

# Christmas Eve Candlelight Service December 24, 2023

# FIRST CHURCH

Congregational 1633-1636 United Church of Christ Garden and Mason Streets Cambridge, Massachusetts

### WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE...

Grounded in God Growing in Community Acting in Love FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE CONGREGATIONAL 387 YEARS ON THE WAY 1636-2023

www.firstchurchcambridge.org

Welcome! We are an Open and Affirming, Just-Peace church, committed to inclusivity and non-violence. We love the teachings of Jesus with our minds as well as our hearts! We believe and question, question and grow. We're an old church with forward-looking ways. We have plenty of passion, theological opinions, good music, food, and fellowship.

We offer a variety of programs, events, and activities for adults, children, and families. Please explore our <u>website</u> and visit us on a Sunday. If you are looking for a church to call home, maybe we're the one! We pray that you will always be showered with the Love that came to Earth at Christmas. It never ends. It is yours forever.

> www.sneucc.org Website of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ

www.ucc.org The national website of our denomination - the

United Church of Christ - see what we stand for!



#### First Church Land Acknowledgment

We, gathered here, acknowledge that we are meeting on land which has been the traditional ancestral homeland of the Massachusett people. We acknowledge that this land is unceded and remains sacred to the Massachusett, and to their close neighbors and relatives, the Nipmuc and Wampanoag peoples.

You can find a longer version of this acknowledgment here or by scanning the QR code.

## Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

VOLUNTARY		In dulci jubilo	Dieterich Buxtehude	
THE LIGHTIN	G OF THE WREATH	John 1:1-5, 12, 14	The Antony/Melichar Family	
*CAROL	O come, O come, E who mourn in lon	O Come, O Come Emmanuel Emmanuel and with thy captively exile here, until the Child mmanuel shall come to us, in	of God appear.	
*GREETING			Joanne Paul	
L:	O Come, all you fait The time is almost h	hful and all you skeptics, too. ere!		
C:	When worlds are made new,			
L:	•	humble take heart,		
L. C:	when shepherds rise up and wise ones bow down, and a new day dawns, bringing good news, for a change.			
L:	For tonight, Love is born. And tomorrow			
C:	justice and joy, grace and glory are born anew.			
All:	Christ is born! So co	ome, let us adore him!		
*CAROL 132		O Come, All Ye Faithful		
WORDS OF V	VELCOME		Carla Arevalo	
ANTHEM	L	o, How a Rose E'er Blooming	arr. P. Sykes	
READING		Isaiah 9: 2-11	BBB	
*CAROL 137	I	Hark, the Herald Angels Sing		
READING		Luke 1:26-38	Eleanor Goode	
CAROL 147		Infant Holy, Infant Lowly (Please remain seated.)		

A STORY AN	D A SONG	The Message of the Birds Give Me Birds at the Dawning	Sarah Higginbotham			
READING		Luke 2:1-14				
HOMILY			Dan Smith			
LIGHTING TH L: <b>C:</b>	HE CHRIST CANDLE The light of Christ Thanks be to Goo	:!				
SHARING TH	IE LIGHT	Give Me Light in the Darkness	(see p. 5)			
Give me light in the darkness, light in the darkness, light in the darkness to sing my soul awake.						
PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD & THE LORD'S PRAYERKate Layzer(Please pray this prayer and address God in words most meaningful to your heart.)All:Our Creator, 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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.Kate Layzer						
CAROL 142		Silent Night, Holy Night (Please remain seated.)				
RESPONSIVE	PROCLAMATION					
L:		n the darkness, did not overcome it. ur Light, is born this night.				
<b>C</b> :		are born this night.				
L:	Love and light are	e born this night.				
C:	•	e in the morning!				
L:	Let it sing your souls awake. Let's sing it together now.					
All:	Joy to the world!	The Lord is come!				
*CAROL 134		Joy to the World!				
*BLESSING A	ND PEACE					

#### Leading Worship

Bappu Antony, Kiran Balummel, and Jodi Melichar, Advent candle lighters Carla Arevalo, Pastoral Asociate Bold Black Ballerina (BBB), First Church member First Church Choir Eleanor Goode, First Church youth Sarah Higginbotham, Director of Creative Worship & Arts Duncan Hollomon, song leader Kate Layzer, Minister of Street Outreach Jodi Melichar, First Church member Joanne Paul, First Church member Lee Prouty, tech support Dan Smith, Senior Minister Beth Spaulding, song leader Peter Sykes, Music Director

> Bulletin Cover Image Freddie Funck, First Church member



In light of the Christmas theme of welcome to those who seek shelter and refuge in difficult times, tonight's offering will support our Homeless and Refugee Resettlement Ministries through our Friday Café, First Church Shelter, and Welcome Corps projects. There are offering baskets located at each of our doors, or you may use the QR code to the left. Thank you for your generous support!

#### CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP AT FIRST CHURCH

#### The Message of the Birds

Our Children's Time includes the reading of "The Message of the Birds" by Kate Westerlund, illustrated by Feridun Oral, published by Michael Neugebauer Ltd. ©2014.

#### Give Me Light in the Darkness

Our candle-lighting song is based on "Give Me Birds at the Dawning," written by Betsy Binstock and arranged by Peter & Mary Alice Amidon, from *Twenty-five Anthems for Interfaith and Community Choirs* ©2016, Amidon Music Publishing. The words have been adapted to fit the Advent and Christmas season.





# Do you want to follow the hyperlinks, but you're holding a paper bulletin in your hand?

Use your phone's camera to hover over the QR code marked "scan me;" this will take you to the Members & Friends page of our website, where you'll find the bulletin online, as well as links to news, events, and more.

