

Greetings members and friends of the First Congregational Church of Shelburne,

This Sunday is the First Sunday in Advent. The attached worship resource follows the Advent Service video. The link to this YouTube video is pasted below and can also be found on the church web page, shelburnechurch.org.

Advent Sunday Services are being prerecorded in the church sanctuary and will be available on YouTube. These services will include the lighting of our Advent Wreath, music, prayer, scripture, and a preaching series titled, "*The Questions of Advent.*"

Advent Wreath readings for home use are also attached to this note. They include a brief explanation of the Advent Wreath and a one page liturgy for lighting each weekly Advent candle and the Christ Candle on Christmas Eve.

After such a tumultuous year, may this Advent bring us all a sense of Peace, Hope, Joy and Love,

Pastor Rob

Welcome to the First Sunday of Advent Worship
November 29, 2020

Good Morning to our members and friends at home,

This Sunday is the First Sunday of Advent. This season of Advent will include YouTube videos recorded in our sanctuary, the lighting of the Advent Wreath every Sunday and a preaching series titled, "*The Questions of Advent.*" We hope that you utilize the Sunday videos and the Worship Resource and light an Advent candle every Sunday.

Prayer Requests: We are accepting requests for prayer (healing, comfort, thanksgiving, and others). Please send your requests to the Pastor at pastor01089@gmail.com. Requests will then be sent out through our email list to the congregation for our common prayer life during the week. PLEASE remember that all prayer requests received become public knowledge. If you are uncertain if your request for another might be confidential, do not send it.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath: The Candle of Peace

Call to Worship (Responsive, L=Leader, P=People) Isaiah 52:7-10

L How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,

P **who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion,**
'Your God reigns.'

L Break forth together into singing, for the Lord has comforted his people

Unison Morning Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Prayer for Peace

Lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth. Lead me from despair to hope, from fear to trust. Lead me from hate to love, from war to peace. Let peace fill my heart, my world, my universe. Let me prepare the way of my Lord, Prince of Peace, who taught me

to pray saying ...*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.*

Prayers of the People

Loving God, who, in the coming of Christ, has fulfilled your promise to raise up a horn for our salvation, to bring peace on earth, we give you our thanks for this season of waiting and preparation. We do confess that it is hard for us to wait, it is hard for us to wait for anything or anyone, we are impatient by nature, especially when we look for, work for and pray for peace and then take stock of all the conflict, the violence, the senseless wars with senseless killing. There is so much hatred, so much abuse, so much innocence lost, so much that seems so cruel and brutal, so blind, so arrogant, ignorant and yes, so evil, that we are impatient for the coming of your peace, O Lord. We hear the familiar verses; swords into plow shares, spears into pruning hooks, neither shall we learn war anymore, those verses brings us to tears, and yet we are still on the edge of the abyss of destruction.

We are impatient for the coming of your peace, O Lord. We confess that seeking peace is something we pray for, dream of, but find it difficult to be involved in a meaningful way. Help us, O God, not only to wait, but to see how it is we can find your peace in our lives. Peace in what we say, and how we say it. Peace in what we do, and how we do it. Peace in our financial lives and how we use the assets you have blessed us with, peace as citizens of this nation; dedicated to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness for all our people. Peace as parents, as children, as your children, the peace that comes from knowing you, from walking with your Christ, from living with your Holy Spirit. Grant us this peace, as we wait, and as we pray in this time of meditation.....Loving God, grant us your peace according to your holy will. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 1: 5-24 edited

The Questions of Advent: How Will I Know?

The Gospel of Luke is the only gospel account that tells the story of Elizabeth and Zechariah, the parents of John the Baptist. Zechariah was a temple priest. When an angel appeared to him proclaiming that his wife will bear a son, named John, Zechariah questioned how this might be. 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." Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion.

Here ends the reading from
The Gospel according to Luke

After the reading, you may reflect on these passages and share your thoughts.
There is a sermon in the YouTube video for this week.

Benediction: Handley C.G. Moule, 1841-1920

The blessing of the Lord rest and remain upon all his people,
in every land and of every tongue.

The Lord meet in mercy all who seek him;
The Lord comfort all who suffer and mourn;
The Lord hasten his coming, and give us,
His people, Peace, by all means. Amen.