

# Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Niskayuna Reformed Church

December 24, 2022

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Prelude:

Welcome

Pastors Mike & Sherri

Hymn of Worship: *“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”* #151

## “Mountains of Hope”

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

Reflection

Lighting the Hope Candle (Responsive):

One: The light of God’s Hope that shines in Advent is not like a wish, or a strong desire, or even a deep yearning. God’s hope is not conditional. God’s hope WILL come to pass.

**All: God’s hope is a sure and certain hope, strong, dependable, and trustworthy, like a mighty mountain.**

One: We light the candle of Hope, looking to God as our hope, like a mighty mountain that shapes our view and guides our steps in God’s good promise to come again as our Savior and LORD.

**All: Creator God, maker of heaven and earth, as your light begins to break into the darkness of this Advent season, we join with all creation in longing for your coming again. Shine your sure and certain hope into our world, strong, dependable, and trustworthy, like a mighty mountain. May it continue to grow more fully in us, and may we let it shine more brightly through us, until the whole earth is filled with your light and life. Amen.**

Hymn of Worship: *“O Little Town of Bethlehem”* #171

## “Rivers of Peace”

Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

Reflection

Lighting of the Peace Candle (Responsive):

One: The light of God’s peace that shines in Advent is not like a gentle brook, or a quiet stream, or a calm lake. It is not the absence of conflict, but the fullness of God.

**All: God’s peace is like a river that moves and flows with energy for change, washing away the old habits that harm and washing us anew in readiness for God’s Holy Spirit.**

One: We light the candle of peace, like a flowing river that washes us anew, making room for the

Spirit of God.

**All: Creator God, maker of heaven and earth, as your light continues to break into the darkness of this Advent season, we join with all creation in longing for your peace like a river. Let your light of peace wash over us like an ever-flowing stream, washing away what dams our lives, and washing anew with the force that brings change and makes room for the life-giving presence of your Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Anthem: *“There Shall Come A Star out of Jacob”*

## “Wilderness of Joy”

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

Reflection

Lighting of the Joy Candle (Responsive):

One: The light of God’s joy that shines in Advent doesn’t depend on the right circumstances or the proper conditions. It is not something we can control, or manufacture. It blooms as an offshoot of God’s wondrous presence.

**All: God’s Joy is like a wilderness, wild and untamed, blossoming promised new life amid the harsh reality of our world.**

One: We light the candle of joy, like the wilderness, God’s abundant goodness and presence, alive and active among us.

**All: Creator God, maker of heaven and earth, as your light continues to break into the darkness of this Advent season, we join with all creation in longing to rejoice with singing like the wilderness. We long for a world redeemed by you, where gladness and joy spring up amid sorrow and sighing. Help us not to settle for conditional happiness that changes with the season but let us take root in the true joy of your presence, wild, untamed, generous, life giving and free, blossoming among us. Amen.**

Hymn of Worship: *“Joy to the World!”* #161

Offertory:

## “Houses of Love”

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Reflection

Lighting of the Love Candle (Responsive):

One: The light of God’s love that shines in Advent is not like a palace where the privileged dwell, or a secret society open only to those who know the password. God’s love is warm and welcoming, with room for all.

**All: God’s love is like a house, inviting us to make ourselves at home in God’s presence. Comforting us with grace and challenging us with truth. Reminding us of our belovedness and belonging as children of God.**

One: We light the candle of love, like a house, warm and welcoming, making room for us as God’s

beloved children.

**All: Creator God, maker of heaven and earth, as your light continues to break into the darkness of this Advent season, we join with all creation in dreaming of your love, dwelling among us like a home, warm and inviting, with room for all. Help us to make ourselves at home in your presence as your beloved children and help us to make a home for you in our hearts as your faithful disciples. Come, O Come, Emmanuel – God with us. Amen.**

*“Light of The World”*

Scripture Reading: John 1:1-14

Lighting The Christ Candle

Receiving The Light

Hymn of Worship: *“Silent Night”*

Benediction

Postlude