



The Third Sunday of Advent

“You can do very little with faith, but you can do nothing without it.”

Kindly silence cell phones and other devices during worship. All hymns are included on pages 5-8.

Prelude *Wachet auf ruft uns die Stimme*, BWV 645 Johann Sebastian Bach

Call to Worship

Isaiah 12:2-6

Leader: Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

People: With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

Leader: And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name;

People: Make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted.

Leader: Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.

People: Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Hymn 114 (p. 5) *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* Truro

Prayer of Invocation

Gloria (Unison)

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 without end. Amen.

A Liturgy for Advent

Presentation of the Advent Banner

An Advent Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10. The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.”

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning
sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of
jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not
travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go
astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall
not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the
Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their
heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

An Advent Litany

Leader: Let all Creation rejoice!

People: Our God is coming!

Leader: The prophet tells those who fear: Be not afraid!

People: Our God is coming to save us.

Leader: Our Lord has shown us the way.

People: He will not let any of us go astray.

Leader: Those who are lost will be found.

People: Those who mourn will be comforted.

All: Let us ready ourselves to see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God!

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

An Advent Prayer (Unison)

Holy God, in this season of anticipation, help us to be patient.

Loving God, in this time of watching, help us to see clearly.

Healing God, in these weeks of preparation, make ready our hearts for the arrival
of the Light of the World.

Words of Welcome; Our Ministry and Mission

Anthem *Come, Thou Redeemer of the Earth* Trad., arr. David Willcocks

Children's Moment

If you notice details, you might be asking, "What's going on with that pink candle?"
Today we light a pink candle, and we do so for a reason: it's Gaudete Sunday. *Gaudete*
is the Latin for "rejoice." Advent is a season of anticipation and preparation, a time of
seriousness, as it especially was in the early Church. Today is a break of sorts, a chance
to rejoice, to be happy, to cut loose—and why not? We are getting ready for the arrival
of the Baby Jesus, and that is ultimately a reason for us to rejoice.

Scripture Lessons

Zephaniah 3:14-20. ¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵The Lord has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. ¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. ¹⁷The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing ¹⁸as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. ¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

Luke 3:7-18. ⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." ¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Sermon "Rejoice!"

Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 110 (p. 8) *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Veni Emmanuel

Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

As we hold our community members in prayer, please exercise care and discretion when sharing. Help us keep our prayer list current by contacting the church office to add or remove names.

Today we offer our ongoing prayers for Pete, Lloyd, Arlene, Evelyn, Barbara, Greg, Larry, Edith, Jan, Eileen, James, Jimmy, Jean, Michelle, and Stephanie.

O God of our salvation, we rejoice on this day, giving thanks to you for all you have done for us and our forebears. We have been lost, and you have provided us with direction, helping us overcome obstructions, making it possible for us to handle our disappointment. Comfort us, sustain us, during this time when so much is expected of us. Help us to see what truly matters, and empower us to focus on you and your desire for the world, that we may live in your kingdom and make it a reality for all.

We pray this, and all the joys and concerns we hold in our hearts, in the name of your Son, our Savior. Amen.

The 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.

Offering of Gifts

Remembering those who are without, who are in need, who are often ignored, we invite your support of our ongoing ministry in and for the community.

Offertory *Of the Father's Heart Begotten* Finnish, arr. David Willcocks

Doxology (Unison)

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

Prayer of Dedication (Unison)

Holy God, in gratitude for the community into which you have gathered us, with thanks for the grace you have shown us, and in response to the love with which you have embraced us, we present these gifts. Amen.

Hymn 109 (p. 9) *Watchman, Tell Us of the Night* Aberystwyth

Benediction

My friends, life is short. We do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So, be swift to love, and make haste to be kind.

Now go forth with the love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, this day and forevermore. Amen.

