

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
“Where No One Is A Stranger”  
First Sunday after Christmas  
December 29, 2024

## PRELUDE

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## GREETINGS, GOOD NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, JESUS ENCOUNTERS

### \* Call to Worship

(read responsively)

One: Praise God from the heights! The Holy One is transcendent, radiant, and glorious.

Many: Salvation, redemption, and liberation come from above and dwell among us.

One: Praise God from the earth! Emmanuel is humble, gracious, and near.

Many: Past, present, and future rests in the work of our hands in God’s hands.

One: Praise the name of God! I AM hears our cry, responds to our need, and still speaks to our spirits.

Many: Blessing, honor, and power belong to our God. Praise God!

### \*Opening Song:

“Hark, the Herald Angels Sing”

#185

### \*OPENING PRAYER

(prayed together)

Wise and Eternal God, You are sovereign over all the earth. Your works declare your greatness. Make your wisdom known to us as we gather in your holy name. Amen.

## TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of love, we long to hear your voice, but sometimes block our ears to the true words of love you speak into our lives. You offer words of love and acceptance, but we find reason to ignore them or withhold them from others. Be tolerant and forgive us in your love, for we yearn to find your perfect bond of unity in our relationships with one another and the world. Amen.

## A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Beloved, trust that the grace of God has appeared, bringing new life to all. Receive the gifts of grace and mercy from the Compassionate One.

Many: God recognizes our repentance, comes to us in our weakness, offers strength for transformation, provides encouragement for repair, and grants forgiveness for sin. Thanks be to God!

SHARING THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 2:41-52 read from *The Message*

### \*AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

(read together)

We believe in God, the creator and giver of life, who brought all creation to birth, who mothers us and fathers us, protecting, nurturing, and cherishing us.

We believe in Jesus Christ: God born among us as a fragile baby, embodying both love and the need for love, and calling us to rest in God as trustingly as a tiny child.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, breathed into us at our birth, always drawing us on to be born again, encouraging, exhorting, comforting, nourishing our growth and inspiring our living.

We believe in the reconciliation of the world to God, through Christ. Hunted at birth and humiliated at death, he entered our fearful darkness so that we might enter his glorious light and share the life of his resurrection.

And we believe that each new child is a glimpse of the face of God, a sign of the life to come, and a call to live in peace and celebrate living together. Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Amen.

### \* GLORIA PATRI:

“Glory Be to the Father”

#734

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world with-out end. A-men, A-men.

### FOCUS SCRIPTURE:

Isaiah 52:7-10

read from *The Message*

## SONGS OF TH SEASON

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/THE LORD’S PRAYER (with debts/debtors)

## PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

### \* DOXOLOGY:

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

#34

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**\* PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Lavish God, accept these offerings so that the blessings and favor you have given to us may be shared among our neighbors with trust, hope, and love. Amen.

**\* CLOSING SONG:** "Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child" #219

**\*Going Forth with the Peace of Christ**

**POSTLUDE**

**\*Indicates all who are able please stand**

The Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Words of Assurance (adapted), and Offering Prayer of Dedication are by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ. The Prayer of Confession is by Kristiane Smith from *The Abingdon Worship Annual-2024* edited by Mary Scifres and B.J. Beu. The Call to Confession is from *Lectioary Liturgies* by Thom M. Shuman. The Affirmation of Faith (adapter) is by Nathan Nettleton, 1999, incorporating some lines from "Midwife of Our Lives" by Kathy Galloway published in Kathy Galloway (ed.) *The Pattern of Our Days*, Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 1996, p.138. Posted on Nettleton's [Laughingbird.net](http://Laughingbird.net) website.

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Organist: Antonia Rupert  
Worship Leader: David Burrow  
Pastor: Rev. Chris Burtnett  
December Radio Sponsor: Mick and Kris Schlievert  
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Sunday, December 29: 10:30am. – Worship  
No Sunday School  
Coffee

Tuesday, December 31: 9:30am-noon- Pastor at Feed Mill

Wednesday, January 1: Happy New Year

Sunday, January 5: 10:30am – Worship with Sacrament of Communion  
No Sunday School  
Coffee  
Food Pantry

Sunday, January 12: Annual Reports are due

Sunday, January 26: Annual Meeting after Worship and potluck

If anyone would like to be on a committee, change committees or office, please let Helen Scuffham know.

Our Daily Bread "God is with Us 10 Christmas: Reflections and The December/ January/February 2024-2025 issue of "Our Daily Bread" may be picked up in the Fellowship Hall entry.



*First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
166 Years  
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