

# Church on the Hill

A Congregation of the  
Reformed Church in America  
167-07 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Flushing, NY 11358

**December 3, 2023**

**10:30 AM**



Photo Credit: Emerson Chen Photography

**Rev. Kimberley Trinidad — Guest Preacher**

**Mr. Sean Cotty — Music Director**

Rev. Robert A. Perless – Pastor Emeritus

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

## First Sunday of Advent

**BOLD** – Congregation responds

\* – Congregation Stands

### Prelude

Improvisation on “Veni Emmanuel”

Sean Cotty

### Welcome

#### \* Gloria Patri

*Glory be to the Father,  
And to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen, Amen.*

### Votum

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. **Amen.**

### Sentences of Scripture

#### Prayer of Invocation

Eternal God, on this first Sunday of Advent, we look to you and your precious son Jesus as our only source of hope. Illuminate places of darkness in our lives and in the world around us. Let your hope arise in our hearts. Fill us with your mercy and love. **Amen.**

#### Advent Candle Lighting

Hope

The Sanislo Family

#### Call to Worship

(taken from Psalms 42)

As the deer pants for streams of water, **so my soul pants for you, my God.** Put your hope in God, **for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.** By day the Lord directs his love, **at night his song is with me- a prayer to the God of my life.** Put your hope in God, **for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.**

#### \* Hymn No. 133

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

#### Prayer of Confession

**Lord, we confess that at times we get so distracted by the world and our problems that we forget about you. We let worry and doubt overshadow**

**our hope and faith. We forget to take a moment, to take a breath, and to sit in your presence. We let our burdens weigh us down instead of giving them to you. Forgive us we pray, renew our hope, and help us to return to you. Amen.**

## **Assurance of Pardon/God's Wisdom for Life**

**Anthem**

Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming

Praetorius

*Lo! How a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,  
Of Jesse's lineage coming as saints of old have sung.  
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.*

*Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind,  
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.  
To shew God's love aright, she bore men a Saviour,  
When half spent was the night.*

## **Prayer of Illumination**

Holy Spirit, open our hearts to receive your Word, reveal to us the good news, and enable us to trust in the promise of salvation in Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

## **Scripture Readings**

Maureen Saepia-Chen

Matthew 20: 29-34

p. 802

*This is the Word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

"The Mystery of Hope"

Rev. Kimberley Trinidad

**\* Confession of Faith**

The Apostles' Creed (RCA contemporary version)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit**

**And born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

**Was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven,  
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
The holy catholic<sup>†</sup> Church,  
The communion of saints,  
The forgiveness of sins,  
The resurrection of the body,  
And the life everlasting. Amen.**

<sup>†</sup> The word "catholic" means "universal,"  
referring to all followers of Christ worldwide.

## **Anthem**

Prepare the Way of the Lord

William Rowan

*Prepare, prepare the way of the Lord!  
Prepare the way!  
Make straight his path.  
Every valley shall be exalted,  
Every hill made low;  
And the crooked shall be made straight,  
And the rough places plain.  
And the glory of the Lord  
Shall be revealed.  
And all mankind shall see it,  
Shall see it together.*

## **\* Doxology**

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below,  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

## **The Communion Service**

### **Communion Prayer**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts!

**We lift them up to the Lord.**



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Holy and right it is, and our joyful duty to give thanks to you at all times and in all places, O Lord our Creator, almighty and everlasting God! You created heaven with all its hosts and the earth with all its plenty. You have given us life and being, and preserve us by your providence. But you have shown us the fullness of your love in sending into the world your Son, Jesus Christ, the eternal Word, made flesh for us and for our salvation. For the precious gift of this mighty Savior who has reconciled us to you we praise and bless you, O God. With your whole Church on earth and with all the company of heaven we worship and adore your glorious name singing:

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

Most righteous God, we remember in this Supper the perfect sacrifice offered once on the cross by our Lord Jesus Christ for the sin of the whole world. In the joy of his resurrection and in expectation of his coming again, we offer ourselves to you as holy and living sacrifices. Together we proclaim the mystery of the faith:

**Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us, we pray, that the bread which we break and the cup which we bless may be to us the communion of the body and blood of Christ. Grant that, being joined together in him, we may attain to the unity of the faith and grow up in all things into Christ our Lord. And as this grain has been gathered from many fields into one loaf, and these grapes from many hills into one cup, grant, O Lord, that your whole Church may soon be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

**The Communion—Words of Institution**

*(We partake of the Bread.)*

The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ.

*(We partake of the Cup.)*

The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ.

