



The First Sunday of Advent

“At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving others with God’s own love and concern.”

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

Prelude *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 659 Johann Sebastian Bach

Call to Worship Adapted from Romans 13:11-14

One: You know what time it is, how it is now the moment to wake from sleep.

All: Salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers.

One: The night is far gone, the day is near.

All: Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

One: Let us live honorably as in the day!

All: Let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ!

Hymn 104 (p. 5) *We Hail You God's Anointed*

Ellacombe

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 2:1-5. The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. ²In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. ³Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. ⁴He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. ⁵O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

An Advent Litany

One: O come, O come, Emmanuel!

All: The Christ child is coming!

One: O come, O come, Emmanuel!

All: Let us prepare for his arrival.

One: O come, O come, Emmanuel!

All: We open ourselves to you.

One: O come, O come, Emmanuel!

All: Let us prepare the way with prayer to God and service to his people!

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

E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come

Paul Manz

Children's Moment

Hope, love, joy, and peace. These are the four virtues that we lift up during Advent, and we mark them with the candles of the Advent wreath, which we light during worship. These virtues are always worth celebrating, but especially during this season of preparation, when we get ready for the birth of the baby Jesus. I hope that you will let the excitement of this special season fill you with love, joy, peace, and yes, hope.

Hymn 112 (pp. 6-7) *Keep Awake, Be Always Ready*

Wachet Auf

Scripture Lessons

Psalm 122. ¹I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

²Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

³Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together.

⁴To it the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord.

⁵For there the thrones for judgment were set up, the thrones of the house of David.

⁶Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you.

⁷Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers."

⁸For the sake of my relatives and friends I will say, "Peace be within you."

⁹For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good.

Matthew 24:36-44. ³⁶[Jesus continued,] “But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴²Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

Sermon “Almost Here...” Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 103 (p. 7) *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* Stuttgart

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, Edith, Jan, Eileen, Juanita, Terry, Dan, Ethan, Travis, Larry, Garrett, Penny, Sue, and Rick.

And now, we will share a prayer from the Anglican Bishop George Appleton:

Lord, increase my faith, that I may embrace everything that is your will.

Lord, increase my faith, that the mountain of difficulty may be removed.

Lord, increase my faith, that I may never be a loss for some creative action for you.

Lord, increase my faith, that I may never be impatient or frustrated.

Lord, increase my faith, that I may run to you in every situation.

Lord, increase my faith, that I may trust you in seeming failure or defeat.

Lord, increase my faith, that I may endure as seeing you who are visible only to the eye of faith.

Lord, fill me with faith, hope, and love, this day and always.

We pray this, and all the joys and concerns we hold in our hearts, in Jesus' name. 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

Never Weather-beaten Sail

Richard Shephard

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*)

God, in an age when we are always rushing, you call us to wait. In a time when we seek instant gratification, you bless us with a season of anticipation. In gratitude for what you have given us and for what is yet to come, we present this morning's offering. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Hymn 114 (p. 8)

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Truro

Benediction

Postlude

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 661

Johann Sebastian Bach

* * *

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organist • The FCC Choir • Amy Driscoll, Liturgist

Nicole and Brandon Mason, Ushers • Linda Jacobs, Zoom Greeter

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.

Advent Begins Today, November 27—Let's Decorate!

All are invited to stay after worship to help decorate FCC for the season. We'll hang wreaths, string lights, trim our tree, and have fun as we prepare the church for the season of Advent. We won't have our usual potluck (*but if you happen to bring treats, people would probably eat them...*).

CHRISTMAS COMES TO ALL—LISTEN'S HOLIDAY BASKETS

Many thanks to those who have so far offered donations of new items from our wish lists!

The updated list is available in the Parish Hall and will be emailed again later in the week.

