

The United Parish in Brookline



American Baptist • United Church of Christ • United Methodist

Rooted in the past, Reaching into our future Celebrating United Parish's 50th Anniversary



November 29, 2020 First Sunday of Advent Hope

PRELUDE We transition into our sacred time as our music invokes the spirit of God. Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming To a Christmas Rose arranged by Sandra Eithun **United Parish Ringers**

CHIMING THE TRINITY We call forth God the Creator, Savior and Holy Spirit in musical tones.

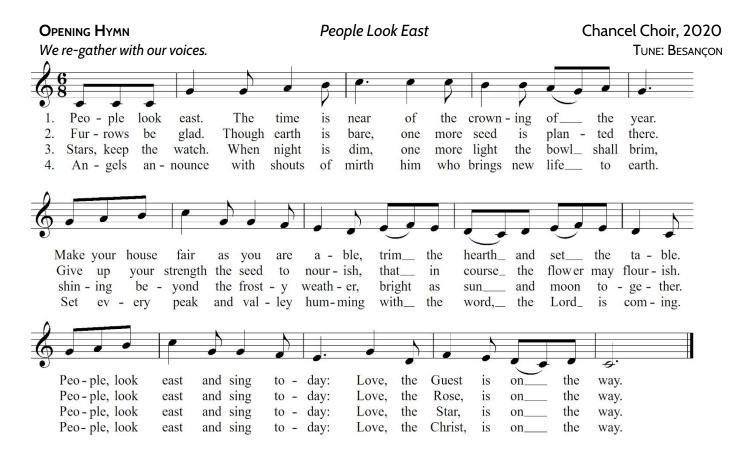
INTROIT We welcome the light of Christ with song. Veni Emmanuel

Kent French Senior Pastor

Translation: O come, O come, Emmanuel! Redeem thy captive Israel that into exile drear is gone, Far from the face of God's dear Son. Rejoice, Rejoice. Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel. One: In our homes we gather around wreaths to pray our lost hopes, broken peace, limited joys, and love so hard to find and share, in this season of coronavirus. We affirm that our candles mean we claim the power to call this season Advent when God's light comes into the world and nothing can overcome it.

All: We light the candle of hope in the face of ... [all are invited to name aloud or in the chat something that opposes hope in their lives or in the world]

- One: God's hope shines on hopelessness, and brightens the path toward peace.
- All: Emmanuel, God be with us, in the week to come, lighting hope on the wick of our lives so that we may shine on our world. Amen



LITANY OF **PREPARATION** We set our intention for worship with this call and response.

Lisa Weil

Discernment and Engagement

Ministry Team

- One: The voice of one cries out, "in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the LORD!" How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the King?
- All: With branches of cedar, the tree of royalty.
- One: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of the eternal Christ?
- All: With garlands of pine and fir, whose leaves are ever living, ever green.
- One: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of our Savior?
- All: With wreaths of holly and ivy, telling of his passion, death, and resurrection.
- One: How shall we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Son of God?
- All: By hearing again the words of the prophets, who foretold the saving work of God.
- One: For God did not send God's Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Christ, might be saved.
- All: Glory to God in the highest!

GREETINGS We warmly welcome all into our midst.

Amy Norton and Kent French Associate Pastor and Senior Pastor

PRAYER OF CONFESSION in unison

Together, we confess the ways we have gotten out of step with God and seek to re-center ourselves in the Love of God.

God of Advent, God of new beginnings and patient expectation,

- we come into your presence
- aware of the ways in which we stray from your love,
- aware of the ways we tarnish the gift of life that you give us.

Forgive us and help us, we pray,

- when we bury you so deeply in our hearts that the world doesn't see you,
- when we ignore your teachings,
- when we do not follow Christ,
- when we lead lives of apathy, against your love,
- when we build fences and fortresses to push people away,
- and silence the cries of those in need.

Forgive us, we pray:

- Free us from our sin,
- Free us from our captivity,
- Free us into a life illuminated with Love,
- In which your light of Hope will shine brightly in our souls,
- through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

SILENT CONFESSION

We continue praying in silence for up to one minute for our personal confessions and spiritual centering.

One: O God, in your compassion;

All: Hear our prayer.

Assurance of Pardon We receive the Good News that we are loved, forgiven and renewed in God's presence.

THE PEACE We share this Good News among ourselves with words of Peace and Love.

- One: The Peace of Christ and the Love of God be with you always;
- All: And also with you.

PEACE RESPONSE We re-gather with our voices in song.	Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning Spiritual, arranged by André Thomas	Choir and Congregation Cy Perkins, <i>hand drums</i>
The	choir will sing each section the first time. Please join them t	he second time.
Refrain:	Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, Keep your lamps trimmed and burning the time is a	Irawing nigh. All Repeat
Verse:	Children, don't get weary, children don't get weary, Children don't get weary, the time is drawing nigh. All Repeat	
Refrain:	Keep your lamps trimmed and burning (2x)	

READING FROM THE GOSPEL Mark 13:24-37 We reflect together on this sacred story from the life of Jesus Christ. Wilson Hood Seminarian, 2018-2019

One: The Good News of Jesus Christ; All: Thanks be to God!

