

Fletcher's Chapel United Methodist Church

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The Prelude

*Chiming of the Hour

The Call to Worship

"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'"

Welcome, preacher! Welcome, people! Welcome home!

All: Let us worship joyfully in God's house. Amen.

*Hymn

"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

UMH 196

Lighting the Candle of Hope

The Lauber Family (8:30)

Lynn & Pat Burroughs (11:00)

God of justice and peace, healing and comfort, we see all that is wrong and wonder where you are. We are a broken people, unable to work together for our common good. We cannot see or hear each other even within our own families and communities. We are a suffering world; our nations are filled with conflict and violence. The fragile earth cries out with longing for redemption.

We, God's people, long for God's presence, saying with the prophet: "If only you would tear open the heavens and come down!" (Isaiah 64:1, CEB)

On this first Sunday of Advent, we light this candle to remind us of our longing that God will come into the world, bringing justice and peace, comfort and healing. *[The first candle is lit.]*

The Opening Prayer

God of power unexpected, we want you to tear open the heavens and come down; to make mountains quake, water boil, and stars to fall until all nations tremble at your presence! But you, you will not perform according to our wants and whims. Instead you come like the sound of sheer silence: Thin. Quiet. Instead you are born among us as an infant. Instead you show us how love is made perfect in weakness. So, we will stay alert, or at least we will try, because we are your people and there is no other God besides you. **Amen.**