

Even tax collectors came to be baptized. They said to him, “Teacher, what should we do?” He replied, “Collect no more than you are authorized to collect.” Soldiers asked, “What about us? What should we do?” He answered, “Don’t cheat or harass anyone, and be satisfied with your pay.” The people were filled with expectation, and everyone wondered whether John might be the Christ. John replied to them all, “I baptize you with water, but the one who is more powerful than me is coming. I’m not worthy to loosen the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. The shovel he uses to sift the wheat from the husks is in his hands. He will clean out his threshing area and bring the wheat into his barn. But he will burn the husks with a fire that can’t be put out.” With many other words John appealed to them, proclaiming good news to the people.

SERMON “Rejoice Rejoice” Rev. Ned Alderman

HYMN “Come, O Come Emmanuel” v.1-4 #211

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lowly exile here until the Son of God appear.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

2. O Come, thou Wisdom from on High, and order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show and cause us in her ways to go.

Refrain

3. O come, O come, great Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai’s height
In ancient times once gave the law in cloud and majesty and awe.

Refrain

4. O come, thou Root of Jesse’s tree, an ensign of thy people be;
Before thee rulers silent fall; all peoples on thy mercy call.

Refrain

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Loving God, through the gift of prayer you teach us to hold one another in our hearts. Hear now our prayers: for the leaders and people of every nation:

for the church and all who serve the Lord:

for those who suffer in sorrow and affliction:

for refugees and travelers far from home:

for all who are in prison or facing trial:

for those who sit in darkness, or in the shadow of death:

Gracious God, this is our prayer: that your love will overflow more and more in our lives, in your church, and in all the world, until all may know the compassion of Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord, in whose name we pray.

Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING



Oaklette United Methodist Church

"God's Body in this Community"

"Oaklette United Methodist Church through worship, education, and outreach, seeks to make the gospel of Jesus Christ real, as we minister to all people."

December 8, 2024

Second Sunday of Advent



Welcome in the name of our Lord. A nurturing and well-supervised nursery is available for infants and young children. A Cry Room is also available. Please ask the greeter for further assistance and directions to these rooms. [†] = Invites persons to stand as they are able.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER

Loving, sustaining God, like the mighty oak, may our branches at Oaklette church embrace those around us in this community. Use us as an instrument to welcome and shelter your people. Deepen our roots so that our branches are strong. Let the Holy Spirit flow like a river through our church, so that we may do your will. In Jesus’ holy name, Amen.

OPENING SCRIPTURE

Luke 3:1-6 [CEB]

In the fifteenth year of the rule of the emperor Tiberius—when Pontius Pilate was governor over Judea and Herod was ruler over Galilee, his brother Philip was ruler over Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was ruler over Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas – God’s word came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. John went throughout the region of the Jordan River, calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins. This is just as it was written in the scroll of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

A voice crying out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way for the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be leveled. The crooked will be made straight and the rough places made smooth. All humanity will see God’s salvation.”

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Reader One: The prophet Malachi calls us to watch for the messenger God will send us, a messenger who burns with a passion for God’s coming salvation. “For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness” (Malachi 3:2b-3).

Congregation: In a world driven by a passion to maintain the status quo, we choose to live with a passion for God’s peace, to listen to those who call us to righteousness, and to submit ourselves to God’s grace, that we might be refined and purified until we reflect God’s love throughout the earth.

Reader Two: We light this candle of peace as a sign of our commitment to passionately pursue the work of making peace in our hearts, our families, our communities, and throughout the earth until God’s kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven.

PRELUDE

“Coventry Carol “

DANA MOODY

MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

Lay Reader: The messenger of God’s holy covenant is coming!

People: Prepare the way of the Lord!

Lay Reader: The messenger comes to prepare the way before us!

People: Prepare the way of the Lord!

Lay Reader: Who can endure, who can stand when the Lord appears?

People: Prepare the way of the Lord!

The Abingdon Worship Annual 2009 copyright 2008 by Abingdon Press

OPENING PRAYER (ALL)

God of us all, we watch and wait. We look east and west, watching for the promised approach of the one the prophets speak of, the one the gospel stories describe, the one who is you with us. Keep us alert and awake, ready to receive the one who comes. Amen.

Bennett, Tanya Linn. The Abingdon Preaching Annual 2021: Planning Sermons and Services for Fifty-Two Sundays (p. 254). Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition.

