

Christmas Eve 2020 at First Congregational Church

Gathering Music

Welcome, Announcements and Opening Prayer

Lighting the Advent Wreath

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.

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 heav'n above:

"Glory to God, all glory in the highest!" [Refrain]

O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,

O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Reading Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Sacred Dance "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

Reading Luke 2:1-7

Carol "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O 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.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,

While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth;

And praises sing to God the King and Peace to all on earth.

Reading Luke 2:8-14

Carol "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 th'angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,

late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb:

veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,

pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King"

Reading Luke 2:15-20

Carol "What Child Is This"

What Child is this who, laid to rest on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom Angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and Angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh, come peasant, king to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise a song on high, the Virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

Homily

Reading Matthew 2:1-12

Carol "As with Gladness Men of Old"

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious God, may we evermore be led to thee.

As they offered gifts most rare at thy cradle rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'nly king.

Dedication of Offerings

Doxology

Pastoral Prayer with the Lord's Prayer

Lighting the Christ Candle: Jesus, the Light of the World

Reading John 1:1-5, 14

Lighting Our Candles

Carol and Sacred Dance "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, heav'nly hosts sing, "Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!"

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."

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!

Benediction

Postlude

AS YOU PREPARE, be aware that we're going to be dimming the lights and lighting candles near the end of the service. If you want to participate, please provide yourself with a candle or two and a way to light them. Then you can dim your lights and light your candles with us.

OUR OFFERING, obviously, can't be collected in the plates by the wise men, the way we've done it before. I'll be offering everyone an opportunity to make a special offering to the church or to a favorite charity. If you want to mail a contribution to the church, the address is:

First Congregational Church
189 Main Street
Littleton, NH 03561

Many deep and warm thanks to those who have come out to make this service happen.

Dottie Morton is our faithful keyboard musician here at First Congregational. Wilma Weddington is our candle-lighter and also one of our readers.

Kim Smith is performing sacred dance for us.

Alice Muh is our camera person.

Bob Muh is helping with the lights.

David Weddington is worship leader today
and pastor of First Congregational Church.

And we're very glad for each and every one of you, the people of this church and this community, a community that includes people from all over the place, gathered virtually to celebrate together this wonderful Christmas Eve.

May the light that came into the world in Jesus shine in our hearts and in all we do until it fills the world with God's great love.

blessings,
david