

### **CARE FOR CHILDREN**

A nursery for infants and toddlers is available during the 10:00 a.m. service.  
Sunday School for children 3 years through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade in room LL5.

#### **Worship Preview for Sunday, December 25, 10:00 A.M.**

Rev. Barry W. Szymanski delivers the Christmas message.

Nicolas Sluss-Rodionov is the organist.

Jillian Bruss will provide the special music.

### **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES** *SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24*

#### **FAMILY SERVICE 4 P.M.**

The Pilgrim Fellowship will present their annual Christmas play in a worship service for all ages. Bring your friends and neighbors to enjoy this fifty plus year tradition here at First Church.

#### **CANDLELIGHT CHORAL SERVICE 11 P.M.**

This service will highlight the superb seasonal music of the Choir of First Church. Dr. Szymanski's sermon is entitled "Christmas!"

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS  
FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
DECEMBER 18, 2011 10:00 A.M.

*Please silence your cell phones.  
Pass and sign the red pew pads.  
Guests, we would love to greet you following the service  
or at coffee fellowship in the Social Hall (located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor).*

THE PRELUDE

*Jesu Bambino* Pietro Yon  
Diane Houriet, Patricia Gregory - Handbells

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Mary, Rob, and Will Dummert

Minister: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, king of the universe. You sent your Son to be the Light of the world and to spread his light of love to all. Bless us and accept this wreath of light made from our hands. May its ever increasing brightness be a sign to us of the approaching nearness of your Son, that we might joyfully prepare for his humble birth in a manger and be ready to receive him at his coming again in glory; We pray this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*[As the first pink candle is lit, we say:]*

**ALL: Stir up thy power, O Lord, and come, that by thy protection we may be rescued from the dangers that beset us through our sins; and be a Redeemer to deliver us; Who lives and reigns with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.**

*[As the second pink candle is lit, we say:]*

**ALL: O King of all nations, Jesus Christ, only joy of every heart, come and save your people.**

*[As the blue candle is lit, we say:]*

**ALL: O Key of David, Jesus Christ, the gates of heaven open at your command, come and show us the way to salvation.**

*[As the final pink candle is lit, we say:]*

**ALL: O Wisdom, holy Word of God, Jesus Christ, all things are in your hands, come and show us the way to salvation.**

HYMN *[remain seated]*

*People, Look East*

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim  
One more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather,  
Bright as sun and moon together.

made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

*Thanks be to God.*

\*HYMN

*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 the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

*Refrain:*

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 God-head see; hail the incarnate Deity,  
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Hail the heaven-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings,  
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.

\*THE BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Improvisation on a Seasonal Hymn Tune*

**\*The congregation is invited to stand, if able.**

*The Christmas decorations are provided by the Board of Deacons  
and through the generous donations of members in honor of, or in memory of, loved ones.*

THE EIGHTH READING

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

Troy Peterson

St. Matthew 2

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, and thou Bethlehem in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed: and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold and frankincense, and myrrh.

*Thanks be to God.*

HYMN [*remain seated*]

*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 Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.

As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly manger bed,  
There to bend the knee before him whom heaven and earth adore;  
So may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare, at the manger 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 heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way;  
And, when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide. Amen.

THE NINTH READING

*St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.*

Dick Buchman

St. John 1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything

People look East and sing today:

Love the Star is on the way.

CHIMES & TOWER BELLS

\*PROCESSIONAL

*Once in Royal David's City*

Verse 1 solo: Indra Brusubardis, Soprano

Once in royal David's city Stood a lowly cattle shed, Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for his bed: Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.	In whose gentle arms he lay: Christian children all must be Mild, obedient, good as he.
He came down to earth from heaven, Who is God and Lord of all, And his shelter was a stable, And his cradle was a stall; With the poor, the scorned, the lowly, Lived on earth our Savior holy.	And our eyes at last shall see him, Through his own redeeming love; For that Child who seemed so helpless Is our Lord in heaven above; And he leads his children on To the place where he is gone.
And, through all his wondrous childhood, He would honor and obey, Love and watch the lowly maiden	Not in that poor lowly stable, With the oxen standing round, We shall see him; but in heaven, Set at God's right hand on high; When like stars his children crowned, All in white shall wait around.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND OUR LORD'S PRAYER

Dick Buchman

**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 [*remain seated*]

*Of the Father's Love Begotten*

Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,  
He is Alpha and Omega, he the source, the ending he;  
Of the things that are, that have been, and that Future years shall see,  
Evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heaven adore him; Angel hosts, his praises sing;  
Powers, dominions, bow before him, and extol our God and King;  
Let no tongue on earth be silent, every voice in concert ring,  
Ever more and ever more!

Christ, to thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,  
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving, and unwearied praises be:

Honor, glory and dominion, and eternal victory,  
Ever more and ever more! Amen.