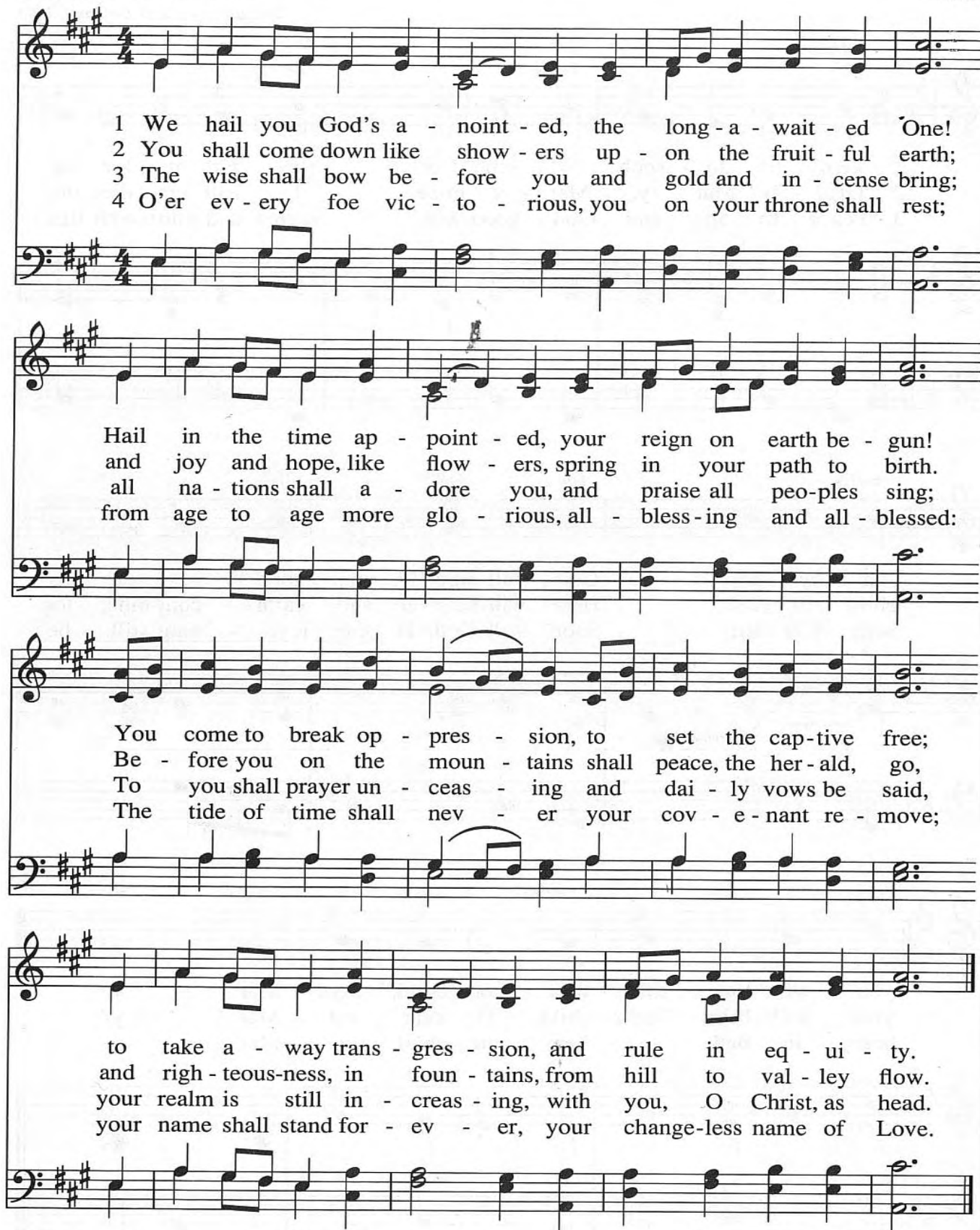
Thanks to all for giving to local families and seniors in the true spirit of Christmas!

We Hail You God's Anointed

104

James Montgomery, 1821; alt.