Postlude *Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her*, BWV 700 J. S. Bach

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor • Alyson and Terry Ellison, Liturgists
Ernie Drown, Organ/Piano • The FCC Choir

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If you wish to have a joy, concern, or prayer request lifted up in the service, or if you know of someone who may need special prayers, a card or phone call, or some other form of pastoral care, please email prayer@fccleb.org or speak with Rev. Silver directly.

114 Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Based on Psalm 24

Georg Weissel, 1590-1635

Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878

TRURO L.M.

Thomas Williams', "Psalmodia Evangelica," 1789

1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; Be - hold the
2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; Make it a
3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide My heart to
4 So come, my Sov - ereign; en - ter in! Let new and

King of glo - ry waits! The King of kings is
tem - ple, set a - part From earth - ly use for
thee; here, Lord, a - bide! Let me thy in - ner
no - bler life be - gin; Thy Ho - ly Spir - it

draw - ing near; The Sav - ior of the world is here.
heaven's em - ploy, A - dorned with prayer and love and joy.
pres - ence feel; Thy grace and love in me re - veal.
guide us on, Un - til the glo - rious crown be won. A - men.

Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying

Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608

Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, all.

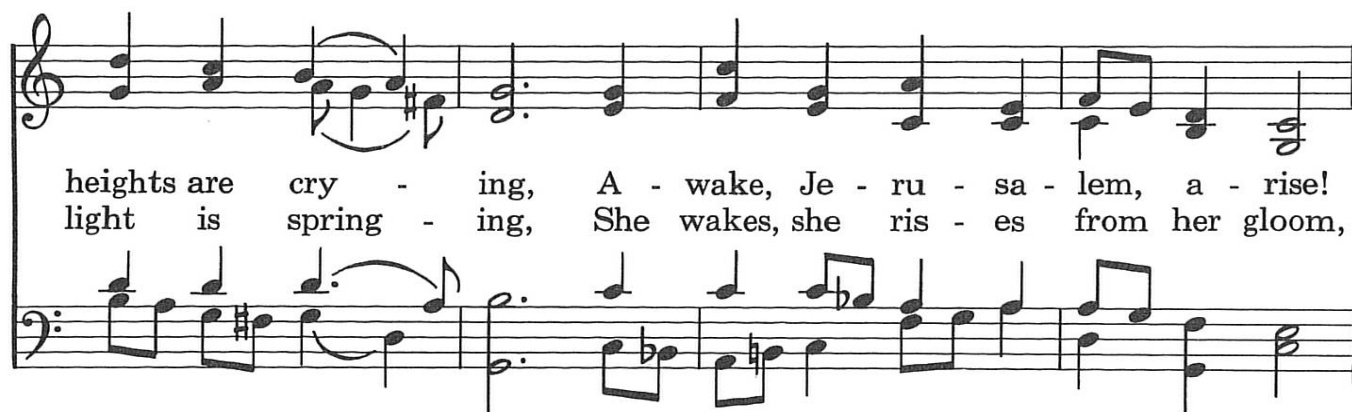
WACHET AUF 8.9.8.8.9.8.6.6.4.8.8.

