

A person is walking away from the viewer towards a bright, arched doorway in a dark, cavernous space. The light from the doorway illuminates the person and the floor, creating a strong contrast with the surrounding darkness.

**#MoreHope**  
**#DoNotBeAfraid**

We must accept  
finite disappointment,  
but never lose  
infinite hope.  
- Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Asbury United Methodist Church**

**November 27, 9:30 A.M.**

143 Ann Mary Brown Drive,  
Warwick, RI 02888  
(401)467-5122

Pastor  
Rev. Yohan Go

*The First Sunday of Advent*

Angels Among Us: #DoNotBeAfraid

**WE GATHER**

*Prelude*

*Welcome and Announcements*

*Asbury Mission Statement*

We are Asbury! Abundantly thankful to God; Saved by Christ's resurrection; Blessed by God; United by Christ's love for each of us; Reaching out to our church family and our community; Yearning to tell the Good News to all by being Christ's voice, hands, and feet in the world.

**Birthday**

November 27      Eileen Donnell

December

2      Ashley Anderson Williams

3      Kevin Quinn

*A MOMENT OF SILENCE TO CENTER OUR SOULS AND  
PREPARE FOR WORSHIP*

**Threshold Moment**

*Leader:* The angels that appear in the story of Jesus' birth would have been very comfortable in our world of tweets and hashtags. Their messages were often short and to the point—their favorite line being #DoNotBeAfraid. As we look at the stories of these winged messengers to Zechariah, Mary, Joseph and the Shepherds, we will

in the center of our sanctuary  
and sing to one another the message  
we must take to the world:

**Benediction**

**Do not be afraid**

**Do not be afraid**

**Do not be afraid**

**Do not be afraid**

**Postlude**

### **Doxology**

*Tune: O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow  
Praise God, all Spirit messengers below.  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!  
Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

### **Unison Prayer of Dedication**

*God of peace and possibility,  
we offer these gifts so that they may be transformed into your good  
news  
for the sake of the world. Amen.*

### **WE GO FORTH**

#### **Closing Hymn/Song**

UMH # 240 *"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"*v.s. 1,2,3

#### **The Mission to the Messengers**

*Pastor:* Every week I will give you a mission. It is a mission with a message. So I'm inviting you to share our quote meme for the week from our church Facebook page to your Facebook or other social media. If you don't use social media, please cut the picture on the front page of the bulletin and mail it to someone, give it to someone and send it in a message-whatever you can do in whatever channels of communication are available to you.

Let us turn toward the Candle of Hope

contemplate what messages we can offer that will fly in the face of a culture of fear and bring more hope, more peace, more joy, and more love to the world.

We begin with an angelic visit to Zechariah. It was just another day at the temple for Zechariah. It was his priestly turn to make sure everything was done properly and in good order. But it turned into something quite different when an angel showed up at the altar.

#### ***Soloist: Alice Pace***

There are angels among us that may not meet the eye  
There are messages of hope coming from a choir on high  
But don't just look up;  
for the way God works  
is to plant more hope right here on earth  
just like it was with Jesus birth.

There are angels among us,  
there are angels among us,  
there are angels among us,  
bringing hope on earth.

Do not be afraid  
Do not be afraid  
Do not be afraid  
Do not be afraid

#### ***Prayer***

Holy Living God, Blessed Jesus, Guiding Spirit,  
**alight within us your flame of hope this day.**

Grant us openness to hear your message.

**Grant us courage to be your messengers in the world,  
creating more hope in the midst of fear.**

*Pastor:* And with the angel messengers above us, among us and  
within us, we sing...

All Together:  
**Do not be afraid  
Do not be afraid  
Do not be afraid  
Do not be afraid**

***Opening Hymn***

UMH # 196 *"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"*

***Passing the Peace***

I invite you to pass the hope of Christ with your neighbors,  
for each time we connect with one another, hope grows.

**WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD**

**Scripture Reading**

*Luke 1: 5-25, 57-80 adapted from The Voice translation*

*Letters to elected officials re: gun control legislation; Funds to  
Ukraine, Healing Guatemala, UMCOR; Connection with Camp  
Aldersgate; Support of Project Outreach with ongoing collections*

***Response:***

"For all who proclaim your reign on earth,  
we join their refrain,  
**Do not be afraid."**

**Pastoral Prayer** by Rev. Yohan Go

**Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy  
Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give  
us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we  
forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into  
temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, The  
power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

**Sing "Angels Among Us" Refrain**

There are angels among us,  
there are angels among us,  
there are angels among us,  
bringing hope on earth.

*Pastor: We believe there are angels among us  
Called within us, not just from up above  
You give us peace enough in these times of trial  
You show us how to live, You teach us how to give  
You call us to be light and love*

**Offering**

*Intrude*

*Ahra Oh*

When Zacharias's voice was restored to him, he sang from the fullness of the Spirit a prophetic blessing.