Ps. 72



1 We hail you God's a - noint - ed, the long - a - wait - ed One!
 2 You shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit - ful earth;
 3 The wise shall bow be - fore you and gold and in - cense bring;
 4 O'er ev - ery foe vic - to - rious, you on your throne shall rest;

Hail in the time ap - point - ed, your reign on earth be - gun!
 and joy and hope, like flow - ers, spring in your path to birth.
 all na - tions shall a - dore you, and praise all peo - ples sing;
 from age to age more glo - rious, all - bless - ing and all - blessed:

You come to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive free;
 Be - fore you on the moun - tains shall peace, the her - ald, go,
 To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows be said,
 The tide of time shall nev - er your cov - e - nant re - move;

to take a - way trans - gres - sion, and rule in eq - ui - ty.
 and righ - teous - ness, in foun - tains, from hill to val - ley flow.
 your realm is still in - creas - ing, with you, O Christ, as head.
 your name shall stand for - ev - er, your change - less name of Love.

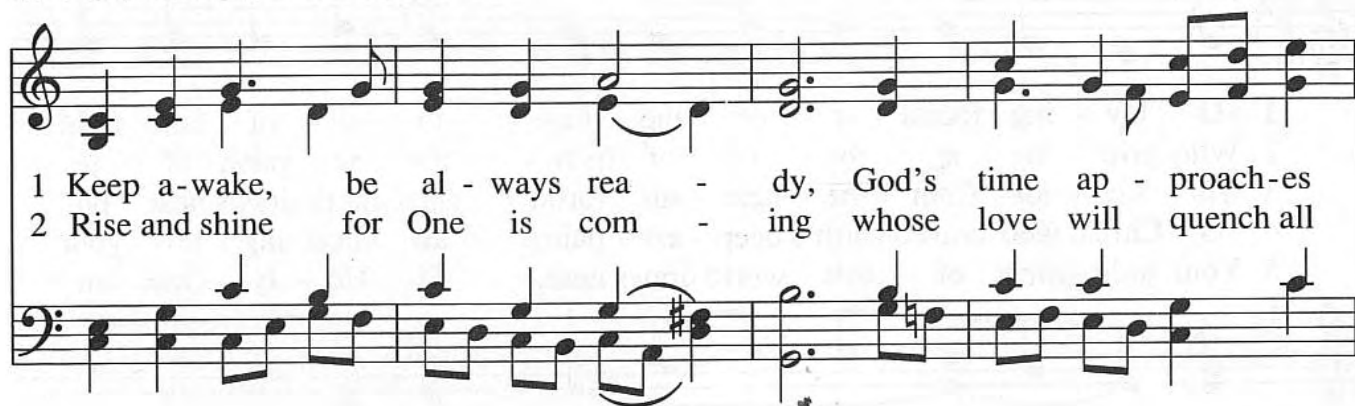
Written as a Christmas hymn for the Moravian settlement in Yorkshire, England, this hymn has enjoyed widespread popularity from the beginning. It is characteristic of Montgomery's deep faith and passion for social justice.

Tune: ELLACOMBE C.M.D.
 Gesangbuch der herzoglichen Wirtembergischen katholischen Hofkapelle, 1784

Keep Awake, Be Always Ready

Isa. 2:1-5; 60:1-3; 64:1-9; Matt. 24:36-44;
Rom. 13:11-14; 1 Cor. 1:3-9; 1 Thess. 3:9-13

Arthur G. Clyde, 1993



1 Keep a-wake, be al - ways rea - dy, God's time ap - proach-es
2 Rise and shine for One is com - ing whose love will quench all



sure and stea - dy, God's strength will keep your heart from blame.
na - ture's thirst - ing to be made whole for - ev - er more.



