

**Service of Worship**  
First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2015

10:30 am

*Edward Hays, A Pilgrim's Almanac*

"Advent is a winter training camp  
for those who desire peace."

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**GATHER AND PREPARE FOR WORSHIP**

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**    *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*                  Hopson

**CHIMES**

**INTROIT**

**THE PEOPLE OF GOD GATHER**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: 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 scriptures,  
foretelling the saving work of God.**

One: For God did not send the Son into the world to  
condemn the world, but that the world through him  
might be saved.

**\*HYMN # 125** (vss. 1 & 2) *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

**THE MEANING OF THE "GREENING"**

*Today our church will put on its Christmas apparel: the  
Christmas tree stands in the chancel; candles will soon  
decorate the window sills; greens and poinsettias will  
adorn the sanctuary. We realize that although it is not yet  
Christmas, we need to prepare our hearts and homes to  
receive the Christ child.*

**\*HYMN # 142** (vss. 1 & 2)

*People Look East*

**THE SYMBOLS OF GARLAND AND WREATHS**

*As 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, symbolized the victory and glory of  
the fulfillment of scripture in the coming of Christ.*

**\*HYMN # 142** (vs. 3)

*People Look East*

## THE SYMBOL OF LIGHT

*Advent is a time of expectation and this is symbolized not only by the four-week period of preparation, but also by the lighting of an Advent Candle on each Sunday of the season. The flames of each new candle remind the worshiper that something is happening, but something more is still to come. The Advent season will not be complete until all four candles are lighted – with the central Christ candle also burning brightly on Christmas Eve.*

### SCRIPTURE READING

Gospel

John 1:6-14

NT pg. 91

### The Lighting the Advent Candle – “Hope”

One: Today is the first Sunday of Advent, the time when we prepare for the coming of Jesus. (*first candle lit.*) We light the candle of Hope for all God’s people struggling to be bearers of hope in a troubled world.

**All: God, as we wait for your promise, give light, give hope.**

One: A candle burns, the first marker of our Advent journey. As we set out on our journey to Christmas, may we travel hopefully.

**All: As we set out, God of journeys, travel with us.**

One: This candle burns as the sign of our hope. God of hope, come to us again this Advent.

**All: May your hope live within us, burning as a light in our lives. Amen.**

**\*PRAYER OF HOPE** (*let us pray together . . .*)

**O God, we thank you for the hope that is in our hearts because Christ has revealed your love to us. Fill us with the joy and peace of believing. May the power of your Holy Spirit bless this day and the coming weeks of preparation, so that we may be ready to receive Christ in our hearts and homes anew, serving him in all that we say and do. Amen.**

**\*MUSICAL RESPONSE**

*Glory to God*

Capo 3: (Bm) (Em) (A) (D)  
Dm Gm C F (chords continue)

Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!  
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

The musical notation consists of two staves of music in 6/8 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff includes chord markings above the notes: Dm, Gm, C, and F. There are asterisks above the first and fourth measures of the first staff. The second staff also has asterisks above the first and fourth measures. The lyrics are written below the notes.

*\*May be sung as a canon.*

(MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1979, Music ©1979, 1981 Les Presses de Taize (admin. GIA Publications Inc. All rights reserved. OneLicense.net License # A-725159.)

## THE SYMBOL OF HOLLY AND IVY

*Though steeped in legends and superstition, holly and ivy maintain a quality of life over death which is fitting and proper for the birth of one who offers each of us life beyond death – Christ the Lord.*

## HYMN

### *The Holly and the Ivy*

1. The holly and the ivy,  
Now both are full well grown.  
Of all the trees that are in the wood,  
The holly bears the crown.

### **Chorus**

Oh, the rising of the sun,  
The running of the deer.  
The playing of the merry organ,  
Sweet singing in the quire.

2. The holly bears a blossom  
As white as lily flower;  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
To be our sweet Savior. **Chorus**

3. The holly bears a berry  
As red as any blood;  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
To do poor sinners good. **Chorus**

## THE SYMBOL OF POINSETTIAS

*Today the Poinsettia is the most popular of Christmas plants, for even without the legend, Christians see the flaming star of its red bracts the star of Bethlehem.*

**MUSIC** – *O Christmas Tree*

## THE SYMBOL OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

*We put up evergreen trees in our homes and churches to remind ourselves that Christ is ever present and that he is the “Tree of Life.” We put lights on the tree to remind us that the Christ Child came to earth as the “Light of the World.”*

## THE SYMBOL OF THE CRÈCHE

*Whenever we see a Nativity we find ourselves with Mary and Joseph; with the Shepherds, and with the Wise Men; bowing before the manger, overwhelmed by God's expression of love in coming to us.*

**\*HYMN # 147** (vs. 1)

*Away in a Manger*

## CHILDREN'S MOMENT

*(Children through second grade may go to the nursery.)*

## SCRIPTURE READING

Gospel

Luke 2:6-7

NT pg. 58

**\*HYMN # 147** (vs. 2)

*Away in a Manger*

## PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION

**The Lord's Prayer** *(in 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## GOD'S PEOPLE RESPOND

## OFFERING

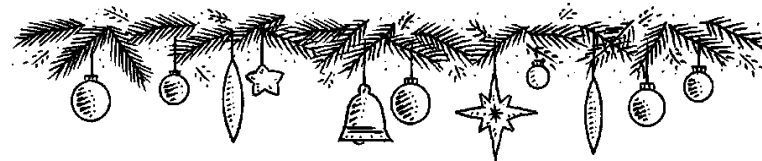
**Invitation**

**Offertory**

**\*ADVENT DOXOLGY**

Tune: Veni Emmanuel

Em G C D7 G D G C G  
Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea - tures  
5 Am Bm7 Em Am Em B7 Em A7 D Em  
here. . . . be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. Praise  
10 D Bm G C Am D7 G D Em Bm G  
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -  
15 C D7 Em D G C G Am Em Bm Em  
man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.



