

First Congregational Church
Our Church in Worship

December 16, 2018 10:00 AM

Third Sunday in Advent

PRELUDE *The Shepherds at the Manger* – Franz Liszt Adam Peithmann

WELCOME Rev. Kevin Pleas

TIME OF SILENCE

RINGING OF THE STEEPLE BELL

INTROIT *When God is a Child* – Brian Wren/Joan Fogg Chancel Choir

Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn, telling the world that the Savior is born. When God is a child there's joy in our song. The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be afraid.

THE SERVICE OF CANDLE LIGHTING

Barbara Hebert & Ron Poloske

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

LEADER: We gather in preparation,

PEOPLE: **For good news is about to be proclaimed.**

LEADER: We gather in expectation,

PEOPLE: **For joy is about to explode in our midst.**

LEADER: We gather in celebration,

PEOPLE: **For we are those people who have said yes to the manger, yes to love enfleshed, yes to the one incarnate for others, yes to the wholeness of God.**

INTRODUCTION

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF JOY

ADVENT PRAYER (UNISON)

O Holy One, as Christmas draws near, there is a sense of excitement in the air. We can feel a joy in our lives and see it in those around us. Still, for some of us this is a sad time because of unhappy things that have happened in our lives. Help us to have the joy that does not depend on earthly happiness but on you. Help us to be filled with your joy so that we may share it with a joyless world. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN NO. 170 *How Great Our Joy!*

TIME WITH GOD'S CHILDREN

OFFERING FOR OUR CHILDREN'S MISSION PROJECT

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 3:15-16 (Common English Bible) Collin Plourde

The people were filled with expectation, and everyone wondered whether John might be the Christ. John replied to them all, "I baptize you with water, but the one who is more powerful than me is coming. I'm not worthy to loosen the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

MESSAGE: The Waiting Game

CLOSING PRAYER

MOMENT FOR MISSION

CHORAL ANTHEM *Behold that Star!* – Spiritual/arr. Philip Kern Chancel Choir

Refrain: Behold that star, behold that star up yonder! Behold the star, it is the star of Bethlehem.

There was no room found in the inn for him who was born free from sin. The wise men came on from the East to worship him, the prince of Peace. (Refrain) A song broke forth upon the night from angel hosts all robed in white. "Glory to God, world without end, and peace on earth, good will to men." (Refrain) Hallelujah! Behold that Star!

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

Barbara Papagian

LEADER: God, in your mercy

PEOPLE: **Hear our prayer**

SILENT MEDITATION

PASTORAL PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE

Hear our prayer, O Lord, incline thine ear to us, and grant us thy peace.

*HYMN NO. 163

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

OUR MORNING OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*DOXOLOGY – To the tune of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts;

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)

We present our gifts to you with joy, O God. May they be used to make a difference in the lives of people where hope is scarce. May our gifts be a reminder of your love, to all those who will receive them. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 1:26-38 Tom Irving

SERMON: Letting Be Rev. Kevin Pleas

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 143 *Joy to the World*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *The Rejoicing* – G. F. Handel

*You are invited to stand if you wish.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 1:26-38 (New Revised Standard Version)

Pew Bibles: New Testament page 52

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

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You are welcome here! ▪ We are an Open & Affirming Congregation