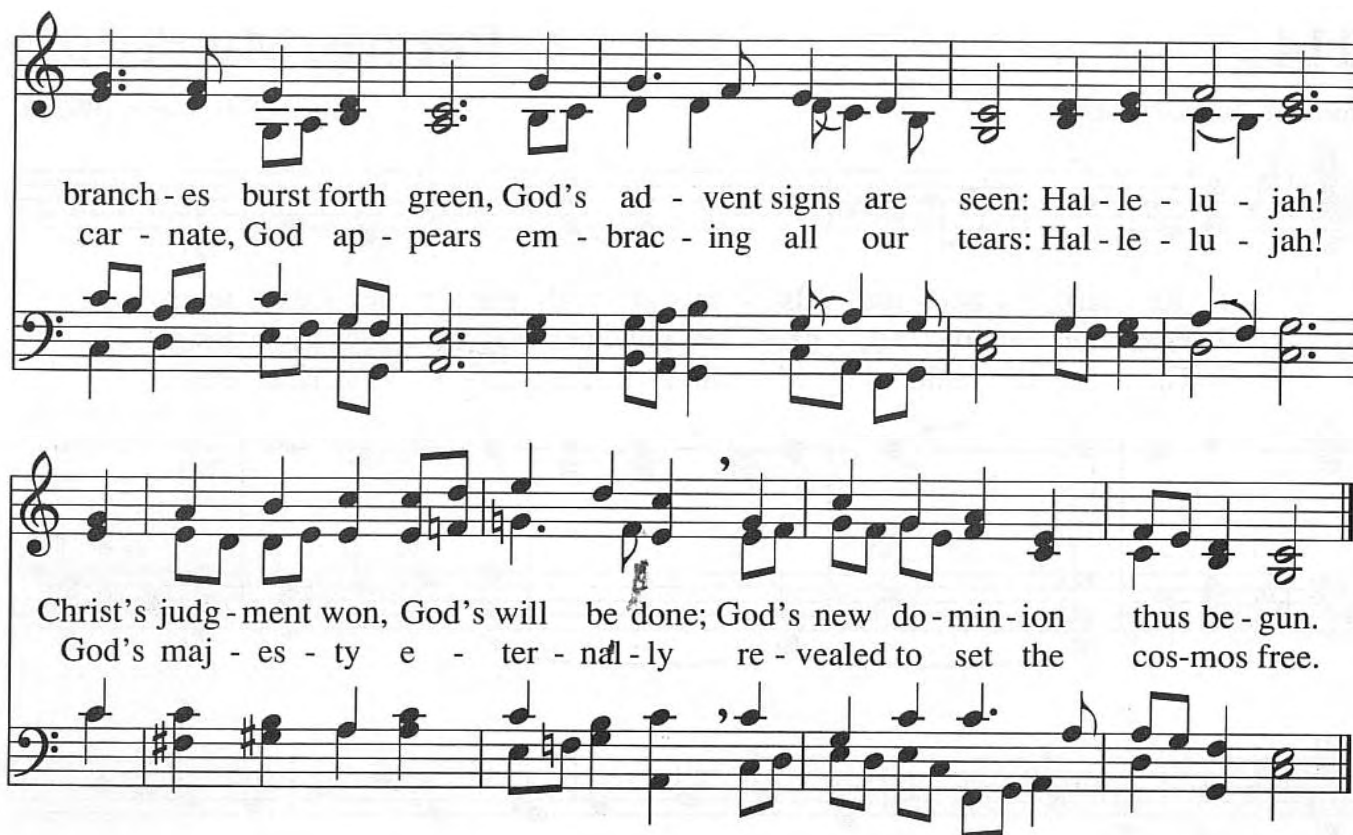
Clouds, the Spir - it's light con - ceal - ing, dis - perse, God's pur - est
On that day to end all weep - ing, death's swords trans - formed to



light re - veal - ing; cre - a - tion will its Sov-ereign name. Dry
tools of reap - ing, the God of might will mer - cy pour. In -

This new text, written to reflect the readings for the first Sunday in Advent, is set to a traditional tune of the season by sixteenth-century Lutheran pastor Philipp Nicolai.

Tune: WACHET AUF 8.9.8.8.9.8.6.6.4.8.8.
Philipp Nicolai, 1599
Harm. J. S. Bach, 1731



branch - es burst forth green, God's ad - vent signs are seen: Hal - le - lu - jah!
car - nate, God ap - pears em - brac - ing all our tears: Hal - le - lu - jah!

