



MORNING PRAYER AND HOLY COMMUNION AT NINE  
SERVICE LEAFLET

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 9, 2018

The Second Sunday of Advent

\* PSALM OF THE DAY

The Song of Zechariah (Luke 1:68–79) *(read responsively by verse)*

L: Blessed be the Holy One, the God of Israel; you have come to your people and set them free.

**P: You have raised up for us a mighty savior, born of the house of your servant David.**

L: Through your holy prophets you promised of old, that you would save us from our enemies,  
from the hands of all who hate us.

**P: You, O God, promised to show mercy to our fathers and to remember your holy covenant.**

L: This was the oath you swore to our ancestors Abraham and Sarah,  
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

**P: Free to worship you without fear, holy and righteous in your sight all the days of our life.**

L: You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go ahead to prepare God's way,

**P: To give the people of God knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.**

L: In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

**P: To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

THE FIRST READING

Malachi 3:1–4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

THE SECOND READING

Luke 3:1–6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

HOMILY

“Prepared for Grace”

Rev. Ahrens

*Part II of the Advent/Christmas Sermon Series, “Grace”*

MISSION INVITATION

Cash and designated checks go to the **Bethlehem on Broad Street program (BOBS)**. BOBS started more than 30 years ago in response to a single request for dinner on Christmas Day. BOBS provides Christmas for many each year. For information about volunteering visit the website: [bethlehemonbroadstreet.org](http://bethlehemonbroadstreet.org). Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY HYMN 101

Comfort, comfort O my people

*Psalm 42*

*Want to give online? Please see the Depart to Serve insert for more information and a QR link.*

WORSHIP LEADERS

The Rev. Emily Krause Corzine, *celebrant*

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *preacher*

Tom Stewart, *pianist*

Scott Jones, *liturgist*

Lauren Muscott & The Files family, *Advent Candle Lighters*

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16 (Advent III)

Liturgist: Jenny Provenzano

Advent Candle Lighters: Emily Odle

Communion Preparation: Kelly Dodd

Refreshments: Nicole Moss