Melody by Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608

Harm. by J.S. Bach, 1685-1750



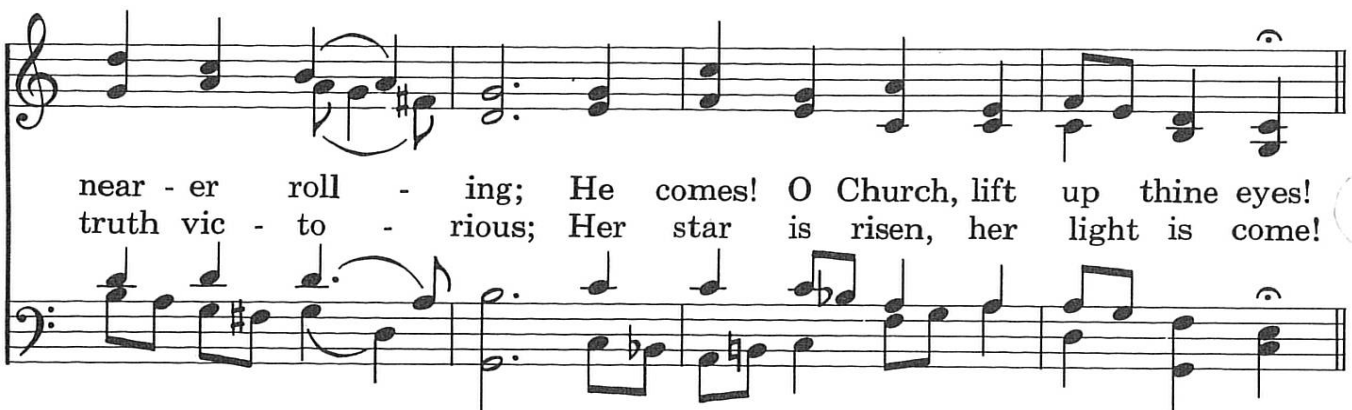
1 Wake, a-wake, for night is fly - ing; The watch-men on the
2 Zi - on hears the watch-men sing - ing; Her heart with deep de -



heights are cry - ing, A - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, a - rise!
light is spring - ing, She wakes, she ris - es from her gloom,



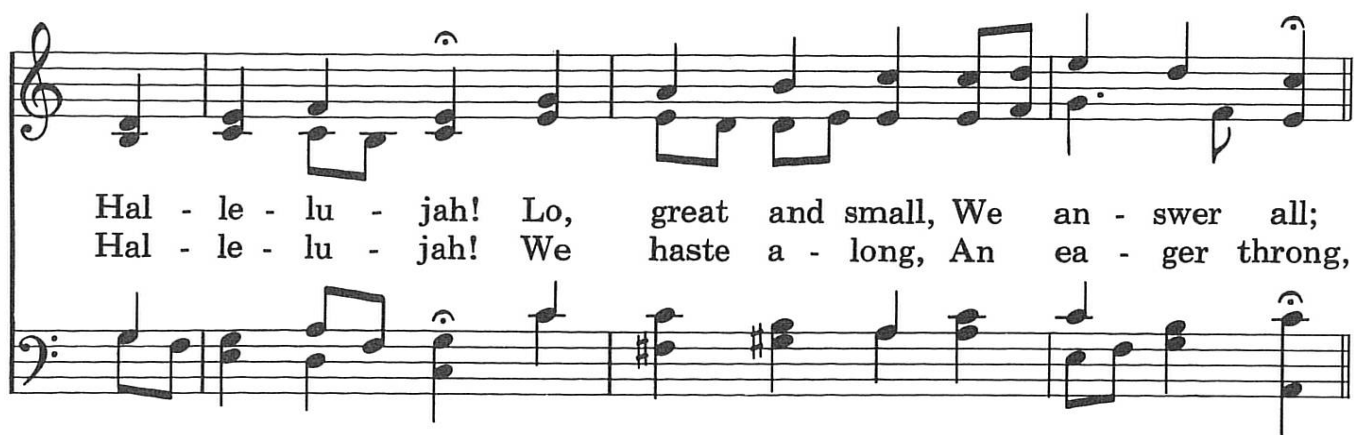
Mid-night's sol - emn hour is toll - ing; His char - iot wheels are
For her Lord comes down all glo - rious, In grace ar - rayed, by



