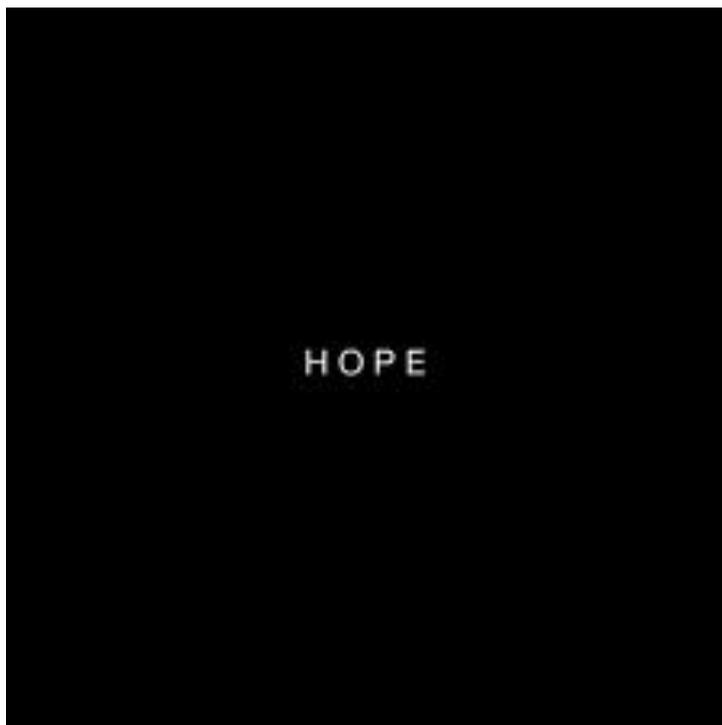


**Keene Valley Congregational Church
United Church of Christ**

November 27, 2022



Learning to Walk in the Dark



Keene Valley Congregational Church A Welcoming Spiritual Community

Greetings! We are glad you joined us for worship today.

The mission of the Keene Valley Congregational Church, UCC is to welcome people wherever they are on life's journey, joining together in worship and spiritual exploration while striving lovingly to serve others with justice and compassion.

On October 7, 2018 the congregation voted overwhelmingly to become Open and Affirming by embracing the following statement of covenant:

The mission of the Keene Valley Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is to welcome all people wherever they are on life's journey, joining together in worship and spiritual exploration while striving lovingly to serve with justice and compassion. In order to live more deeply into these values, while understanding that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning and intersex people are often scorned and discriminated against both in the church and in society, we declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming Church. We covenant to welcome all individuals into the wholeness of the life of the church and to work to end oppression and discrimination wherever we encounter them and to help create the beloved community of God's realm.

On October 10, 2021 the congregation voted unanimously to accept the following statement of covenant to become a Creation Justice Church:

Keene Valley Congregational Church affirms that the global environmental crisis is the most pressing spiritual challenge of human history. This moment calls us to understand our mission statement's charge to, "strive lovingly to serve others with justice and compassion," to broadly include both the human and non-human Creation. As such, we declare our congregation to be a Creation Justice Church. We commit ourselves to thoughtfully engage in acts of compassion to heal the world, mitigate the effects of the environmental crisis, and advocate for justice on behalf of all Creation.

We are thankful for the ways God invites us to journey together!



Offertory

Pat Hickey and Linda Rascoe for the Christmas Fund

***Doxology**

To God, all honor and delight,
To Christ revealed in earthly night
To God the Spirit now we raise
Our joyful songs of thankful praise. Amen.

***Unison Prayer of Dedication**

All: God, we pray that you receive these offerings and transform them into extraordinary blessings. Where your children cry, may they be used to bring joy. Where your children have forgotten to care, may they be used to open hearts. Where your children look within, may they be used to invite all of us to look without. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

REFLECTION

Learning to Walk in the Dark

The Rev. Susie Allen

MUSICAL REFLECTION

Martha Gallagher

***HYMN**

People Look East

Insert

WE RETURN TO THE WORLD

CHARGE

based on Micah 6:8

One: As we leave our sanctuary today, and meet again the joys and challenges of our lives and of all Creation, let us remember what God requires of us throughout the upcoming week:

All: To do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Praise To The Lord, The Almighty

arr. Koertz



Tradition of the Advent Wreath

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 four candles provide us with a visual way to count off four Sundays of this season. The flame of each new candle reminds us that something is happening, but something more is still to come. The Advent season is not complete until all four candles are lighted, with the central Christ candle also burning brightly on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The tradition of the Advent wreath is traced back to an old Scandinavian custom that celebrated the coming of light after a season of darkness. In that day, candles were placed on the edge of a horizontal wheel. As the wheel was spun around, the lighted candles would blend into a continuous circle of light. Today we use a circle of evergreen to remind us of the continuous power of God, which knows no beginning nor ending.