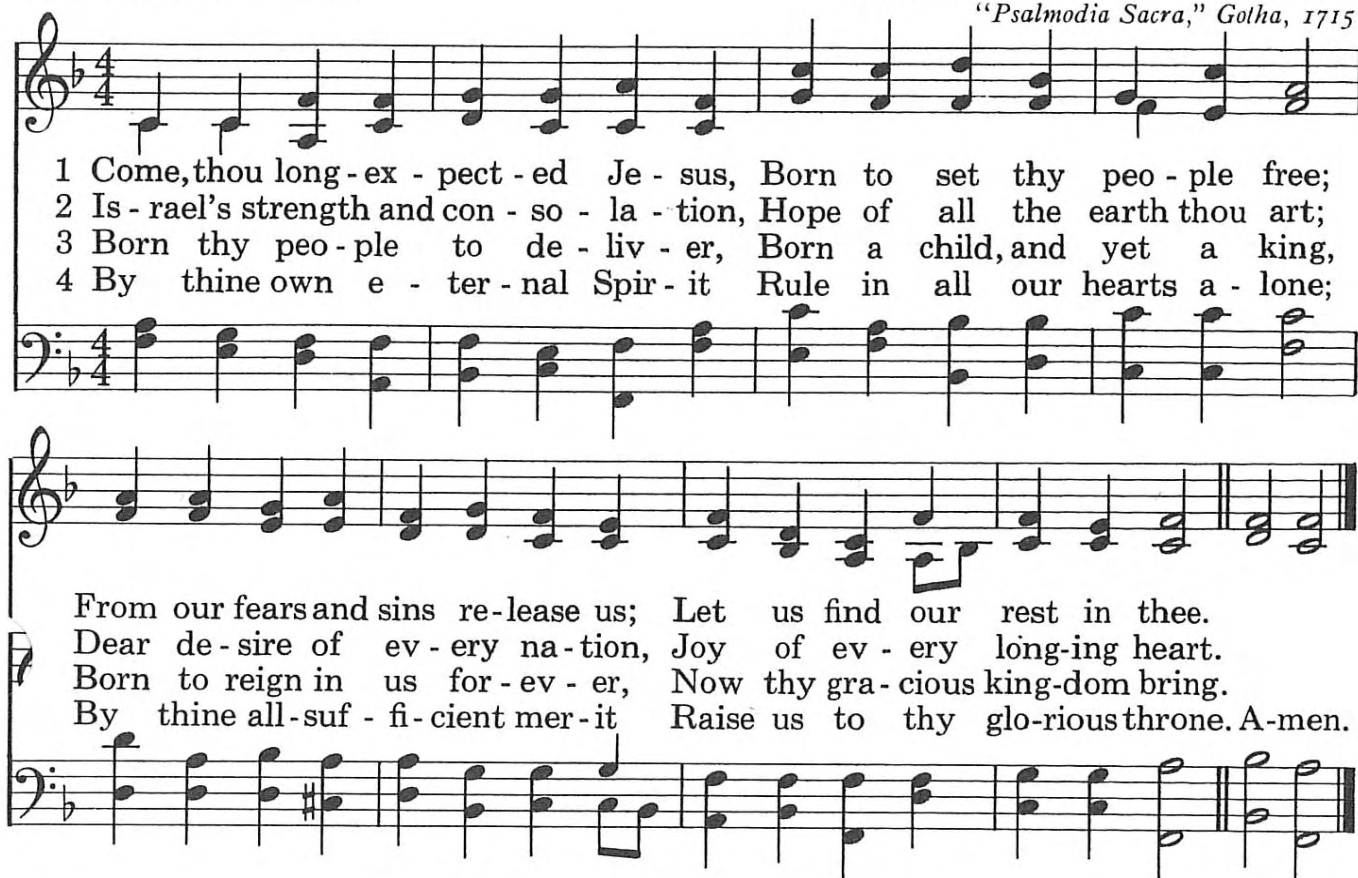
Christ's judg - ment won, God's will be done; God's new do - min - ion thus be - gun.
God's maj - es - ty e - ter - nal - ly re - vealed to set the cos - mos free.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