***Songs of Illumination***

UMH#393 "Spirit of the Living God" vs1

***Sermon***

**"Make Ready a People" By Rev. Yohan Go**

**WE RESPOND**

**Prayers of the People**

*Sing "Angels Among Us"*

Pastor: I believe there are angels among us  
Sent down to us from somewhere up above  
They come to you and me in our [toughest] hours  
To show us how to live, to teach us how to give  
To guide us with a light of love  
In this moment we pray for all those who are in need of hope.

After the end of sharing each prayer concern...

*Response:*

"We hear the message of God,  
**Do not be afraid."**

*Pastor:* In this moment we give thanks for all the ways we have experienced God's presence among us, in the words and actions that bring hope in the midst of despair.

*Prayer Chain Ministry; Card ministry; Teddy Bear Ministry; Food for the Soul; Food collection for Holliman School; Uvalde Memorial;*

**Narrator:** To understand the life of Jesus, I must first give you some background history, events that occurred when Herod ruled Judea for the Roman Empire. Zacharias was serving as a priest in the temple in Jerusalem those days as his fathers had before him. He was a member of the priestly division of Abijah (a grandson of Aaron who innovated temple practices), and his wife, Elizabeth, was of the priestly lineage of Aaron, Moses' brother. They were good and just people in God's sight, walking with integrity in the Lord's ways and laws. Yet they had this sadness. Due to Elizabeth's infertility, they were childless, and at this time, they were both quite old—well past normal childbearing years.

One day Zacharias was chosen to perform his priestly duties in God's presence, according to the temple's normal schedule and routine. He had been selected from all the priests by the customary procedure of casting lots for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to enter the sacred precincts of the temple. There he burned sweet incense, while outside a large crowd of people prayed.

**Congregation:** Praying, praying, praying!

**Narrator:** Suddenly Zacharias realized he was not alone: a messenger of the Lord was there with him. The messenger stood just to the right of the altar of incense. Zacharias was shocked and afraid, but the messenger reassured him.

**Messenger:** Zacharias, calm down! Don't be afraid! Zacharias, your prayers have been heard. Your wife is going to have a son, and you will name him John. He will bring you great joy and happiness—and many will share your joy at John's birth.

This son of yours will be a great man in God's sight. He will not drink alcohol in any form; instead of alcoholic spirits, he will be filled with

the Holy Spirit from the time he is in his mother's womb. Here is his mission: he will turn many of the children of Israel around to follow the path to the Lord their God. Do you remember the prophecy about someone to come in the spirit and power of the prophet Elijah; someone who will turn the hearts of the parents back to their children; someone who will turn the hearts of the disobedient to the mind-set of the just and good? Your son is the one who will fulfill this prophecy: he will be the Lord's forerunner, the one who will prepare the people and make them ready for God.

**Zacharias:** How can I be sure of what you're telling me? I am an old man, and my wife is far past the normal age for women to bear children. This is hard to believe!

**Messenger:** I am Gabriel, the messenger who inhabits God's presence. I was sent here to talk with you and bring you this good news. Because you didn't believe my message, you will not be able to talk—not another word—until you experience the fulfillment of my words.

**Narrator:** Meanwhile the crowd at the temple wondered why Zacharias hadn't come out of the sanctuary yet.

**Congregation:** I wonder why Zacharias hasn't come out of the sanctuary yet?!

**Narrator:** It wasn't normal for the priest to be delayed so long. When at last he came out, he was making signs with his hands to give the blessing, but he couldn't speak. They realized he had seen some sort of vision. When his time on duty at the temple came to an end, he went back home to his wife. Shortly after his return, Elizabeth became pregnant. She avoided public contact for the next five months.

**Elizabeth:** I have lived with the disgrace of being barren for all these years. Now God has looked on me with favor. When I go out in public with my baby, I will not be disgraced any longer.

**Narrator:** When the time was right, Elizabeth gave birth to a son. News about the Lord's special kindness to her had spread through her extended family and the community. Everyone shared her joy, for after all these years of infertility, she had a son! As was customary, eight days after the baby's birth the time came for his circumcision and naming. Everyone assumed he would be named Zacharias, like his father.

**Elizabeth:** No. We will name him John.

**Congregation:** That name is found nowhere in your family. Zacharias, what do YOU want the baby's name to be?

**Narrator:** He motioned for a tablet, and he wrote, "His name is John."

Everyone was shocked by this breach of family custom. They were even more surprised when, at that moment, Zacharias was able to talk again, and he shouted out praises to God. A sense of reverence spread through the whole community.

**People:** Wow!

**Narrator:** In fact, this story was spread throughout the hilly countryside of Judea. People were certain that God's hand was on this child, and they wondered what sort of person John would turn out to be when he became a man.