

Dare to Imagine 1st Sunday of Advent: Dare to imagine God's goodness!

Focus - Can we, dare we, embrace *hope* once more? We can when we remember God's steadfast goodness and the goodness of learning and walking in God's ways.

Welcome

Call to Worship

We acknowledge that we are gathering on the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples. We affirm that settlers have specific responsibilities in the journey of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The Pottawattomies, Ottawas, and Chippewas.

We give thanks to Creator, and to those peoples who have stewarded this land for generations.

We are grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and worship here, As we witness the reconciling movement of the Spirit and seek to live into right relations with our Indigenous neighbors and all of creation.

Prayer

Candle Litany

Leader: We light a candle of hope.
And we imagine:

People: God's righteousness, God's steadfast love, God's justice.

Leader: We light the candle to see God's goodness in us, among us.

People: Imagine that . . . we are God's wonders, blessed wonders.

Songs

Confession and Assurance

Leader: A friend once said children grow taller at night—
while at rest—bones quietly stretch, and bit by bit their bodies grow.
Trees grow silently, too—
from deep inside—energy is released.
Branches reach for the light.
People can grow silently, too.

**People: We confess that all too often we stifle the growth
God inspires deep inside of us,
preferring the immediate, the good enough, the comfortable.**

Leader: In Advent—O God—cause us to get up on our tiptoes,
lean forward, and extend our gaze.

**People: Surely God, who caused the righteous Branch to spring up,
will enliven our imaginations in this season of hope.**

(silence)

Assurance Leader: **The kingdom of God is near.**

Listen—can you hear it?

Look—can you see it?

Our God says, “Surely the days are coming— they are already here!”

Song

Children’s time

Scripture Jeremiah 33:14-16, Luke 21:25-36

Sermon Smooth Journey on the Rough and Crooked Roads

Song **Children dismissed for Sunday School**

Sharing/Pastoral prayer - After “*Lord, in your mercy*” respond with “*hear our prayer.*”

Offering Song

Announcements IDI Summary Session on December 4 via zoom 8:30 am.

Plan to join together to decorate the sanctuary for Advent after worship this morning.

Sending

Stand up, raise your heads,
reach toward the light,
wait in growing hope.

Dare to imagine the goodness of our God.

Jeremiah 33:14-16 The Righteous Branch and the Covenant with David

¹⁴ The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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.”