**Thanksgiving after Communion**

Brothers and sisters, since the Lord has now fed us at his Table, let us praise God's holy name with heartfelt thanksgiving! Bless the Lord, O my soul, **and all that is within me, bless his holy name.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul, **and do not forget all his benefits—**

Who forgives all your iniquity, **who heals all your diseases,**

Who redeems your life from the Pit, **who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy.**

The Lord is merciful and gracious, **slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

He does not deal with us according to our sins, **nor repay us according to our iniquities.**

For as the heavens are high above the earth, **so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;**

As far as the east is from the west, **so far does he remove our transgressions from us.**

As a father has compassion for his children, **so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him,**

Who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, and will also give us all things with him. **Therefore shall my mouth and heart show forth the praise of the Lord, from this time forth forevermore. Amen.** *(From Psalm 103, with additions)*

## Prayers of the People

### *Lord's Prayer*

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy name.**

**Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in Heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**And forgive us our trespasses**

**As we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation,**

**But deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the Kingdom and the power**

**And the glory, forever. Amen.**

**Prayer Response**

Hear Our Prayer, O Heavenly Father

*Hear our prayer, O heavenly Father,  
For the dear Redeemer's sake. Amen.*

\* **Hymn No. 135**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

\* **Benediction**

**Response** (please be seated)

Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming

*O Saviour, Child of Mary,  
Who felt our human woe;  
O Saviour, King of Glory,  
Who dost our weakness know,  
Bring us at length we pray,  
To the bright courts of Heaven  
And to the endless day.*

**Postlude**

Herr Christ, der einge Gottes-Sohn

J.S. Bach

*Music Notes*

Throughout Advent we draw heavily from the writings of the book of Isaiah and William Rowan's (1951-) *Prepare the Way of the Lord* is part of that prophetic focus. The text is taken from Isaiah 40:4-5. The Book of Isaiah is generally considered as three sections by different authors at different times. The first section, Chs.1-39, is filled with accusations against Israel and warnings of judgment to come. The tenor of the Book changes dramatically in Ch. 40 as the opening lines are "Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God." Israel has paid the penalty and been forgiven its sinfulness. A shining future lies ahead. In our verses, a new path is to be created for the return to Jerusalem and God's glory will be seen by "all flesh" – a revelation not only for Israel but for all people.

*Lo, how a rose e'er blooming* is a German Marian hymn. The literal translation of the German title is "A rose has sprung up." The author of the text is unknown but its first written appearance was in 1599. The music was composed by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621). The words are based on the prophecy of Isaiah that from "Jesse's lineage" will come the incarnation of a Messiah.

Originally the work contained the two verses offered in our anthem this morning. If, however, you look to the version included in our hymnal (No. 163)

you will see a 3rd verse. Perhaps it is no surprise that there are a variety of English translations of the text as well as added verses. While all translations hew to the spirit of the original poetry, the words vary significantly. For example, our first line, "Lo, how a rose e'er blooming, From tender stem hath sprung" has been translated as, "A Spotless Rose is blowing, Sprung from a tender root" or, "Behold, a branch is growing of loveliest form and grace." To recognize the commitment of those who created new poetry for this historic hymn, today we offer both the anthem and as Benediction Response the fifth verse added by the American musician and hymn translator Harriet Reynolds Krauth Spaeth.



# Announcements

## INTRODUCTION

Minister Kimberley Trinidad is a native New Yorker who has been a member of the RCA for thirty years. Kimberley is a graduate of New Brunswick Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity and is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Pastoral Care and Counseling. Minister Kim is called to help others and enjoys connecting to God's people from all walks of life. She is honored to preach and is actively involved in providing pulpit supply. When she is not spreading the Good News, Minister Kim enjoys spending time with her family, watching movies, and reading whodunnits. Her favorite scripture is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Her prayer is that her ministry speaks hope and love into the lives of others.

## COMMUNITY CHURCH OF DOUGLASTON

The Community Church of Douglaston invites you to their 99th Annual Vespers Service on Sunday afternoon, December 3 at 4 pm, a service of Christmas lessons and carols. The church has a parking lot in the back and is handicap accessible via the front door. A cookie reception follows with homemade cookies.

## CHILDREN AT WORSHIP

The White Christmas Service on December 10, 2023, will once again be led by our children. All children ages 6 to 13 are invited to join the Sunday class, now through Dec. 10th at 10:30 AM, to prepare for this service. In addition, younger children are invited to participate in the pageant as well. There will be one more whole group practice today, December 3rd at 11:30 AM. All children are welcome and encouraged to be a part of this special service.

## COFFEE HOUR

Please join us for coffee hour after the service, downstairs in Gessner Hall.

## OFFERING

If you feel called to give, offering plates are located in the rear of the sanctuary, where you can leave your offering upon entry or exit of the sanctuary.