HYMN

“Tell Out, My Soul”

#200

1. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of God’s word;
in God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.
2. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of God’s name!
Make known God’s might, who wondrous deeds has done;
God’s mercy sure, from age to age the same;
God’s holy name, the Lord, the mighty one.
3. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of God’s might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;
proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

4. Tell out, my soul, the glories of God’s word!
Firm is the promise and God’s mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children’s children and forevermore!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lay Reader: God of light and love, your prophets call us to prepare for your coming, and to open our hearts to all who seek compassion and relief.

People: Too often, we close our ears to cries of pain, closing ourselves off from the healing power of kindness and love.

Lay Reader: Your messengers call us to straighten the paths of all who might stumble, and to make a way in the wilderness, where there seems to be no way at all.

People: Too often, we close our eyes to the sight of those in need, fearing that justice for others will bring loss to ourselves.

Lay Reader: You call us to bring light into the shadowy places, and to be messengers of your coming into a world of death and despair.

People: Forgive us when we are unwilling to bear your light, when we close off the pathways of our hearts to those who are in need of your good news.

PROMISE OF ASSURANCE

Lay Reader: Hear the good news: When we cannot find our way through the gloom, God gives light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen.

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

ANTHEM

“Hush My Heart”

CHANCEL CHOIR
Monica Whitehurst, Soloist

SCRIPTURE

Luke 3:7-18 [CEB]

Then John said to the crowds who came to be baptized by him, “You children of snakes! Who warned you to escape from the angry judgment that is coming soon? Produce fruit that shows you have changed your hearts and lives. And don’t even think about saying to yourselves, Abraham is our father. I tell you that God is able to raise up Abraham’s children from these stones. The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit will be chopped down and tossed into the fire.” The crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” He answered, “Whoever has two shirts must share with the one who has none, and whoever has food must do the same.”

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

We are called by God to present a harvest of righteousness – not by virtue of our own works, but by the grace of the one who began a good work in us, and is even now bringing it to completion. Let us bring the offerings of our lives to the Lord.

*Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 1 © 2012
Westminster John Knox Press*

OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God, in this Advent season, we bring our offerings with hearts open to your call. Just as John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, may our gifts help prepare the way for your kingdom. Use these offerings to bring hope, justice, and transformation. Help us to look beyond the surface, to see your work in surprising places and people. Bless our giving, that it may shine with the presence of Emmanuel. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

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

HYMN

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

#196

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 every nation, joy of every longing heart.
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.

SENDING FORTH

Go in peace, live in love, and seek to be holy in all that you do. May the God of mercy keep you, the Holy Spirit cheer you, and Christ in glory greet you, now and at the day of his coming.

*Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 1 2012 Westminster
John Know Press*

GOING FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE

POSTLUDE

“Ring Out Sweet Bells”

DANA MOODY

Today's service is being broadcast on Facebook Live at 11:00 am. You can access the service through the Oaklette Church Group on Facebook. You can also access the sermon through the Oaklette UMC Facebook page. If you are unable to use Facebook Live a link can be sent to you by email after the Facebook Live Worship has been recorded, but we will need your email address to do this. The Facebook Live service will also be downloaded to our website on Monday morning.

*The flowers on the altar today are presented to the glory of God
The Food Basket on the altar is presented to the glory of God.*



PARTNERS IN MINISTRY TODAY

Members of the Church

Nursery Care Providers: Barbara Bennett & Joanne Rooks

Prayer Partner: Shellene Castellow

Advent Reader: Debbie & David Rippard

Lay Reader – Brenda Swoope

Audio-Visual Operator – Julian Baker

Facebook Live Recorder: Bright Tsevi

Greeter: Joanne Rooks

Pastor: Rev. Ned Alderman

Administrative Assistant: Eileen Ballance

Financial Secretary: Edna Bess

Coastal Virginia Dist. Superintendent: Rev. Beth Givens

Resident Bishop, Richmond Area: Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson



*In Lieu of Christmas Cards
Barbara and Jack Buchanan have made a donation to
Oaklette Church.*



Poinsettias have been donated by:

Barbara Bennett in honor of Food Pantry

Judy Carter

Shellene & Rob Castellow

Jerome Dickinson

Danny Etheridge

Carol Friedman in honor of Joyce Gaston

Linda & Calvin Gallop

Judy Litten

Chip Payette

Stella Price

Joanne Rooks

Lisa & Brooks Ryno

Brenda Swoope

Linda & John Tandy in honor of parents

Carol Friedman in honor of Monica Whitehurst

Patti Wilson