit! **Here we become one.**
Jesus is both host and guest. **As each one of us is as well.**
Come to the open table! **All are welcome here!**

Communion Prayer

We give thanks to you, O God, for this journey of life that is filled with blessing. Our hearts are enthralled by the wonder of creation, the night and the day, the dark and the light, the depths of the seas and the height of the mountains! But most of all, we are grateful for the love that weaves all beings together and connects us firmly to you.

We thank you for the one who showed us how to love, for Jesus, who held nothing back as he walked this earth. He granted everyone a place at the table, the marginal, the hated, the distrusted, the stranger, the mentally ill, the physically challenged.

He called us all together to share this table of abundance.

The night before he died, he met with friends and said:

“Take and eat all of you. For this is my body.”

And then he took the cup, gave you thanks, blessed it and said:

“Take and drink. For this is my blood. Do this in remembrance of me.”

And so we do this in remembrance of that inclusive table, at which we became one in Christ

“Come Holy Spirit, pour your life into this bread and your wisdom into this cup.”

(Bread is Broken. Cup is poured. Meal is shared.)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

*CLOSING HYMN “O How Shall I Receive You?” #102

POSTLUDE Toccata by Giovanni Martini

TODAY

The First Church in Belfast

United Church of Christ

Advent Carol Sing

4:00 p.m.

Love Light Tree Lighting

5:00 p.m.

Reception to follow