



**Middlebury Congregational Church
United Church of Christ**

**December 5, 2021
Second Sunday of Advent**

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come Emmanuel arr John Schaffner

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Liturgist: Malcolm Todt

INTROIT

Prepare the Way of the Lord

CALL TO WORSHIP Liturgist

Leader: A voice cries out in the wilderness,

People: Prepare the way of the Lord.

Leader: Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

People: Every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain and hill be made low

Leader: Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together.

People: Prepare the way of the Lord. Let us worship God.

INVOCATION Liturgist

CALL TO CONFESSION (based on Matthew 3:2-3) Rev. Manzi

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, you created us in your own image. Forgive us when we have refused to see that divine image in others or ourselves. You called forth light, forgive our preference for the dark. You sent John to be a voice crying out to prepare the way. Forgive us when we have been silent when we should have cried out. We ask you to straighten the winding ways of our hearts and smooth the paths made rough by sin. Create in us clean hearts, keep us watchful for your coming, and continue perfecting the good you have begun in us. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and drawing near. Amen.

(Time for individual silent confession)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (based on Isaiah 63:11-12)

Hear the promises of the Lord: See, your salvation has come! You are a holy people, redeemed by God; sought out and not forsaken. Friends, hear and believe the good news of the gospel: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

The Romaniello Family

Prayer

Leader: Please join me in a spirit of prayer: Eternal God, you offer rest for our hearts and peace for our souls. Give us the grace to seek peace in our lives, peace in this community, and peace in the world. Through Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

ALL: Amen.

Children preK-8th grade may exit through the back doors of the sanctuary and meet in the Narthex to go to Sunday School

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READINGS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE Rev. Manzi

Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

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. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

Luke 1:5-20

In 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. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to

enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But 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. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With 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 Lord." Zechariah 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." The 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. But 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."

SERMON
Zechariah and Elizabeth

Rev. Manzi

MUSICAL OFFERING

Come, Thou Redeemer of the Earth arr. David Willcocks
The Women of the MCC Choir

Joys and Concerns and Pastoral Prayer

Katrina will ask if there are any prayer requests from the congregation. Please feel free to share your prayer concerns, joys and witness to your brothers and sisters. She will also share requests that she received prior to today's service.

OFFERING AND DEDICATION OF OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

***Doxology in Unison** Pilgrim Hymnal #515

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)

God of all righteousness, receive these gifts of gratitude, the offering of our lives. Purify them with your refining fire so that they may serve your purposes and shine with your glory; through Christ our Lord. Amen

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Rev. Manzi

Invitation

The Great Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you

People: And also with you

Leader: Lift up your hearts

People: We lift them up to the Lord

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise

THE LORD'S PRAYER (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 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,

For ever and ever. Amen.

[We use "Father" and "trespasses," but please use whatever words bring you closest to God.]

Words of Institution

Distribution of the Elements

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, for you have smiled upon us with favor and fed us with your tender mercy. Send us forth to share your light with those who sit in darkness and guide our feet in the way of peace; through Christ our Savior. Amen

***CLOSING HYMN**

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #115

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

POSTLUDE

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

arr Charles Callahan

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

115

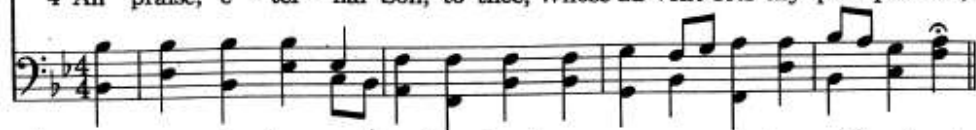
Latin: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749
Tr. John Chandler, 1806-1876, alt.

WINCHESTER NEW L.M.

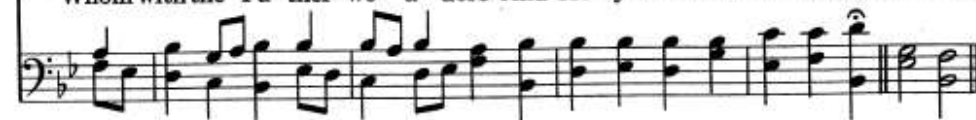
Adapted from "Musicalisches Handbuch," Hamburg, 1690



1 On Jor-dan's bank the Bap-tist's cry An-noun-ces that the Lord is nigh;
2 Then cleansed be ev - ery Chris-tian breast, And fur-nished for so great a guest!
3 For thou art our sal - va - tion, Lord, Our ref - uge and our great re - ward;
4 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee, Whose ad-vent sets thy peo - ple free;



Come then and heark-en, for he brings Glad tid-ings from the King of kings.
Yea, let us each our hearts pre-pare For Christ to come and en-ter there.
Once more up - on thy peo-ple shine, And fill the world with love di-vine.
Whom with the Fa - ther we a - dore And Ho - ly Ghost for ev - er - more. A - men.



ADVENT