

Sebastopol United Methodist Church



HOPE

Sunday, November 29, 2020
THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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Order of Worship, including Scripture

Lighting the first Candle of Advent

First Sunday of Advent - Jeremiah 33:114-16

In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

We light the first candle of Advent, the candle of **HOPE**.

Leader: "The days are surely coming, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah," says the Lord. God's people have always been people of hope. Be silent for a minute, reflecting on what you hope for as a child of God.

Let us pray:

God of hope, grant us the vision of the future that is in harmony with your will for us. Amen.

Seasonal Theme:

Advent is a time of expectation, anticipation, and preparation for the coming again of Jesus in Bethlehem, and in our hearts.

Theme for the day:

The hope for, and the joyful anticipation of, the coming again of the Christ into our hearts.

Call to worship:

*(please read the **BOLD** text, aloud or silently as you prefer)*

Pastor: May the joy of the advent season with its message of mighty hope
be with you all!

People: **And also with you!**

Pastor: Let us come before the Lord our God who has revealed himself
in ages past.

People: **We come, remembering that God has done awesome deeds that we
did not expect.**

Pastor: As we enter into God's presence, we are reminded that the Lord
is our Father.

Unison: **Yes, we are all God's people, and we come to prepare ourselves
for the coming of God's Son, our brother, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Centering & Prayer of Illumination:

(please read along with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

Almighty and Everlasting God, we come before you on this first Sunday of Advent
to prepare ourselves for the coming of the Christ Child. We know that it is not you
who have hidden from us, but we who failed to recognize your presence among
us. As we welcome the Christ Child, may we realize anew that you, O God, are
indeed *Immanuel* -- God with us. By the power of your Holy Spirit, inspire us, that
in hearing of your Word, we may be filled with new understanding and fresh
desire to please you in all we do, for the sake of your Son, Jesus. Amen.

Readings from Scripture: **Mark 13:24-37** **1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

[texts of Scripture follow the service, beginning on page 4]

Message: **KEEPING HOPE AFLOAT!**

Pastoral Prayer

*With thanksgiving for God's gifts to us, let us offer ourselves and the fruits of our labor for God's
work in the world. Thank you for continuing to send your offerings and pledges by mail.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication:

(please read along with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

O God of Righteousness, you have saved us from the worst that the world can do, and have promised to redeem the whole of creation when Christ comes again. In faith and hope, we offer our gifts of money and self, that we may be a part of what you are doing in the world even now, as we watch for Christ's coming in glory. Amen.

Blessing and Benediction:

May the God of Hope keep you. Stay in love with Him. Live with the reflection of His love in you, and seek to be holy in all that you do.

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Scripture Readings – November 29, 2020

first reading – MARK 13:24-37

“But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this

generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

second reading – **1 CORINTHIANS 1:3-9**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Thank you for worshipping with us today.