THE FIRST READING

Ben Blaedow

*God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*

Genesis 3

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou has done this, thou art cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

*Thanks be to God.*

ANTHEM

*Something to Sing About*

Schram

Junior & Cherub Choirs, directed by Roxanne Trump-Miles

Did you see the star up in the sky, in the sky?  
Did you see the star up in the sky, in the sky?  
Something to sing about! Something to sing about!  
Did you see the star up in the sky, in the sky, in the sky?

Angels told the shepherds, He is born, He is born!  
Angels told the shepherds, He is born, He is born!  
Something to sing about! Something to sing about!  
Angels told the shepherds, He is born, He is born, He is born!

Shepherds ran to worship Christ the King, Christ the King.  
Shepherds ran to worship Christ the King.  
Something to sing about! Something to sing about!  
Shepherds ran to worship Christ the King, Christ the King, Christ the King.

Jesus came to save us, praise the Lord, praise the Lord!  
Jesus came to save us, praise the Lord, praise the Lord!  
Something to sing about! Something to sing about!  
Jesus came to save us, praise the Lord, praise the Lord, praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, praise the Lord!

*(Refrain)*

This is Christ the Lord, masters, be ye glad!  
Christmas is come in, and no folk should be sad:

*(Refrain)*

THE SEVENTH READING

Tom Rondeau

*The shepherds go to the manger.*

St. Luke 2

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them in heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

*Thanks be to God.*

\*HYMN

*Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

Angels, from the realm of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
Ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er Your flocks by night,  
God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant light:  
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar:  
Seek the great Desire of nations, ye have seen His natal star:  
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,  
Suddenly the Lord, descending, in His temple shall appear:  
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.  
Amen.

THE OFFERTORY

ANTHEM

*Masters In This Hall*

arr. Willcocks

Masters in this hall, hear ye news today  
Brought from over sea, and ever I you pray:

*Refrain:*

Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell sing we clear!  
Holpen are all folk on earth, born is God's Son so dear:  
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell sing we loud!  
God today hath poor fold raised, and cast adown the proud.

Going o'er the hills, through the milkwhite snow,  
Heard I ewes bleat, while the wind did blow:

*(Refrain)*

Shepherds many and one, sat among the sheep,  
No man spake more word, than they had been asleep:

*(Refrain)*

Quoth I, fellows mine, why this guise sit ye?  
Making but dull cheer, shepherds though ye be?

*(Refrain)*

Shepherds should of right, leap and dance and sing,  
Thus to see ye sit, is a right strange thing:

*(Refrain)*

Quoth these fellows then, to Bethlem town we go,  
To see a mighty lord, lie in manger low:

*(Refrain)*

How name ye this lord, shepherds? then said I,  
Very God, they said, come from heaven high:

HYMN [*remain seated*] *Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light*

[*Children age 3 through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade are invited to go to Sunday School in LL5 during the singing of the hymn.*]

Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light, and usher in the morning;  
Ye shepherds, shrink not with affright, but hear the angel's warning.  
This child, now weak in infancy, our confidence and joy shall be,  
The power of Satan breaking, our peace eternal making.

THE SECOND READING

Margy Brown

*God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.*

Genesis 22

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said,  
By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not  
withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will  
multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy  
seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be  
blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. *Thanks be to God.*

HYMN [*remain seated*]

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;  
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel! Amen.

THE THIRD READING

Barb Holtz

*Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.*

Isaiah 9

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the  
shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is  
given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful,  
Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his  
government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom,  
to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The  
zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. *Thanks be to God.*

ANTHEM

*Hodie! Alleluia!*

Lightfoot

Hodie Christus natus est! Hodie! Alleluia!  
Today the angels sing, Today the angels rejoice!  
Today the angels sing for joy!  
Rejoicing, singing alleluia!  
Gloria in excelsis!

THE FOURTH READING

Carol Hudson

*The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.*

Isaiah 11

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

*Thanks be to God.*

HYMN [*remain seated*]

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

In the bleak midwinter, frost wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign.  
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;  
But his mother only, in her maiden bliss,  
Worshiped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;  
Yet what can I give him: give my heart.

THE FIFTH READING

Katie Holtz

*The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

St. Luke 1

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly

favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

*Thanks be to God.*

ANTHEM

*A Lute Carol*

Caldwell

What sweeter music can we bring,  
Than a carol, for to sing  
The Birth of this our heavenly King?  
Awake the Voice! Awake the String!  
Heart, Ear, and Eye, and everything. Awake!  
The Darling of the world to come,  
And fit it is, we find a room  
To welcome Him,  
To do Him honor, who's our King  
And Lord of all the Rejoicing!  
What sweeter music can we bring,  
Than a carol, for to sing  
The Birth of this our heavenly King?  
Awake the Voice! Awake the String!

THE SIXTH READING

Jane Boyd

*St. Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.*

St. Matthew 1

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

*Thanks be to God.*