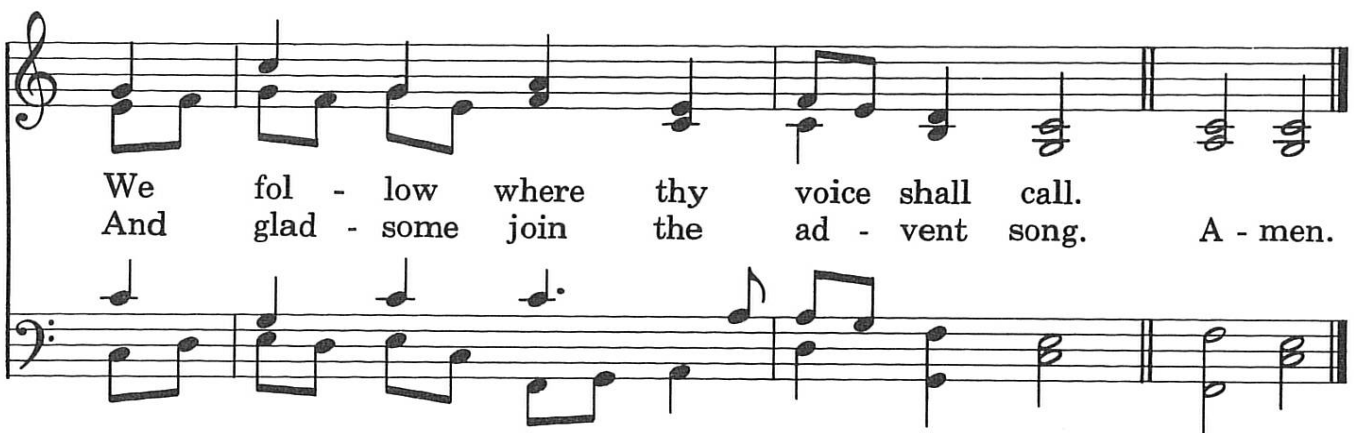
near - er roll - ing; He comes! O Church, lift up thine eyes!
truth vic - to - rious; Her star is risen, her light is come!



Rise up, with will - ing feet Go forth, the Bride - groom meet:
Ah, come thou bless - ed One, God's own be - lov - ed Son,



Hal - le - lu - jah! Lo, great and small, We an - swer all;
Hal - le - lu - jah! We haste a - long, An ea - ger throng,



We fol - low where thy voice shall call.
And glad - some join the ad - vent song. A - men.

3 Now let all the heavens adore thee,
And men and angels sing before thee
With harp and cymbal's clearest tone;
Of one pearl each shining portal,
Where we shall join the choirs immortal
In praises round thy glorious throne;
No vision ever brought,
No ear hath ever caught
Such great glory!
Therefore will we, eternally,
Sing hymns of joy and praise to thee.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

110

Latin: c.9th century

Tr. John M. Neale, 1818-1866, Sts. 1, 2, all.

Tr. Henry S. Coffin, 1877-1954, Sts. 3, 4

VENI EMMANUEL 8.8.8.8.8.8.

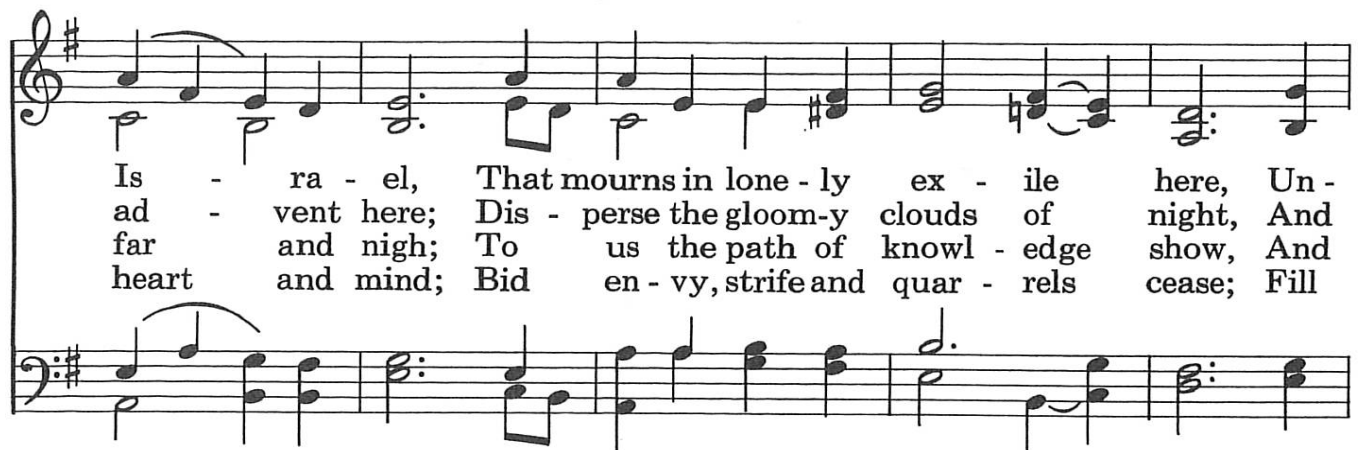
Adapted from Plainsong

Thomas Helmore, 1811-1890

In unison



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran-som cap-tive
 2 O come, thou Day-spring, come and cheer Our spir-its by thine
 3 O come, thou Wis-dom from on high, And or-der all things,
 4 O come, De-sire of na - tions, bind All peo-ples in one

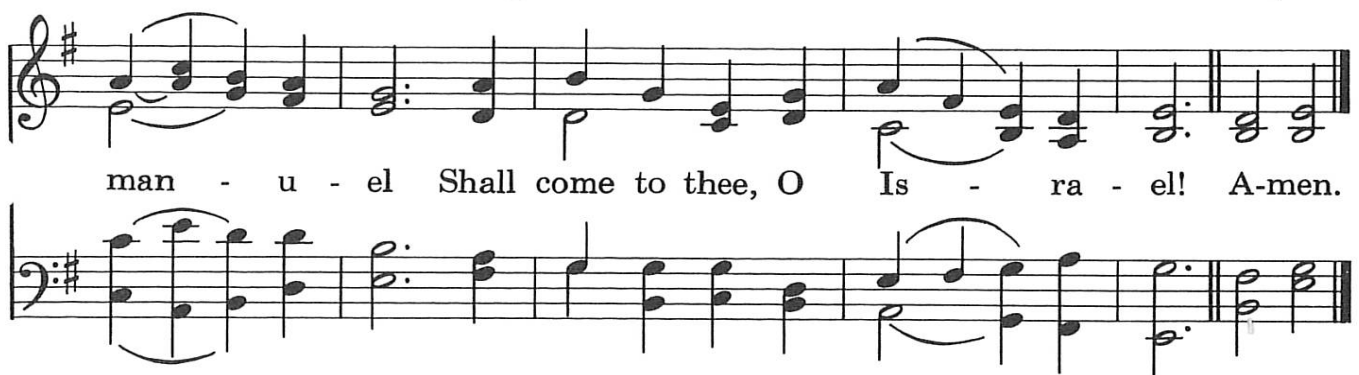


Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here, Un -
 ad - vent here; Dis - perse the gloom-y clouds of night, And
 far and nigh; To us the path of knowl - edge show, And
 heart and mind; Bid en - vy, strife and quar - rels cease; Fill

REFRAIN



til the Son of God ap - pear.
 death's dark shad-ows put to flight.
 cause us in her ways to go. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
 the whole world with heav - en's peace.

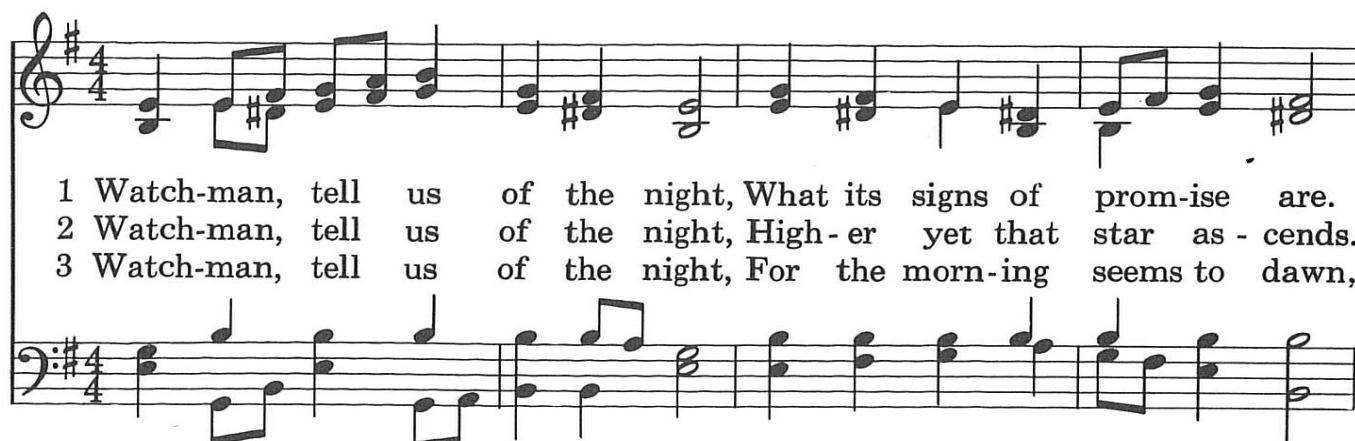


man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el! A-men.