REFLECTION We reflect together on how the Word of God plays out in our lives. Adam Sutton Adult Deepening Ministry Team

CAROL *We re-gather with our voices.*

Lo, How a Rose

Helen Hassinger, Margot Wegman, Nick Duffin Tune: Es ist Ein Ros

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.

> This Flow'r whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air, Dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere. O Flow'r beyond compare, bloom in our hearts' midwinter: restore the springtime there.

FIRST READING E We learn about our Advent evergreen traditions.

Evergreen Wreaths

William and Elizabeth Klaussen Elementary Church School Class **C**AROL We re-gather with our voices. Of Eternal Love Begotten

Of Eternal love begotten, Ere the worlds began to be, He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending, He, Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years shall see, Evermore and evermore.

SECOND READING We learn about our Advent evergreen traditions. Kendall Brainin Confirmation Class

CAROL We re-gather with our voices. *The Holly and the Ivy* Traditional English Carol

Holly and Ivy

Chancel Choir, 2020

Please sing all text in bold print.

The holly and the ivy When they are both full grown Of all trees that are in the wood The holly bears the crown.

Oh the rising of the sun And the running of the deer The playing of the merry organ sweet singing in the choir.

The holly bears a blossom as white as lily flow'r And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to be our dear Saviour

The holly bears a berry as red as any blood And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ To do poor sinners good. Oh the rising of the sun And the running of the deer The playing of the merry organ sweet singing in the choir.

The holly bears a prickle as sharp as any thorn And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ On Christmas Day in the morn.

The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ for to redeem us all.

Oh the rising of the sun And the running of the deer The playing of the merry organ Sweet singing in the choir.

THIRD READINGThe Christmas TreeJustin and Ryan Fenton-HiltWe learn about our Advent evergreen traditions.Middle and Elementary Church School Class

CAROL We re-gather with our voices. O Tannenbaum verses 1 and 2

Choir and Congregation Helen Hassinger, Margot Wegman, Nick Duffin, *Song Leaders* Traditional German Carol



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE We pray together for our congregation, our surrounding community, the nation and the world. Katharine H. Henry Seminarian

One: O God, hear our prayer, All: And guide us in your love. LORD'S PRAYER We sing together the prayer Jesus taught us. We invite you to use your chosen words for God: Father, Mother, Abba, Allah or ...

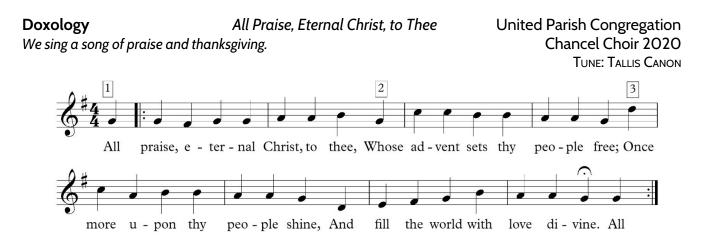
> Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, On Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,

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 and ever. Amen.

OFFERING We offer our gifts for God's service and our visitor cards. No gift is too small or too large. All are precious.

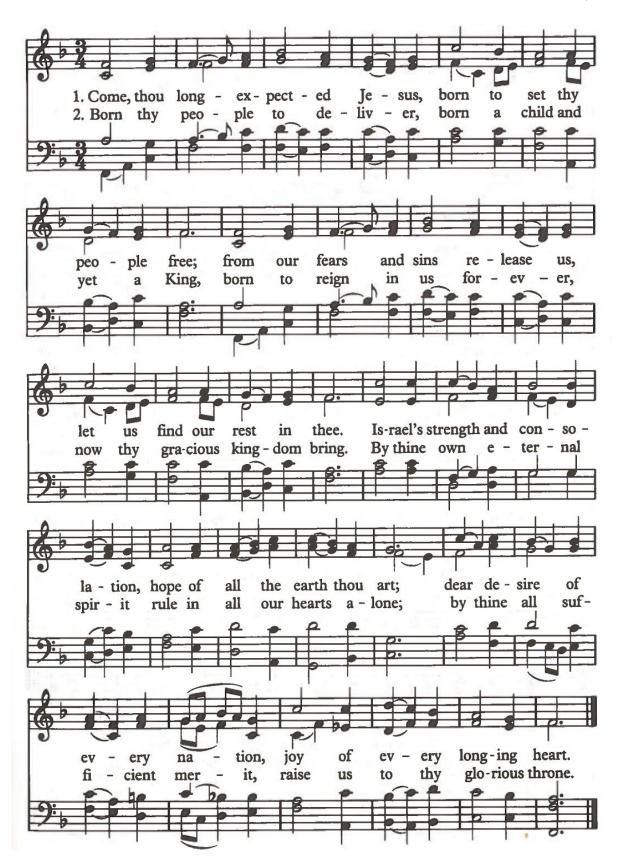
Invitation We hear from community members about why they take part.

