

*First Congregational Church*  
*Our Church in Worship*

December 23, 2018 10:00 AM

Fourth Sunday in Advent

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PRELUDE *Chorale – D. Buxehude* Adam Peithmann

WELCOME Rev. Kevin Pleas

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TIME OF SILENCE

RINGING OF THE STEEPLE BELL

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

Love is a flame that burns in our heart. Jesus has come and will never depart. 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  
Carol Ann Howe & Marsha Neubert

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

LEADER: Show us your unfailing love, O God, our Savior,

PEOPLE: **And grant us your salvation.**

LEADER: Listen to what the Lord our God says:

PEOPLE: **He promises peace to his people, who are his beloved saints.**

LEADER: The Lord will indeed give what is good.

PEOPLE: **Righteousness goes before him and prepares the way for his steps.**

LEADER: May the Lord make his holy face to shine upon us in this time of Advent worship.

PEOPLE: **May we see God's face, and so know peace.**

INTRODUCTION

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF LOVE

ADVENT PRAYER (UNISON)

**O God, we thank you that Jesus showed your love for every person; babies and children, old people and young, sick people and those who were strong, rich people and those who were poor. Come to us in this Advent season, and give us love in our hearts for all people. Amen.**

\*OPENING HYMN NO. 165 *Once in Royal David's City*

TIME WITH GOD'S CHILDREN

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 1:39-44 (Common English Bible)

*Mary got up and hurried to a city in the Judean highlands. She entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. With a loud voice she blurted out, "God has blessed you above all women, and he has blessed the child you carry. Why do I have this honor, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy."*

MESSAGE: Jump for Joy!

CLOSING PRAYER

CHORAL ANTHEM *Gesu Bambino – Pietro A. Yon* Chancel Choir

When blossoms flowered 'mid the snow upon a winter night was born the child, the Christmas rose, the king of love and light. The angels sang, the shepherds sang, the grateful earth rejoiced, and at his blessed birth the stars their exultation voiced.

Refrain: O Come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Again the heart with rapture glows the greet the holy night that gave the world its Christmas rose, its king of love and light. Let ev'ry voice acclaim his name, the grateful Chorus swell, from paradise to earth he come that we with him might dwell. (Refrain)

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.**

\*HYMN NO. 142

*People, Look East*

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)**

**O God—before whom at creation the morning stars sang together, and at the birth of whose Son angels praised you, singing “Glory to God in the highest”—may our offerings be a true sacrifice of praise, helping speed the time of peace on earth and goodwill among all your people. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 2:21-32

Lisa Allen

SERMON

A Song of Joy

Rev. Kevin Pleas

**\*CLOSING HYMN NO. 149**

*Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Fugue in C – D. Buxtehude*

\*You are invited to stand if you wish.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 2:21-32 (New Revised Standard Version)

Pew Bibles: New Testament page 54

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

**First Congregational Church**

United Church of Christ

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