#### CHRISTMAS AND EPIPHANY SERVICES AT FIRST CHURCH



#### Christmas Day Worship Monday, December 25 at 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary and via livestream

Join us on Christmas morning for a joy-filled and bright service in which we will fill our Sanctuary with the sounds of Christmas readings, prayers of thanksgiving and praise, and a very special harpsichord meditation by Peter Sykes of William Byrd's "The Bells." We will also celebrate Christmas Communion together.

#### Christmastide Morning Worship & Hymn Sing Sunday, December 31 at 11:00 a..m. Sanctuary and via livestream

Our Sunday worship during the season of Christmastide will include a Christmas Hymn Sing, which means you get to call out and choose which hymns we will sing together! Come and join the fun, and "come let us adore Him" together!





#### Epiphany Potluck and Service Saturday, January 6, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Margaret Jewett Hall and Sanctuary

Epiphany ("manifestation") is a Christian feast so ancient that it predates Christmas. We will begin with a potluck dinner, followed by a candlelight journey through the darkness until we arrive at the Sanctuary and circle it with light. Under the dome in the chancel, we will rejoice in the sacrament of baptism and renew our own baptismal

promises, ending with a joyful "sprinkling" of all present. This event is for all ages, so gather up friends, neighbors, kids, and come share the light!

#### Manifestation: An Epiphany Art Exhibit Saturday, January 6 in Margaret Jewett Hall

Epiphany is a pathway. The path is taken by the Magi. This path takes Jesus to his identity by baptism. We, too, follow a path throughout our church, beginning our Church year. This art by Henry Gates indicates the life path of seven stages. At each stage, there is a pause with God in rededication of our life. This art can be viewed during our Epiphany potluck supper.





#### **Christian Formation** for Adults

Weekly Virtual Bible Study Faith and Life Groups, virtual and in-person Racial Justice/ Remembering Slavery's Living Legacy Weekly Contemplative Practice

#### for Children & Youth

Church School Classes Creative Arts Projects Our Whole Lives (sexuality education) **Confirmation Class** 

#### **Fellowship**

Young Adults Group Women's Community Events Monthly Men's Breakfasts

#### **Ministries**

**First Church Shelter** Friday Café Street Ministry Trans/Non-Binary Ministry Team Greater Boston Interfaith Organization Earth Stewardship Welcome Corps Refugee Resettlement Team

## Music & Arts

First Church Choir Night Song Service Poet-in-Residence Staff Composer

#### **Building Use & Community Partnerships**

12-Step Meetings Weekly Dances **Concerts and Lectures** Newtowne School

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#### SECOND CAROL

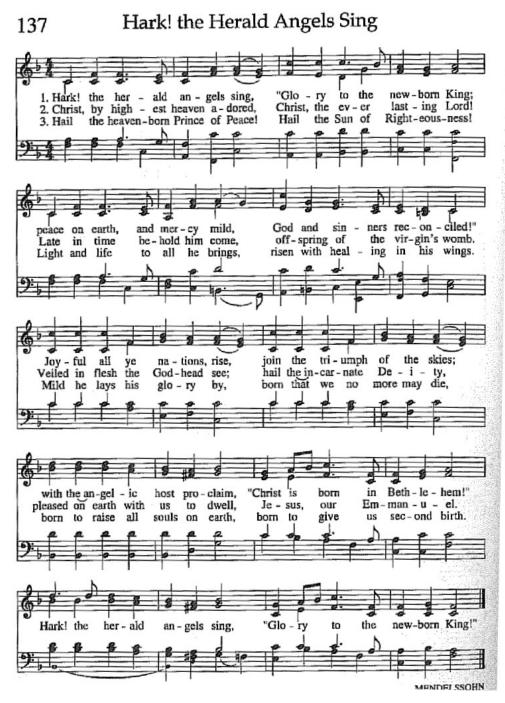


Movement's Frederick Oakeley, over sixteen different translations have been used in hymnals.

-Hymn Insert 1-

RIPTU

#### THIRD CAROL



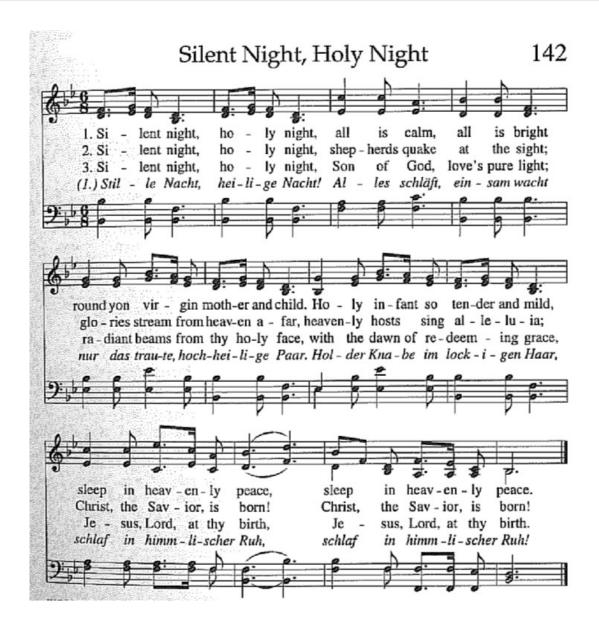
<sup>-</sup>Hymn Insert 2-

#### FOURTH CAROL



-Hymn Insert 3-

#### **FIFTH CAROL**



#### **CLOSING CAROL**



-Hymn Insert 5-