

Scripture Lesson

Luke 2:22-40. ²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Sermon *“Bringing Up Baby”* Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 144 (p. 7) *What Star Is This, With Beams So Bright* Puer Nobis Nascitur

Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

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

Today we offer ongoing prayers for Pete, Arlene, Evelyn, Gordon, Greg, Jan, Edith, Eileen, Waneta, Terry, Juanita, Dan, Travis, Garrett, Sue, Rick, Edward, Duane, Priscilla, Ron, Lauren, Brian, Micah, and Al.

A Christmas Affirmation of Faith (*Unison*)

I believe that Christmas is more than a time for parties and ornaments; it is a time for remembering Jesus, the incarnation of God's love in human flesh.

I believe that there are gifts more important than the ones beneath the tree, such as the things we teach our children, the way we share ourselves with friends, and the efforts by which we set about reshaping the world in which we live.

I believe that the finest carols are often sung by the poorest voices, from hearts made warm by the wonder of this season.

I believe in the angels' message that we should not be afraid—that the Child of Bethlehem is able to overcome all anxieties, fears, and insecurities.

I believe in prayer and quietness as a way of approaching Christmas—that if I wait in silence, I will experience the presence of the one born in the manger, for He lives today as surely as He lived then.

I believe in going away from Christmas as the Magi went, “another way.” I want to be different when these days are past—more centered, more thoughtful, more caring.

And I believe that God will help me and sustain me in my belief, this night and forevermore. 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

Long, Long Ago

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*)

Gracious God, we come to you on the cusp of a New Year, imagining all that is possible. Help us to remember and to assist those in our midst, and those around the world, who are in need, who struggle to get by, who have little to celebrate. Inspire our giving and our service, we pray, Amen.

Hymn 117 (p. 8) Angels, From the Realms of Glory Regent Square
Benediction
Postlude Variations on Adeste Fideles Raynor Taylor

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Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organ/Piano • The FCC Choir • Betsy Alexander, Contralto
Brian Clancy, Liturgist • Linda Gerlach and Phil Hammond, Ushers • Bob Gerlach, Zoom

Please Note: CONTENT FOR THE 2023 ANNUAL REPORT DUE FRIDAY, JANUARY 12

Materials for FCC's 2023 Annual Report must be submitted to the Church Administrator by January 12, in order to ensure timely distribution of the report prior to our Annual Meeting. Please note that reports should be as concise as possible, summarizing in the briefest terms only the most relevant and noteworthy items particular to your committee.

The 2023 Annual Meeting will be Sunday, February 11, 2024



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

Winter Concerts

All in the FCC Sanctuary

Upper Valley Music Center Community Chorus—Friday, January 19, at 7:00 pm

Directed by Annie Arrington and accompanied by Will Ögmundson, UVMC's Community Chorus is pleased to offer its debut concert! The program includes a variety of musical styles and genres, following the group's motto—Just Sing! *More at uvmusic.org/event/community-chorus-uvmc-concert.*

The Anonymous Coffeehouse—Fridays, Jan. 26, Feb. 9 and 23, Mar. 8 and 22, all at 7:30 pm

Our comfy community venue for live folk music is thriving in its fourth season! Come and go as you please; food and drink available. *Free admission. For performers and more, visit anoncoffee.org.*

Cantabile Women's Voices: Northern Exposure—Sunday, January 28, at 3:00 pm

Kathy Sherlock-Green brings back this outstanding chorus with an exploration of music from across northern Europe and Canada. They'll sing music of Eriks Esenvalds, Kim André Arnesen, Jean Sibelius, Canadians Eleanor Daley and Donald Patriquin, and an original piece by Kim Baryluk based on Native Canadian Mi'kmaq chant. *Adults \$15, seniors \$10, students (13+) \$5, under 13 free. Advance purchase preferred; more at www.cantabilewomen.org.*

Benjamin Kulp, Cello, and Chenyu Wang, Piano—Sunday, February 11, at 3:00 pm

UVMC's longtime cellist Ben Kulp joins new faculty member Chenyu Wang for a concert of short works for cello and piano. *More at uvmusic.org/event/ben-kulp-cello-and-chenyu-wang-piano.*

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Latin: John F. