



First Congregational Church of Greenwich declares itself to be open and affirming; open to all for participation, membership, leadership, and employment, and affirming of all who wish to join us as children of God.

We continue to give thanks for God's guidance in our journey of faith.

We welcome you to this special Christmas Eve service at First Congregational Church. We hope that the mystery and comfort of the incarnation will be born in you this night as we tell the story of how God came to be with us in Christ Jesus.

May God bless you and your family as we worship together.



ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Prelude on "On Christmas Night"

Noel Rawsthorne

Dr. Craig Scott Symons, Organist

CHRISTMAS GREETING

Rev. Patrick Collins

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Cydney Van Dyke

One: The impossible is about to happen in a stable. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

All: **Those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them has the light shined!**

One: This is the evening when creation stood still and held its breath, for God was doing the most unbelievable and dangerous thing.

All: **This is the evening when God embraced humanity from the inside, as one of us, from birth to death.**

One: I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people. To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

All: **Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among all people!**

CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;**

Refrain:

**O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest! (*Refrain*)**

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: (*Refrain*)**

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Krueger Family

Advent hope moves us; Advent love leads us; Advent joy stirs us; Advent peace stills us, that we might affirm our King Jesus.

It is time we set flame to this Advent affirmation by lighting the Christ Candle. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God. He was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judea. He was the long-awaited Messiah whose coming was prophesied. The same Jesus lives today in our hearts. He deserves our highest loyalty and total commitment. In Jesus Christ our hope is fulfilled; our love is consummated; our joy is complete; and our peace is sealed.

Rejoice, a Savior is born.

A savior is born, indeed. Joy to the world!

ANTHEM

While By My Sheep

Hugo Jungst

The Chancel Choir Quartet

LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

Robbie Finch

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned.

You have made the nation great;

you have increased its joy.

They rejoiced before you as with joy at the harvest,
as those who divide plunder rejoice.

As on the day of Midian, you've shattered the yoke that burdened them,
the staff on their shoulders,
and the rod of their oppressor.

Because every boot of the thundering warriors,
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned, fuel for the fire.

A child is born to us, a son is given to us,
and authority will be on his shoulders.
He will be named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

There will be vast authority and endless peace
for David's throne and for his kingdom,
establishing and sustaining it
with justice and righteousness
now and forever.

DUET

Gesu Bambino
Pietro Yon
Hanna Golodinskii, soprano
Thomas Woodman, bass

SECOND LESSON

Luke 2:1-14
Jackie Ryckman

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified.

The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."

SOLO

The Virgin's Slumber Song
Max Reger (sung in German)
Daniel Young, tenor

*Amid the roses Mary sits and rocks her Jesus-Child.
While amid the treetops sighs the breeze so warm and mild,*

*And soft and sweetly sings a bird upon the bough.
Ah, baby, dear one slumber now;*

*Happy is thy laughter; holy is thy silent rest.
Lay thy head in slumber fondly on Thy mother's breast;
Ah, baby, dear one slumber now.*

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Rev. Patrick Collins

MULTIMEDIA REFLECTION

Mary Did You Know/What Child Is This
David Vicchiollo, Katherine Taylor Moore

NATIVITY PAGEANT

Once in Royal David's City

CALL TO OFFERING

Rev. Patrick Collins

CAROL SING

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”
Hail the heaven-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, Risen with healing in his wings,
Mild he lays his glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Joy To The World!

Joy to the world! The Lord is come: Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room, And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love, And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

Angels We Have Heard On High

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come adore on bended knee, Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

CHRISTMAS PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Cydney Van Dyke

SOLO

O Holy Night
Adolphe Adam
Linnea Conley, mezzo soprano

CAROL

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born!"

**Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

**Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.**

BENEDICTION

Rev. Patrick Collins

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo
J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

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