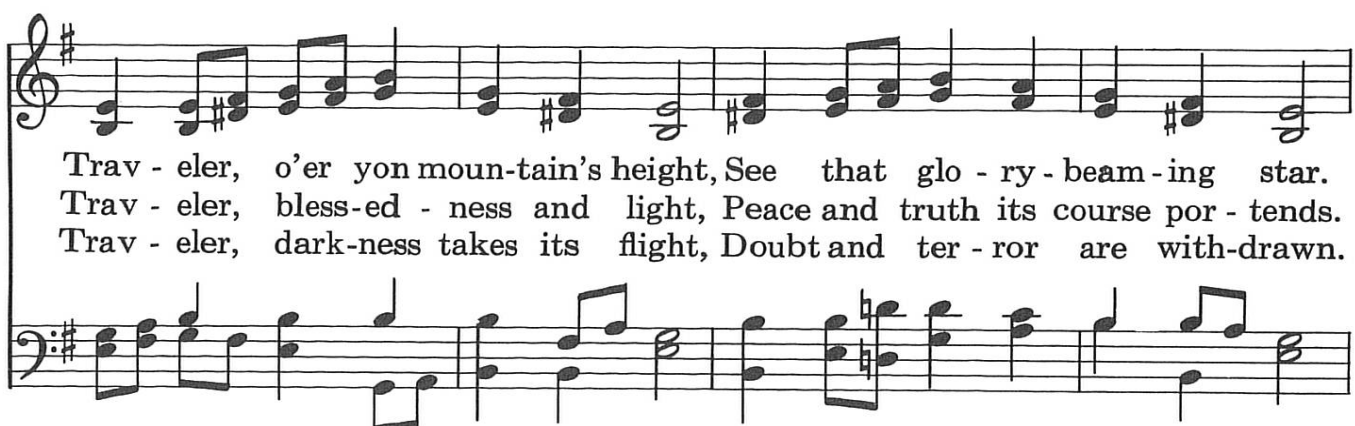
Watchman, Tell Us of the Night

John Bowring, 1792-1872

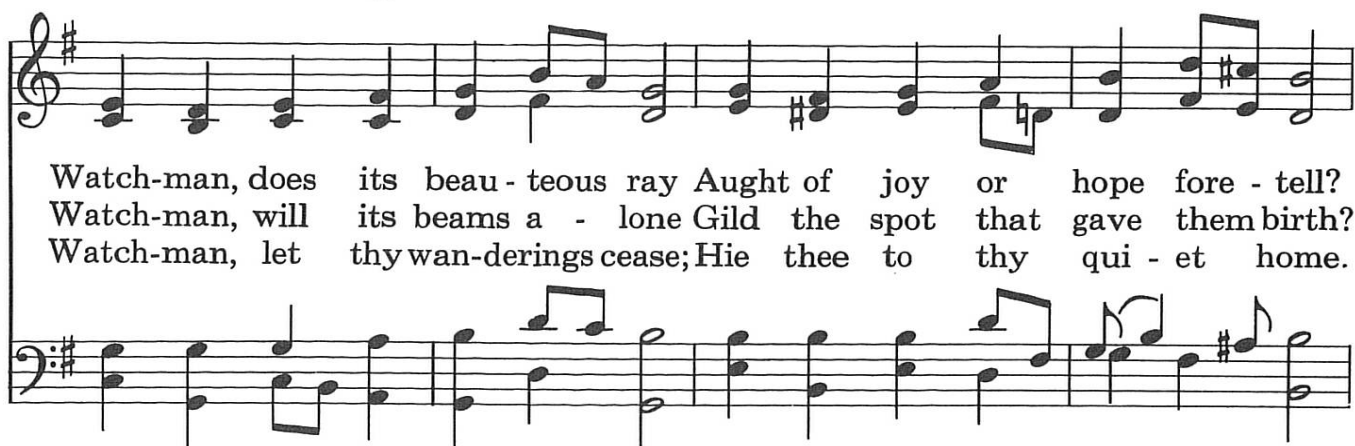
ABERYSTWYTH 7.7.7.7.D.

Joseph Parry, 1841-1903


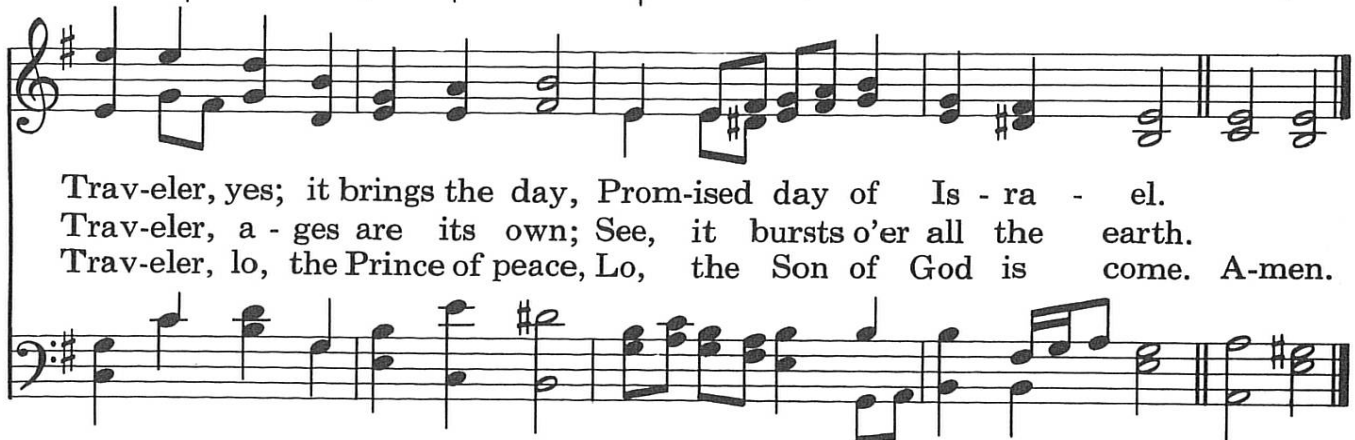
1 Watch-man, tell us of the night, What its signs of prom-ise are.
 2 Watch-man, tell us of the night, High-er yet that star as-cends.
 3 Watch-man, tell us of the night, For the morn-ing seems to dawn,



Trav-eler, o'er yon moun-tain's height, See that glo-ry-beam-ing star.
 Trav-eler, bless-ed-ness and light, Peace and truth its course por-tends.
 Trav-eler, dark-ness takes its flight, Doubt and ter-ror are with-drawn.



Watch-man, does its beau-teous ray Aught of joy or hope fore-tell?
 Watch-man, will its beams a-lone Gild the spot that gave them birth?
 Watch-man, let thy wan-derings cease; Hie thee to thy qui-et home.



