



(Luke 1:19)

# Sow Good News

## INDEPENDENCE PRESBYTERIAN

THE OLD STONE CHURCH OF INDEPENDENCE

*I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this Good News.*

### FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*Hope ~ December 3, 2023*



C.J. Briggs, Music Director  
Julie Lehmann, Church Secretary

Lauren Somple, Liturgist  
Rev. David B. Wigger, Pastor

*We see the world as it has always been. And we are all waiting,  
with bated breath for the kingdom of God to break in. ~ Kate Bowler*

~ *GATHERING* ~

**PRELUDE**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** (*Luke 1:19*)

I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you,  
and to bring you this **Good News!**

**RESPONSE**

PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

GTG #95

Taizé Community

PREPARE THE WAY

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES**

Beth Polansky

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

**As the Holy One has promised, in days to come...**

the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks;

**nation shall not lift up sword against nation,**

**neither shall they learn war any more.**

Let us walk in the light of the Holy One.

**HYMN**

JUST AS I AM, WITHOUT ONE PLEA

GTG #442

by Charlotte Elliot

WOODWORTH

**CHILDREN OF GOD**    OUR BIRTHDAY OFFERINGS

**\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*adapted from Isaiah 64*)

God, you meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in our ways. You were angry, and we sinned, we transgressed. We have all become like an unclean thing, even our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We fade like a leaf all of us, and our iniquities, like wind, lift us away. But, now O Living God, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; the work of your hand, all of us. Do not be very angry, O Living God, and do not remember iniquity forever. See, we are your people, all of us. **Amen.** [*Silent Confession*]

**\*RESPONSE**

LORD, HAVE MERCY

GTG #576

by Swee Hong Lim

SINGAPURA

**\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Know that you are forgiven and be at peace. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

*~ LISTENING TO THE WORD ~*

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

**HEBREW BIBLE**

ISAIAH 64:1-9

*(Mayfield)*

**GOSPEL LESSON**

LUKE 1:5-25

*(NRSV)*

Hear what the Holy Spirit is telling God's people.

**For faith comes by listening.**

**SERMON** SACRED ENCOUNTERS: ZECHARIAH & ELIZABETH

*~ RESPONDING TO THE WORD ~*

**\*BLESS THIS ADVENT: HOPE** *(from The Lives We Actually Have)*

God, these are darkening days, with little hope in sight. Help us in our fear and exhaustion. Anchor us in hope.

**Blessed are we with eyes open to see the accumulated suffering of danger, sickness, and loneliness.**

As we wait—expectantly—for God to break into our world, into our communities, into our lives, may we have the eyes to see, soft hearts toward others, and open hands to what God has for us now. Trusting that something new is going to break forth amid this Advent darkness.

**Blessed are we who ask: Where are you, God? And where are Your people—the smart and sensible ones who fight for good and have the power to make it stick?**

God, seek us out, and find us, we your tired people, and lead us out to where hope lies where your kingdom will come and your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

**Fill us with your courage. Calm us with your love. Fortify us with your hope. Amen.**

**\*INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

**\*RESPONSE**

GLORY TO GOD  
by Jacques Berthier

GTG #583

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**INVITATION TO THE TABLE**

**RESPONSE**

PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD  
Taizé Community

GTG #95  
PREPARE THE WAY

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

... joining the song of the universal church and the heavenly choir:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth  
are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

*~ GOING FORTH ~*

**\*HYMN**

LONGING FOR LIGHT, WE WAIT IN DARKNESS  
by Bernadette Farrell

GTG #314

**\*BENEDICTION**

I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you,  
**and to bring you this Good News!**

**POSTLUDE**