Deb Hall Adult Deepening Ministry Team



Prayer of Dedication We ask God's blessing over the gifts.

United Parish Congregation, 2019 CLOSING HYMN Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus Together in song, we set our intention in leaving this sacred space. Chancel Choir 2020 TUNE: HYFRYDOL



HOLY BUSINESS We share news of God's work in our community's activities.

BENEDICTION We receive a blessing as we prepare to depart this sacred gathering.

POSTLUDE We transition out of our sacred time together. O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Elise Molloy Tower Bells

Please join us for Coffee Hour after worship on Zoom. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89230311301?pwd=SXk3d2dKSTNlNmRwbGZ4aW1meDJsQT09 Meeting ID: 892 3031 1301 Passcode: 340421 Or call 646-558-8656

WFICOME

We at the United Parish in Brookline believe that all people are made in the image of God and embrace and cherish every person and every kind of family. Jesus Christ welcomed everyone; we seek to follow his example in our own life and worship, by extending God's love and grace abundantly and equally to everyone. We affirm and welcome all people to share in worship, fellowship and leadership with us, to join us in a diversity of race, gender, sexual identity, physical and mental ability, ethnicity and economic means.

We have joined with other Open and Affirming (United Church of Christ) and Welcoming and Affirming (American Baptist Churches USA), as well as with the Reconciling Ministries Network (United Methodist Churches) to declare that we are and will remain open to all people.

We invite you to consider becoming a member of the United Parish family. You may become a member by transferring membership or by a statement of faith. If you desire to retain ties with a former church, we invite you to become an associate or affiliate member for the time you are with us.

Ministers Senior Pastor Associate Pastor Seminarian Minister of Music Parish Administrator **Facilities Manager** Building Usage Coordinator Accounting Administrator **Nursery Supervisor** Pastor Emerita

The People of the United Parish Kent French **Amy Norton** Katharine Henry Susan DeSelms Sarah Fitzpatrick David Dunphy Helen Hassinger **Donald Firth** Jenna Bergquist Patricia Coughlin



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ABOUT THE EVERGREENS

Wreaths

In many ancient civilizations, it was believed that all objects possessed spirits. Since it was believed that most trees possessed kindly spirits, it became customary for people to bring home sprigs and branches of trees in order that their homes might be blessed by their presence. When Christianity came into existence, the newly converted pagans held onto this custom, so it eventually became part of our tradition. We decorate our homes and places of worship. The evergreens symbolize God's eternal and everlasting love for us, even after death. The wreath, round with no beginning and no end, symbolizes the victory and glory of the fulfillment of Scripture in the coming of the Christ.

Holly and Ivy

Because holly and ivy bear their berries in the dark, cold winter months, our ancestors hung them in their homes to symbolize the hope and expectation of spring. Today we use holly as a reminder of Christ's passion during the otherwise joyous Christmas celebration. Legend has it that a shepherd brought a sprig of holly to the stable on Christmas night as a gift to the Christ child. Its leaves glistened in the moonlight, and its berries were snow white. As the Child reached to receive the gift, the berries suddenly turned a deep red. For Christians today, the prickly leaves represent the crown of thorns which Christ wore during his crucifixion and the berries represent his blood. The ivy represents humanity clinging to divine strength.

The Christmas Tree

The first use of the Christmas tree was in the medieval German Paradise Plays, held outdoors and portraying the creation of humankind. The Tree of Life was a fir tree decorated with apples. Later other ornaments were hung upon them, such as paper flowers and gilded nuts. In England branches or whole trees were forced into bloom indoors for Christmas. From these beginnings the use of a tree at Christmas was established. Martin Luther was perhaps the first to use a lighted tree.

The story is told that on one Christmas Eve Martin Luther wandered outdoors and became enraptured with the beauty of the starry sky. Its brilliance and loveliness led him to reflect on the glory of the first Christmas Eve as seen in Bethlehem's radiant skies. Wishing to share with his wife and children the enchantment he had felt, he cut from the forest an evergreen, glistening with snow, and took it home. He placed upon it candles to represent the glorious heavens he had seen. The use of a candle-lighted tree spread to all Europe, then America came to regard it as the central ornament of Christmas.

The Poinsettia

Most Christmas greenery reflects European traditions. But one colorful plant, which looks like a flaming star, the poinsettia, is a native to the American continent. It was named after Dr. Joel Robert Poinset, an ambassador to Mexico who first introduced it to the United States in 1828. The people of Mexico and Central America call the brilliant tropical plant the "Flower of the Holy Night." The Poinsettia is a many-pointed star that has become a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem.