

First Congregational Church

Our Church in Worship

December 26, 2021 10:00 AM

First Sunday after Christmas

PRELUDE Greensleeves with Coventry Carol – arr. Joel Raney Adam Peithmann

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Carolyn Keilig

STORY *The Last Straw*
Adapted from the book by Frederick H. Thury and Vlasta van Kampen

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive) Rev. Barbara Papagian
Leader: Arise, shine, for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you!
People: And nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising!
Leader: Unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders.
People: And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

OPENING PRAYER (Unison)
Call us, once more, Mighty God, into the story of Christmas. May it be for us not a narrative of long ago, but an experience of the here and now. May hope be born anew in the midst of life’s shadows, that our souls may magnify your name and our spirits rejoice in the salvation Jesus brings. In the name of the Messiah, we pray, Amen.

*HYMN NO. 149 *Angels from the Realms of Glory*

*GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 2:1-6 Carol Soucy

STORY

PASTORAL PRAYER
OUR PRAYER CONCERNS
SILENT MEDITATION

OUR LORD’S PRAYER (Unison)
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.

STORY
REFLECTION

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:8-20 Carol Soucy

STORY
*HYMN NO. 153 (verses 1 & 2) *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

STORY
*HYMN NO. 153 (verses 3 & 4) *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

STORY
*HYMN NO. 150 *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*
STORY CONCLUSION

BENEDICTION (Responsive)
Leader: Let us go to be the gift another needs,
People: sharing God’s blessings of love and grace, running to tell the Story we heard from the shepherds.
Leader: Let us go to be the comfort which can swaddle others,
People: sharing Jesus’ compassion with the poor and needy, welcoming the holiness offered by the most vulnerable we meet.
Leader: Let us go to kindle the lives around us,
People: sharing the Spirit’s peace with all the broken, learning the language of hope from the children in our midst.

POSTLUDE *In Dulci Jubilo – J. S. Bach*

*You are invited to stand if you wish.

The benediction is from *Lectionary Liturgies* © Thom M. Shuman

During these challenging times, we gratefully accept your financial offering to support Christ's mission in the heart of our city. Your gift may be left in any of the offering plates located at the exits.

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Matthew 2:1-6

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Luke 2:8-20

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—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. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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December 26, 2021

Manchester, New Hampshire
United Church of Christ

508 Union Street, Manchester, NH * 603-625-5093
Sunday Worship 10:00 AM

You are welcome here!
An Open & Affirming Congregation