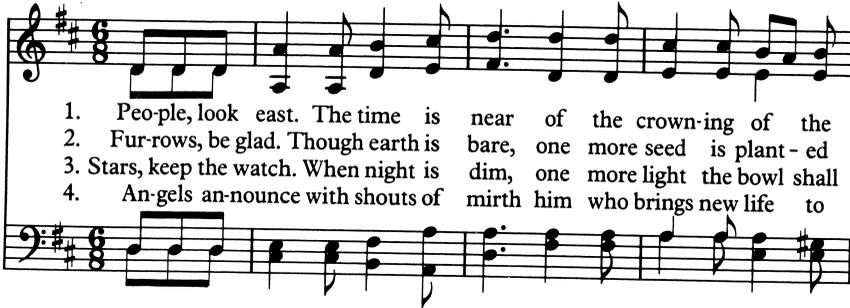
There is also symbolism in the colors of the candles in the Advent wreath. The three purple candles symbolize the coming of Christ from the royal line of David. The pink candle is lighted on the third Sunday of the Advent season. This candle symbolizes joy; its use goes back to the Latin Church, which asked the worshipers to fast during this period of time.

The Nativity Scene

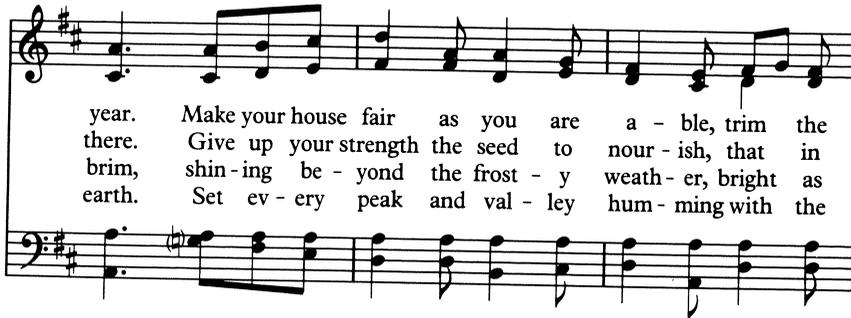
The original crib in which the Christ Child was laid was a manger in the stable, a sign of his humble birth. The popular Christmas crèche at churches and in homes creates a tableau of Jesus in the stable crib at Bethlehem, depicting scenes described by Luke and Matthew.

St. Francis of Assisi is often credited with the first manger scene about 800 years ago. For a people who could not read, it was an effective visual aid in telling the story of the birth of Jesus. We have such a scene here.

People, Look East

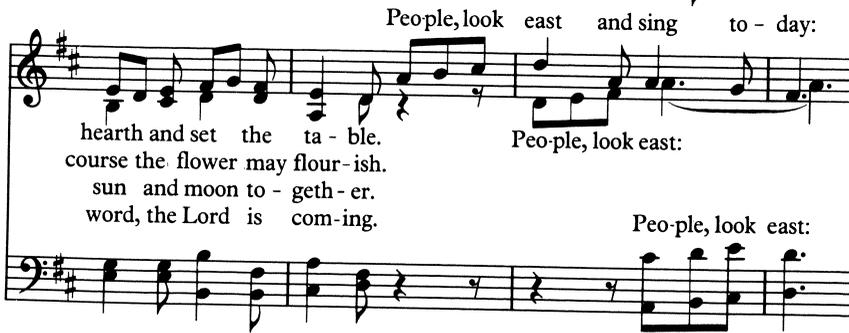


1. Peo-ple, look east. The time is near of the crown-ing of the
 2. Fur-rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is plant-ed
 3. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall
 4. An-gels an-nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to



year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble, trim the
 there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish, that in
 brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er, bright as
 earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley hum - ming with the

People, look east and sing to - day:



hearth and set the ta - ble. People, look east:
 course the flower may flour-ish.
 sun and moon to - geth - er.
 word, the Lord is com-ing. People, look east:



Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 Love, the Star, is on the way.
 Love, the Lord, is on the way.

This Week @ KVCC:

Day	Time	Activity
Sunday	7:00 AM 10:00 AM	Centering Prayer – Via Zoom Worship – In-person and via Zoom
Monday	7:00 AM	Centering Prayer – Via Zoom
Tuesday	7:00 AM 8:00-Noon	Centering Prayer – Via Zoom Liz in Office
Wednesday	7:00 AM 7:00 PM	Centering Prayer – Via Zoom Choir
Thursday	7:00 AM 8:00-Noon	Centering Prayer – Via Zoom Liz in Office
Friday	7:00 AM 9:00 AM	Centering Prayer – Via Zoom Prayer Group - VSR
Saturday	7:00 AM 9:00 AM	Centering Prayer – Via Zoom Faith & Issues – Via Zoom
Sunday	7:00 AM 10:00 AM	Centering Prayer – Via Zoom Worship – In-person and via Zoom

Contact the Church:

Keene Valley Congregational Church

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Facebook: Keene Valley Congregational Church, UCC

Today's Worship Leadership:

Guest Minister – The Rev. Susie Allen

Worship Assistant – Carol Blakeslee-Collin

Ushers – Susan Lacy & Deborah Mitchell

Coffee Hour – Elizabeth Davidson Derr

Zoom Administrator – Dave Craig

Music Director – Rob Hastings

Accompanist – Lynn DeWalt