

Presentation of Advent Wreath

Rachel & Emmerson Hensley

Isaiah 60: 2-3: See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you.3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

The lighting of candles has been part of religious worship for centuries. Jesus was called “the light of the world” in the New Testament. Advent is a time of expectation and this is symbolized by the lighting of an Advent Candle in an Advent Wreath on each Sunday of the season. The flame of each new candle reminds us that something is happening and something more is still to come...Hope...Love...Joy...and Peace. The candles are arranged in a circle to remind us of the continuous power of God, which knows neither beginning nor ending. There is also symbolism in the colors of the candles. The three purple candles symbolize the coming of Christ from the royal line of David. He is coming as the King of Kings and the Prince of Peace. The pink candle, lit on the third Sunday of Advent, represents our Joy found in Him. The large white candle in the center is known as the Christ candle and points to Jesus as the Christ, the Light of the world. As we light these candles we symbolize God Emmanuel, God with us, whose transforming power heals the world of sin and evil. Jesus embodies hope and help for those held captive by oppression. His ministry guides us to personal peace and joy through the illumination of his message of the love of God.

Let us go to the mountain of the Lord.

Come, let us walk together.

Let us live in peace with each other and our neighbors.

Let us walk in the way of the Lord.

Special Music

“*Light a Little Candle*”—Martin

Children’s Choir

Presentation of Poinsettias

Barbara Clanton

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 enchanting legend of the poinsettia dates back several centuries, to a Christmas Eve in Mexico when a little girl had no gift to present to the Christ child in the town Nativity scene. Her cousin urged her to give a humble gift, so on her way to church she gathered some weeds she found along the road and arranged them into a bouquet. As she approached the nativity, a miracle happened: The weeds blossomed into brilliant flowers. The people of Mexico call the brilliant plants Flores de Noche Buena - Flowers of the Holy Night. The poinsettia, because of its many-pointed star shape, has become a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem. The red petals represent the blood shed by Christ on the cross and the green leaves symbolize the promise of eternal life offered to us through that sacrifice. Every time we see a poinsettia it should remind us Jesus came to restore peace.

Offertory

“*Lo How A Rose E’er Blooming*”

Mrs. Carolyn Gregg

Presentation of Greenery

Marcia Parsons

Revelation 22: 13: I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

Because the needles of the pine and fir trees appear not to die each season, the ancients saw them as signs of things that last forever. Isaiah tells us that there will be no end to the reign of the Messiah. Therefore, we hang wreaths of evergreens shaped in a circle, which in itself has no end, to signify that the kingdom of God, to which Christ so eloquently testified, is also without end.

Isaiah 60: 13: The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the juniper, the fir and the cypress together, to adorn my sanctuary; and I will glorify the place for my feet.

Green represents renewal, new life, freshness, and rebirth. Plants such as pine, fir, holly, ivy, and mistletoe are called evergreens because through the seasons of the year they remain ever-green, ever-alive. The early Christians placed them in their windows to indicate that Christ had entered the home. The sprigs of holly placed in each window are signs of Christ’s passion.

The thorny leaves and stems remind us of the crown of thorns, the red berries, the blood of the Savior, shed for us...

It is no wonder then that we deck our sanctuary with evergreens during Advent season. Advent is the season of preparation for the ever-coming Christ, God’s gift to us of renewal and transformation.

Congregational Song

“*The Holly and The Ivy*”

See Back

Presentation of Chrismon Tree

Mike & Nash Barnes

Matthew 4:16: The people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

Psalms 1:3: He will be like a tree planted by streams of water, yielding its fruit in its season, and whose leaf does not wither.

Today, the Christmas tree is the center of our festivities. Glittering with lights and ornaments, it is a part of the beauty and meaning of Christmas. The tree is a symbol of eternal life, the lights remind us that Jesus was the light of the world and He called us to be a beacon in the darkness. Christmas is the feast of love, where we share gifts with each other as Christ shared the gift of eternal life with us. Handmade Christmas tree ornaments have been popular since the first Christmas trees were used in sixteenth century Europe. The last half century has seen the use of various traditional symbols of the Christian faith as the motif of the ornaments. These symbols of Christianity are monograms composed of various combinations of letters of the name Christ or titles for Jesus. They are sometimes called Christograms or Chrismons. Chrismon ornaments are gold and white and made from a variety of materials with a range of traditional symbols. This ancient practice of creating and using the ornaments has become a way for families and churches to retain a sense of the sacred amid the secularization of this important Christian holiday.

Congregational Song

“*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*”

Praise Band

Presentation of Nativity

Miranda & Anastasia Smith

Luke 2: 9-12: An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in clothes and lying in a manger.”

One of the most heart-warming expressions of Christmas is the Nativity. Nativity speaks of the mystery of God's wisdom. God chose to send his son into our world as a baby of humble birth, born in common surroundings. God reached out to all people, the poor and wealthy, the simple and wise, the powerless and the powerful. All who found him knelt in humility before him. Knowing God is possible because he came to us at our level.

Special Music

“*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*”

Children’s Choir

Closing Scripture

Rebekah Brown

Isaiah 9:6-7: For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore the zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

Hymn

“*Emmanuel, Emmanuel*”

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Postlude

“*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*”

Praise Band