103

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

STUTTGART 8.7.8.7.
Melody attr. to Christian F. Wilt, 1660-1716
"Psalmodia Sacra," Goltha, 1715



1 Come, thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, Born to set thy peo - ple free;
2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, Hope of all the earth thou art;
3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child, and yet a king,
4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;

From our fears and sins re - lease us; Let us find our rest in thee.
Dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, Joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
Born to reign in us for - ev - er, Now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.
By thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to thy glo - rious throne. A - men.

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.

Dream Big *Many Thanks for Your 2023 Stewardship Pledges*

"For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind." (Isaiah 65:17)

Thanks to all for prayerfully considering a commitment to FCC's mission and ministry in the coming year. We have so far received 18 pledges, and we gratefully continue to accept them.

Please either place your pledge form in the offering plate or return it to the church office by mail.

Offering envelopes for 2023 (in boxed sets #1-20) are available in the Parish Hall.



The Anonymous Coffeehouse—Fridays, Nov. 25, Dec. 2, Jan. 6 and 20, all 7:30 pm

Come enjoy our popular community venue for live local music! An informal “listening room” for emerging musicians, each show features several acoustic acts. Patrons come and go as they please; food and drink available. *Free admission. For performer info and more, visit anoncoffee.org.*

Lebanon Downtown Holiday Celebration—Saturday, December 3

As Lebanon Recreation and local businesses offer an array of festivities around the Green, the Upper Valley Music Center presents student recitals in FCC’s Sanctuary all afternoon. *Events all day at various times and locations around town. More details at lebanonnh.gov and uvmusic.org.*

Classicopia: Four-Hand Holiday—Sunday, December 4, at 2:00 pm

Pianists Daniel Weiser and Elizabeth Borowsky renew this seasonal tradition with a selection of favorites in exciting, four-hand arrangements—from “Sleigh Ride” and “White Christmas” to *The Nutcracker Suite*. *Adults \$20, FCC mems \$15, children free; visit classicopia.org/concert/four-hand-holiday3/.*

Bel Canto Chamber Singers: Winter Dreams—Saturday, Dec. 10, 7:30 / Sunday, Dec. 11, 4:00

Director Jane Woods leads Bel Canto in its ever-popular holiday program, this year featuring a cantata by Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo and music of Hans Leo Hassler, Felix Mendelssohn, Eric Whitacre, and more. *Adults \$15, students \$10, under 13 free; for more, visit www.belcantosingers.org.*

MUSE: 'Tis the Season of Harmony—Friday, December 16, at 7:00 pm

Directed by the inimitable Glee Charlestream, the Hanover-based Mosaic Union String Ensemble (MUSE) features student musicians of diverse ages and backgrounds. They share a short, festive holiday program in their FCC debut! *Free-will donation. More at www.mosaicunionstringensemble.org.*

Upper Valley Music Center Messiah Sing!—Sunday, December 18, at 3:30 pm

UVMC brings back its annual performance of G. F. Handel’s beloved oratorio, with student soloists and chamber orchestra. All are welcome to join the chorus (scores available!) or just listen. *Fee \$15 choral/orchestral participants; suggested \$10 audience donation. More at uvmusic.org/event/messiah-sing.*

Christmas Party and Carol Sing at the Parsonage

Sunday, December 11, 2:00-4:00 pm—15 Kimball St

All are warmly invited to the Parsonage for FCC’s annual Christmas party! We’ll gather round the fireplace for festive fellowship and favorite carols. *Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share.*

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!



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@fcclieb.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
Jon Scott, Chair of Church Council • Linda Gerlach, Chair of Deacons • 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@fcclieb.org • prayer@fcclieb.org • music@fcclieb.org • www.fcclieb.org