

Welcome to Seward United Methodist Church

November 28, 2021 - 10:30 a.m.

Advent I



Making disciples who make a difference in Seward and beyond.

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Megan Forbes

Passing of the Peace

Call to Worship:

L: Welcome to this first day of Advent.

P: We gather in anticipation of the journey to Bethlehem. We await the telling of the well-loved story.

L: This Advent we will engage our whole selves in this worshipful, waiting season.

P: With body, mind, and spirit we embrace this time.

L: Let faith steep through all our festivities, making sacred each moment.

P: Our hearts are ready, our minds open and our senses alert for the scent of hope.

Hymn

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Verse 1

Come Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free
From our fears and sins release us
Let us find our rest in Thee
Israel's strength and consolation
Hope of all the earth Thou art
Dear desire of ev'ry nation
Joy of ev'ry longing heart

Verse 2

Born Thy people to deliver
Born a child and yet a King
Born to reign in us forever
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring
By Thine own eternal spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone
By Thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne

Bridge

You draw the hearts of shepherds
You draw the hearts of kings
Even in a manger
You were changing ev'rything
You called me to Your kingdom
Before Your lips could speak
And even in a manger
You were reaching out for me

And now we are awaiting
The day of Your return
When ev'ry eye will see You
As heaven comes to earth
Until the sky is opened
Until the trumpet sounds
The bride is getting ready
The Church is singing out

Verse 3

Come Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free
From our fears and sins release us
Let us find our rest in Thee
Come Thou long expected King

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Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Reader 1: Long ago hope wafted unbidden into a broken world.
Unbidden, God's persistent, prevenient grace hounds us.
Possibility now dwells with despair
Heads lift, knees strengthen
We turn our hearts to Bethlehem.

Reader 2: Thus Advent begins and we prepare body, mind, and spirit to welcome again our Messiah.
We light the first candle with the theme, "The Scent of Hope," remembering that when our awareness dawns, God has already been at work in our lives. This Advent we commit ourselves to fulfilling each day the Great Commandment.

**All: I will love God with all my heart, all my soul, all my mind, and all my strength.
Amen.**

HYMN

For the Beauty of the Earth

UMH 92, v. 3

For the joy of ear and eye,

For the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony
linking sense to sound and sight;
Lord of all, to thee we raise
this hymn of grateful praise.

Common Prayer: Keeper of the Stars, Source of Breath and Being, You are with us before we even come to awareness of our need for You. As a mere whiff of baking bread sparks our unknown hunger; Advent's scent of hope stirs up our yearning for our Savior. We wait as did your people of old for our Messiah. Grant that we might recognize your presence and make you welcome in all aspects of our lives. In the name of Christ. AMEN.

Children's Time

Pastor JoEllen Axthelm

Scripture Lessons

Ephesians 5: 1-2

¹Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, ²and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Luke 1: 5-24

⁵In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of God. ⁷But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

⁸Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of God and offer incense. ¹⁰Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. ¹¹Then there appeared to him an angel of God, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When he saw the angel, Zechariah was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. ¹³But 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. ¹⁴You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great in the sight of God. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷With 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 messiah." ¹⁸Zechariah 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." ¹⁹The 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. ²⁰But 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."

²¹Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary.

²²When 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. ²³When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion.

Hymn

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

UMH 216

1. Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
as those of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright
Amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.

2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the Rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,
the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.

3. O Flower, whose fragrance tender
with sweetness fills the air,
Dispel in glorious splendor
the darkness everywhere.
True man yet very God,
from sin and death now save us,
and share our every load.

Sermon

Scent of Hope

Rev. Dr. Mary Kay Totty

The Prayers of the People

Please share your joys or concerns at the microphone or in the comments on Facebook or by texting us at 402-810-8900.

Prayer Hymn

Make Room

Is there room in your heart
Is there room in your heart
Is there room in your heart
For God to write His story

You can come as you are
It may set you apart
When you make room in your heart
And trade your dreams for God's glory
Make room in your heart
Make room in your heart

CCLI Song # 7101018

Mark Hall | Matt Maher

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Sharing of Joys & Concerns
Pastoral Prayer
The Lord's Prayer

Offertory

Megan Forbes

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power up lifts!
Praise the Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prayer of Dedication

Gracious God, we seek to put all we are into this time of preparation that we might fully receive our Messiah into our lives. No half-hearted celebrations, no lukewarm commitments; but a generous, joyous, enthusiastic offering of our whole being we bring to you this day. We dedicate ourselves and these monetary offerings to your work and service. In Christ's name. Amen.

Hymn**Glory****UMH 213**

Verse 1

One star
Burns in the darkness
Shines with the promise Emmanuel
One child
Born in the stillness
Living within us Emmanuel

Chorus

We're singing Glory Glory
Let there be peace let there be peace
Singing Glory Glory
Let there be peace let it start in me

Verse 2

One voice
Speaks for the voiceless
Hope for the hopeless Emmanuel
One love
Brings us together
Now and forever Emmanuel

Bridge

Do not be afraid
God's love is strong enough to save us
Nothing stands in the way
God's love is strong enough to lead us
(REPEAT)

Ending

Let there be peace let it start in me

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Benediction

Rev. Dr. Mary Kay Totty

Postlude

Megan Forbes

The People of God Go Forth to Serve

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The Seward United Methodist Church, 1400 N. 5th Street, Seward, NE 68434

Phone: 402-643-4156 ~ Fax 402-643-4159

E-mail: umcseward@gmail.com ~ Website: www.sewardumc.org

Office hours: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.