Trav-eler, yes; it brings the day, Prom-ised day of Is-ra-el.
 Trav-eler, a-ges are its own; See, it bursts o'er all the earth.
 Trav-eler, lo, the Prince of peace, Lo, the Son of God is come. A-men.



“Poinsettia Fund” for Advent and Christmas **TO BENEFIT THE OPEN DOOR MINISTRY**

For many years our congregation has offered poinsettias for the Sanctuary in honor or memory of family and friends. While we will have a few live poinsettias again this year, we will not be purchasing individual plants for each dedication. **We invite you instead to honor your loved ones at Christmas, with a contribution to our Open Door Ministry for community assistance.**

If you would like to offer a dedication in honor or memory of someone, please complete this form and mail it to the church office, with a contribution (\$5 minimum, payable FCC, memo “Open Door Poinsettia Fund”). Dedications received by Thursday, December 16, will be listed in worship bulletins on Sunday, December 19, and Christmas Eve.

Given by _____ **Contribution** _____

In honor of _____

In memory of _____



**Music
at the
Meetinghouse**

Live Music at FCC!

Masks, distanced seating, and proof of vaccination required.

Cameo Baroque Concert for 19 Days of the Valley—Today, December 12, at 3:00

As their annual effort in the Upper Valley Haven’s “19 Days of the Valley” campaign, Ernie Drown and friends offer a program featuring G. F. Handel, Henry Purcell, G. P. Telemann, William Boyce, and others. *Free-will donation; more at cameoarts.org and uppervalleyhaven.org.*

UVMC Messiah Sing (Abridged)—Next Sunday, December 19, at 2:00

G. F. Handel’s beloved oratorio in a reduced, covid-safe format, thanks to our neighbors at UVMC. Student soloists perform selected arias, and we’ll enjoy a community sing of the Hallelujah chorus.

THE CHRISTMAS FUND

We invite you to consider a donation to the UCC’s Christmas Fund, also known as the Fund for the Veterans of the Cross or Emergency Fund. This program offers compassionate, grateful support for retired clergy and their families with pension, healthcare, and emergency assistance.

Please contribute as you’re able to this vital denominational offering, either by check to FCC (memo “Christmas Fund”) or online at www.pbucc.org/index.php/christmas-fund-home. Thanks!

Giving From the Heart *Stewardship 2022*

Many thanks for the 27 pledges we have already received for 2022! As you prayerfully consider a commitment to FCC’s mission and ministry in the coming year, we will gratefully continue to accept pledges anytime in the coming weeks. Thank you for your support of our church!



First Congregational Church of Lebanon
PO Box 230
10 South Park St
Lebanon NH 03766

Weekly Worship Resources Enclosed!

DATED MATERIAL—Please Deliver Promptly

Do you use email? Contact church@fccleb.org to receive this and other communication by email.

Welcome!

We are a Christ-centered community that celebrates the love of God. Although we are of varied minds, with varying measures of belief and unbelief, we are one body, bound together in Christ. We recognize the uniqueness of every individual as God's beloved child. We seek to respond faithfully to God's call for justice for all creation. We strive in word and deed to be faithful to Jesus' model of loving acceptance. We seek to create a sanctuary where all will know they are welcome and included.

No matter your age, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, race or ethnicity, physical or mental ability, or economic circumstance, you are invited into the full life and ministry of First Congregational Church of Lebanon, including its worship, sacraments, and rites.

Join us as we grow together in God's love.

First Congregational Church of Lebanon

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organist and Choir Director • Nancy Parsons, Children's Community Corner
Barbara Teeter, Chair of Deacons • Linda Jacobs, Chair of Church Council • Barbara Jones, Moderator
Brian Clancy, Church Administrator

Church Office Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9:00-12:00 (or by appointment as needed)
603-448-4281 • church@fccleb.org • prayer@fccleb.org • music@fccleb.org • www.fccleb.org