## BARGAIN BOUTIQUE

The Bargain Boutique is open on Saturdays from 10 am- 1 pm. Donations are accepted on Saturdays only. \*We are unable to accept: Electronics, TVs, Furniture, Textbooks, and Large Toys/Stuffed Animals\*

## JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST!

Be sure to sign up for our email list to keep up with the latest Church on the Hill happenings through the weekly email and the Beacon. A sign-up form can be found on [churchonthehill.org](http://churchonthehill.org)

## Prayer Requests

*If you would like to add a loved one to the prayer list, or if your loved one no longer needs to be on the prayer list, please contact the church office at [office@churchonthehill.org](mailto:office@churchonthehill.org)*

Karin Bennett

The Bermudez Family

Diane Blagburn

Katie and Clayton Buckley

The Cappellano Family

Richard D.

Thomas Degnen

Gabriel DeMelo

Lucas Ditta

Jim Doliner

Joanne Dunckhahn

The Family of Randy Eastman

Adam Gonzalez

The Greer Family

Rudy Jakob

Mary and Norman Kansfield

Susan Laurita

Donna Lemay

Gessa Markantonis

Rose McLain

Kathy Mendler-Murphy

Paul Mobius

Marti and Tom Pearce

Rev. Bob Perless

Iris and Ralph Prager

Patrick Sullivan

Ed Surujballi

Virginia Young



The sanctuary is looped for the hard of hearing. In order to connect to the system, please sit in the north set of pews (on your right when you enter the sanctuary) and set your hearing device to the "T" setting.



Nancy Gessner, Victor Han, **Vice Presidents**  
Nancy Gessner, **Clerk**

*Consistory & Staff*

**Elders**

Linda Diez  
Nancy Gessner (VP)  
Victor Han (VP)  
Rhoda Jabbour  
Sarah White

**Deacons**

Ginny Chan  
Emerson Chen  
Jerry Lutz  
Adriene Toy

**Sean Cotty**, Music Director: [sean.cotty@churchonthehill.org](mailto:sean.cotty@churchonthehill.org)

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CHURCH ON THE HILL

# White Christmas

December 10, 2023

This Advent season, we are pleased to be partnering with **BORDERS OF HOPE, LA JORNADA, and P.S. 116** to provide gifts for children, teens, and adults in our local communities.

Due to space considerations, gifts will not be brought up to the chancel during the White Christmas service. Instead, we will be collecting gifts each Sunday at the back of the Sanctuary and during designated drop-off times from now until December 10th.

## **HOW TO PARTICIPATE**

- **Purchase a gift(s) on our Amazon Gift Registry** and select "Gift Registry Address" when checking out, so the gifts are delivered directly to the church.
- **Give a monetary donation** *in-person at church, by mail, or online via Tithe.ly*. For checks, please include "White Christmas" in the memo, and when using Tithe.ly, select "**White Christmas**" in the Fund drop-down menu.
- **Pick up a White Christmas gift tag** during Sunday Worship or during one of the times listed below. Purchase your toy (which should not exceed \$15) and please attach the gift tag onto it. Then, drop-off the new unwrapped toy during Sunday worship or in the church office, Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10am-2pm, Tuesday/Thursday 1-4pm. (Call church office before stopping by.)



To learn more information about our partner organizations, visit our website at [churchonthehill.org/whitechristmas](http://churchonthehill.org/whitechristmas)



# CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

## DECEMBER 2023



THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE WANTS TO CONTINUE TO HONOR OUR TRADITION OF HONORING THOSE WE REMEMBER AND APPRECIATE AT CHRISTMAS. THIS YEAR WE ARE ASKING THAT YOU DONATE TO ANY OF THE CHURCH FUNDS (MUSIC, FOOD FOR KIDS, COMMUNITY CONCERT, SANCTUARY TECHNOLOGY, ETC.) AND AS IN THE PAST INDICATE THAT YOUR DONATION IS IN MEMORY OF/IN APPRECIATION OF/IN HONOR OF SOMEONE YOU CHOOSE. THESE DONATIONS WILL BE LISTED IN THE BULLETIN ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION.

PLEASE ACCEPT MY DONATION OF \$\_\_\_\_\_ TO THE

\_\_\_\_\_(FUND).

GIVEN BY: \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF + IN APPRECIATION OF + IN HONOR OF

(CIRCLE ONE)

ALL GIFT MENTIONS WILL BE INCLUDED IN A SPECIAL INSERT IN THE CHRISTMAS BULLETIN. PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "CHURCH ON THE HILL", WITH THE NAME OF THE FUND YOU WISH TO DONATE TO IN THE MEMO. GINNY CHAN WILL BE ACCEPTING DONATIONS AFTER CHURCH DURING ADVENT. IF YOU'D LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE ONLINE, PLEASE VISIT OUR TITHE.LY PAGE. **THE DEADLINE FOR INCLUSION IN THE BULLETIN IS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17.**