

**First Congregational Church of Rowley, United Church of Christ
The Order of Morning Worship | Third Sunday in Advent
Drive in Service - 90.3 FM – December 13, 2020 @ 10am**

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Tom Bentley

Call to Worship

Susan Hazen

Leader: The God who speaks comfort to us calls us here.

All: The God who addresses us with tenderness meets us here.

Leader: The God who guides us with gentleness cares for us here.

**All: We come to prepare a way for the Lord, we come to ready ourselves for the transformation of our lives.
For the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Leader: Your song is joy, Singer of Creation, for you are Joy—

All: Joy that fills the empty with good things.

Leader: Joy that sings light into the darkness;
(the first purple candle- the candle of Hope is lit.)

Leader: Joy echoes among us with angelic song;
This is the joy that births hope in the midst of despair.

**All: Open our lips to sing your praise
and receive your melody in my life.**

The second purple candle, the candle of Peace is lit.

Leader: We are ready for your coming.

All: Our hearts are open to the coming of Joy. Amen.

The third candle (the pink candle of Joy) is lit.



Third Sunday of Advent

Opening Song “As with Gladness Men of Old” *(see lyrics from the Pilgrim Hymnal attached)*

New Testament Reading **1 Thessalonians 5:12-23. The Message** **Susan Hazen**

And now, friends, we ask you to honor those leaders who work so hard for you, who have been given the responsibility of urging and guiding you along in your obedience. Overwhelm them with appreciation and love!

Get along among yourselves, each of you doing your part. Our counsel is that you warn the freeloaders to get a move on. Gently encourage the stragglers, and reach out for the exhausted, pulling them to their feet. Be patient with each person, attentive to individual needs. And be careful that when you get on each other's nerves you don't snap at each other. Look for the best in each other, and always do your best to bring it out.

Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live.

Don't suppress the Spirit, and don't stifle those who have a word from the Master. On the other hand, don't be gullible. Check out everything, and keep only what's good. Throw out anything tainted with evil.

Moment of Music “Angels We Have Heard on High” *(see attached lyrics from Pilgrim Hymnal)*

Joys and Concerns *(prayer requests can be texted to 978-973-2362)*

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer *(in unison)*

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin 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.

Gospel Reading John 1:6-8, 19-26 The Message

Susan Hazen

There once was a man, his name John, sent by God to point out the way to the Life-Light. He came to show everyone where to look, who to believe in. John was not himself the Light; he was there to show the way to the Light. When Jews from Jerusalem sent a group of priests and officials to ask John who he was, he was completely honest. He didn't evade the question. He told the plain truth: "I am not the Messiah."

They pressed him, "Who, then? Elijah?"

"I am not."

"The Prophet?"

"No."

Exasperated, they said, "Who, then? We need an answer for those who sent us. Tell us something—anything!—about yourself."

"I'm thunder in the desert: 'Make the road straight for God!' I'm doing what the prophet Isaiah preached." Those sent to question him were from the Pharisee party. Now they had a question of their own: "If you're neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet, why do you baptize?"

John answered, "I only baptize using water. A person you don't recognize has taken his stand in your midst. He comes after me, but he is not in second place to me. I'm not even worthy to hold his coat for him."

Words for our Heritage Sunday

David Irving

Message: "Child-of-God Joy"

Benediction

Rev. Tom Bentley

Postlude "Gloria in excelsis Deo"- by Antonio Vivaldi"

Lyrics

Angels We Have Heard on High

[Verse 1]

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly swinging o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains

[Chorus]

Gloria In Excelsis Deo
Gloria In Excelsis Deo

[Verse 2]

Shepherds why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the may the tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?

[Chorus]

Gloria In Excelsis Deo
Gloria In Excelsis Deo

[Verse 3]

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him Whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King

[Chorus]

Gloria In Excelsis Deo
Gloria In Excelsis Deo

Lyrics

As With Gladness Men of Old

1. As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold,
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Evermore be led to Thee.

2. As with joyful steps they sped
To that lowly manger bed,
There to bend the knee before
Him whom heav'n and earth adore;
So may we, with willing feet,
Ever seek Thy mercy seat.

3. As they offered gifts most rare
At thy cradle rude and bare;
So may we with holy joy,
Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

4. Holy Jesus, every day
Keep us in the narrow way;
And, when earthly things are past,
Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide,
Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

5. In the heavenly country bright
Need they no created light;
Thought its light, its joy, its crown,
Though its sun which goes not down;
There for ever may we sing
Alleluias to our King.