

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
December 24, 2015
Christmas Eve

Gathering Music

Welcome, Announcements and Opening Prayer *Ann Craxton*

*Processional Carol #249 "O Come, All Ye Faithful!"

Ministry of the Acolyte *Emily LaFlam*

Lighting the Advent Candles *the Lucht-Jacques Family*

One: *(light)* Once upon a time, when the world lay in sorrow,
God sent a baby to be the world's Hope.

**All: Come, little baby, come to your manger,
Hope of the world, we welcome your birth.**

One: *(light)* Once upon a time, when the whole world was fighting,
God sent a baby to be the world's Peace.

**All: Come, little baby, come to your manger,
Peace of the world, we welcome your birth.**

One: *(light)* Once upon a time, when the world lay in sadness,
God sent a baby to be the world's Joy.

**All: Come, little baby, come to your manger,
Joy of the world, we welcome your birth.**

One: *(light)* Once upon a time, when the whole world was lonely,
God sent a baby to be the world's Love.

**All: Come, little baby, come to your manger,
Love of the world, we welcome your birth.**

**Unison: Jesus, we wait in the darkness of winter; Jesus, we
wait in the cold of the night; Jesus we wait in a world that
still needs you. Come to your manger; come to your world;
come to your people; dear Jesus, we welcome your birth.**

(Lighting of the Christ Candle.)

Choir Anthem "In the Bleak Midwinter" *Rossetti/Holst*

Reading Luke 2:1-7

Carol #262 "Away in a Manger"

Reading Luke 2:8-14

Carol #277 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Reading Luke 2:15-20

Anthem "Mary, Did You Know?"

Homily "From Curiosity to Joy, from Pondering to Praise"

Reading Matthew 2:1-12

Carol #288 "We Three Kings" *vs. 1, 5*

Worship of God with our Offerings

*Offertory "Sweet Little Jesus Boy"

*Doxology

Pastoral Prayer Lord's Prayer (trespasses)

Carol #253 "Silent Night"

Benediction

*Carol #270 "Joy to the World"

*Ministry of the Acolyte and Postlude

Announcements: Tonight, we're going to rise for the first and last carol, as indicated by the asterisk (*). For the rest of the carols, we'll remain seated.

Our offering this evening will be divided between two groups:

The Emergency Fuel Assistance program of Catholic Charities

YM-360 -- a locally based ministry to youth (YM=Youth Ministry) which offers mentoring and a range of other opportunities to the youth of our community. YM-360 is under the leadership of Dave Coronato, formerly the local director of Life Bridge.

A special thanks to those who took part in this service:

Acolyte: Emily LaFlam

Lead Deacon: Ann Craxton

Choir Director: Dorothy Morton

The First Congregational Church Choir

Readers: Ann Craxton, Phil Krill

Dancer: Kim Smith

Soloist: Alison Bolt

Greeters and Other Helpers: Reg and Emily LaFlam,
Barbara Holland, Rick and BG Frazier

Guidelines for Lighting Candles:

1. If you are holding a lit candle, keep it upright (so no wax will spill).
2. To light your candle, turn it sideways and light it from your neighbor's candle.
3. From then on, hold your candle upright (so no wax will spill).
4. Turn and let your neighbor light his or her candle from the flame of your upright candle.
5. And so on.

You're welcome to take your candle home, if you like.

Please leave the plastic candle-holders in the boxes at the doors of the sanctuary.

Thanks for helping us have a safe and joyful Christmas Eve service.