

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF MONTAGUE,
TRINITARIAN, MONTAGUE, MA
The Third Sunday of Advent
Dec 17, 2023**

Bold italics indicate the work of the people.

**Indicates places to stand if able to.*

The Hymnal for today is the Red Hymnal

**PRELUDE
PROCESSIONAL & ANNOUNCEMENTS
SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS
MOMENT OF SILENCE IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Let the heavens be glad and let the earth rejoice.

Let the sea roar, and all that fills it.

Let the field exult, and everything in it!

Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy before the Lord

For he is coming to judge the world with righteousness,

And to lead the people in truth.

(From Psalm 96)

HYMN #110 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Verses 1-3 only)

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

(Reader 1): On the first Sunday in Advent, we lit a candle of hope for the coming of the Christ child. Last Sunday, we lit a candle for love, to symbolize God's love for us and our love for one another.

(Reader 2): Now we add the candle of Joy, to express the joy to be found in God's reign on earth.

(Reader 3): For the Lord elevates the lowly, releases the captive, and brings sight to the blind.

We rejoice in God's justice and mercy

For God is faithful to all generations.

(All): *Come Lord Jesus, Come!*

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

O Mighty One, who scatters the proud and fills the hungry, by your Holy Spirit let your word leap in us and bring to our yearning the joy that comes with new beginnings and renewed lives. Amen

***PRAYER OF YEARNING**

Emmanuel, be with us in our times of need. Grant us hope when despair overwhelms us. Grant us healing and mercy, when illness and injury sap our strength. Grant us life and growth, when death and stagnation threaten us. Grant us patience and perseverance, when we grow weary, as we await your coming reign.

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

L: A child will be born, whose light will make us whole and whose reign shall be one of joy everlasting.

All: Thanks be to God!

(The Gloria is omitted during this Advent time of waiting)

CHILDRENS MESSAGE

THE WORD IN MUSIC

"A CHRISTMAS CANTATA"

(Natalie Sleeth, arr: Robert Lau)

Choir

PRAYERS

Intercessory Prayers

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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever Amen.

Prayer Response

***DOXOLOGY AND PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING**

*Praise God, the Source of life and birth.
Praise God, the Word, who came to earth.
Praise God, the Spirit, holy flame.
All glory, honor to God's name! Amen.*

(sung to the tune of Old 100th)

***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

With gratitude for all that you provide, dear God, and to the service of the world you love so much, we dedicate these gifts and our lives to you, in Jesus name. Amen

*HYMN #119 “As With Gladness Men of Old”

***BENEDICTION**

Response

As we leave this quiet place, the light of Christ will guide us. As we share His truth and grace, our Lord will walk beside us. May the peace of God be with us as we live and serve in faith. May the love of Christ within us show in all we do and say. Amen. Amen

POSTLUDE

(Please remain seated for the Postlude)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council Meeting Today.

Dec 24th: Advent Morning Service at 10:00am and Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 6:30pm.

No Office Hours on Tuesday, Dec 26. In case of pastoral emergency call Rev. Koyama at 808-282-6711.

PRAYER GARDEN