



December 3, 2023  
First Sunday of Advent

# The Service for the Lord's Day

First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023

9:30 am

Prelude

*Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme (BWV 645)*  
*Pastorale*

J. S. Bach  
Edward Broughton

Call to Worship

One: In God's house, we can be joyful.

**All: We can be grateful. We can be hopeful.**

One: In God's house, we can be weary.

**All: We can be anxious. We can be grieving.**

One: In God's house, we can be honest —

**All: inspired or tired, delighted or doubtful, connected or curious, and everything in between.**

One: This is God's house. You are welcome exactly as you are.

All: Let us worship our loving God.

Lighting the First Advent Candle of Hope

Russell Family

\*Hymn

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*  
(stanzas 1, 2 and 7)

No. 88

Prayer of Confession

One: Gracious God, we are weary. For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray:

**All: forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard.**

**Remind us that we deserve Sabbath rest.**

One: For weary minds that feel overwhelmed and saturated with news, we pray:

**All: forgive us for creating so many distractions.**

**Remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you.**

One: For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray:

**All: forgive us for being impatient with ourselves.**

**Remind us that healing takes time, and that joy and grief can coexist.**

One: For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope,

**All: forgive us. Remind us of Zechariah and Elizabeth.**

**Remind us that your good news knows no bounds. Amen.**

Assurance of Forgiveness

One: Family of faith...So say this with me:

**All: We are loved. We are claimed. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

\*Gloria

**Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

No. 113

Welcome and Announcements

Anthem *Advent Celebration* Mark Patterson  
Celebrate the coming of the King! Light the candles one by one. Come share the joy he brings. Soon the child will reign among us, Jesus Christ, the promised One. Prince of Peace, Messiah, God's own Son. Hold fast, keep watch; great joy is coming! Look close, stay sharp; Christ is coming soon! Look to the heavens, follow the bright star shining in the dark of night. Soon we will find him born in a manger. He will bring us truth and light.  
Melody Singers

Children's Message and the gift of Bibles to Kindergarten Children  
*Children's offering will be collected as they come forward for the message.  
After the message, children and youth may depart for Sunday School or return to their pew.*

Prayer for Illumination Emily Russell

Old Testament Reading Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19 (page 470)

Anthem *Born to Set Us Free* Jay Althouse  
On a dark night filled with wonder all the world awaited his birth. And the wise men came to get him, the Lord of all the earth. Come, O come, Emmanuel; ransom captive Israel. God's own son for all to see, born to set us free. And there was within the heavens a star to guide the way, for the shepherds and the wise men to a manger bed of hay.

Gospel Reading Luke 1: 1-23 (page 830)

Sermon *Annunciation to Zechariah* Rev. Amy Lincoln

\*Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in a God who hears our prayers, who knows the shape and form of our weariness. We believe in a God who wants joy and delight for us, not just survival and existence. We believe in a God who looks ahead, who is not done dreaming for the world—a God who sends hope in the form of people and change, movements and Spirit. And so we return to this space. We bring our joy and our weariness like two sides of the same coin, and we trust that God is already at work. Yes, we believe in a God who hears our prayers. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.**

Offering

*We invite you to consider giving out of gratitude to God after worship today either by placing your offering in the wooden box hanging on the wall at each exit, scanning the QR code in your pew and/or giving online through the church website at [www.flemingtonpres.org](http://www.flemingtonpres.org), or mailing a check to the church office at 10 East Main Street, Flemington, NJ 08822. We give thanks for your generosity, allowing our mission and ministry together to continue.*

Prayer of Dedication

**Almighty God, we give you thanks and praise for your love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Accept our offering in union with Christ's offering for us. Confirm in us the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, that we may testify to the sovereignty of his love. Through Christ, with the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.**

\*Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

The Sacrament of Communion

The Invitation

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

The Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and Cup

*It is our common practice to hold onto the elements until all have received them and then to partake of them together at the direction of the pastor.*

Prayer after Communion

\*Hymn

*My Soul Cries Out With a Joyful Shout*  
(stanzas 1 and 4)

No. 100

\*Charge and Benediction

Response

*Song of Zechariah*

Hal H. Hopson

Blest be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free, who visits and redeems us, who grants us liberty. The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release, God shall fulfill that promise and bring the people peace.

Postlude

*Veni, Emmanuel*

Richard Ellsasser

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from One License with license #A-729872. The hymns are from "Glory to God" copyright © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press. Both hymns are in the public domain. "Advent Celebration" © 2009 Choristers Guild. All rights reserved. "Born to Set Us Free" © 1996 Alfred Publishing Co., Inc. All rights reserved. "Song of Zechariah" AKA "Blest Be the God of Israel" text by Michael Perry © The Jubilate Group (admin. Hope Publishing Co.) music © 1983 Hope Publishing Co. "Veni, Emmanuel" (Christmas Carols for Organ) © 1967 Harold Flammer, Inc. "Pastorale" (Christmas Joy!) © 2000 Lorenz Publishing Co., a division of the Lorenz Corp. "My Soul Cries Out" © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc.

Rev. Amy E. S. Lincoln, Pastor  
Cindy Hall, Office Manager  
Jennifer Miller, Youth Coordinator

J. Jay Smith, Director of Music/Organist  
Margaret Sheneman, Director of Handbells  
Marion Barry, Sexton

Connor Runk, audio/video engineer  
10 East Main Street • Flemington, NJ 08822