



## Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

November 27, 2022: The First Sunday in Advent

### **What does the 1st Advent candle stand for?**

The first candle in Advent symbolizes hope and is called the "Prophets' Candle." The prophets of the Old Testament, especially Isaiah, waited in hope for the Messiah's arrival. The "Prophets' Candle" is especially meaningful for our Chapel's journey through Advent, as we will be reading the prophetic voices in chapters 1 and 2 of Luke's gospel.



### **The birth of John the Baptist is announced to Zechariah: Luke 1:11-17**

*Then there appeared to him [Zechariah] an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."*

### **Hope for Elizabeth and Zechariah**

Knowing that Elizabeth and Zechariah were childless and in their "mature" stage of life, we can imagine that their hope for having a child was a distant memory. But the angel Gabriel's visitation shattered Zechariah's notion of the future. Not only would a child come into their family, but a special prophet who would declare the coming of the Lord. Many refer to John the Baptist as the last Old Testament Prophet!

### **"The hopes and fears of all the years ...": O Little Town of Bethlehem**

This familiar Christmas carol reminds us that there is a light, a saving grace which has come into our world, the event we celebrate on Christmas.

*Oh little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

As we anticipate the birth of Christ, we should look at our own hopes, hopes for ourselves, families, communities, and see where our fears lie. Let the Christmas light guide us as we make our decisions and live our lives. "May our lives reflect our hopes and not our fears."

### **Prayer**

Heavenly Father, Advent is a time for remembering and reflecting on the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We pray that you will turn our hearts toward you as Christmas approaches. Replace the hustle and bustle of the season this year with the celebration of the gifts of hope, peace, joy, love, that you sent to us on that first Christmas. Amen

**Let us keep in our prayers:** for those affected by severe weather; for the hungry and homeless; for those who seek God or a deeper knowledge of Him; Lord, hear our prayer!