The Homer Congregational Church wishes you a joyous Advent and Christmas and invites you to join us for our worship together.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6**

10:30 AM – Worship

Holy Communion will be celebrated, we will light the Advent Candle of Peace.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13**

10:30 AM – Worship

Our time will be filled with wiggles, giggles and enthusiasm as we hear anew the Christmas story through our children.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20**

10:30 AM – Worship

On the fourth Sunday of Advent we light the Advent candle of love and participate in a musical service.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24**

7:30 PM CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

The Service of Lessons and Carols follows an ancient custom of placing music between scripture readings. The service concludes with a candle lighting custom.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27**

10:30 AM – WORSHIP

Join us for a service of music and scripture that will also include musical gifts by members.

“C Come, Let Us Adore Him!”

**\*Prayer of Dedication** (*let us pray together . . .*)

**In this season of waiting and lighting candles, loving God, we offer these gifts of money, of creation, of wondering, and we offer ourselves as bearers of the light of your hope in the world. Amen.**

**GOD'S PEOPLE DEPART TO SERVE**

**\*HYMN # 119** (vss. 1 & 4) *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

**\*BENEDICTION**

**CHIMES**

**POSTLUDE**

\*those who are able, please stand.

**Worship Service**  
**Participants**

**Worship Leader**  
Karen Dudgeon

**Acolytes**  
Abby Elkins,  
Grace Wright

**Nursery Volunteers**  
Lori Schmidt,  
John Gumaer

**Flowers**  
Andrea Herzog-O'Hara  
*In honor of Heather's  
10th birthday*

**Coffee Hour**  
Kathy McKenna

**Attendance**  
November 22 - 94

*Please note: Youth Fellowship  
is now collecting returnable  
cans and bottles. The receptacle  
bin is back in the kitchen.*

*For those who are providing  
gifts to the Youth Group's  
"adopted family", please  
remember to give them to Sherri  
Masterson today. Thank you.*

**Life in the Parish**  
**Week of November 29**

**TODAY – November 29**

9:15 am – The Well  
10:30 am – Worship service  
11:45 pm – Soup and Bread lunch

**MONDAY – November 30**

7:30 pm – Al-Anon meets in RFR

**TUESDAY – December 1**

Noon – Women's Book Group  
lunch, discussion at 12:30  
2:00 pm – Bridge Group  
6:30 pm – Church Council  
meeting

**WEDNESDAY – December 2**

7:00 pm – Choir rehearsal

**SUNDAY – December 6**

9:15 am – Sunday School classes,  
The Well  
10:30 am – Worship service  
11:45 am – Transition Team  
presentation  
11:45 am – Stephen Ministry  
meeting  
11:45 am – CEM meets

*Save the Date: **Sunday,  
December 13** is the Children's  
Pageant, "Were You There."  
Following the pageant, Christian  
Education Ministry and the Youth  
Group will host an all-church  
Christmas Party*

**NOTES AND NOTICES**

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In **next Sunday's** service, Holy Communion will be celebrated and we will light the Advent Candle of Peace. When God's people are in distress, messengers of hope come to remind of God's steadfast love. John the Baptizer is a messenger pointing to the future – a future of hope. Scripture: Malachi 3:1-4 and Luke 3:1-6

**Survey Says!!!!** For the last five months the Transition Team has sought to lead a multi faceted congregational study. In September the congregation participated in a survey created by *US Congregational Life Survey*. You are invited to see and discuss the results following the worship service on **December 6**. For those unable to attend on the 6<sup>th</sup> a second gathering will be held in the Board Room following our Christmas party on **December 13**. If you are unable to attend at either time let one of the members of the Transition Team know and a time for you can be arranged. We want all to participate in this process.

**Gifted to Care.** Spiritual gifts are gifts to give away. God gives them to us, and we use them to serve others. How are you using your gifts right now? Are you looking for a new way to use them? If your spiritual gifts include one or more of the following— faith, mercy, teaching the faith, encouragement, or listening—consider Stephen Ministry, our congregation's one-to-one caregiving ministry. This may be just what you've been looking for! Contact *Bill Masterson (345-4874) or Belinda Burtner (756-2454)* to learn more about this ministry. We will be hosting a brief informational meeting for prospective **Stephen Ministers** after worship on **December 6**. A light lunch will be served.

**The Homer Congregational Church seeks a Child Care Coordinator.** This is a part-time position, approximately 3-4 hours per week with presence required on Sunday mornings and during other events as requested. Normal duties are performed in the church facility. To apply, send resume to Resumes@homercc.org. Job description is available on our web site at www.homercc.com. For more information contact Karen Dudgeon.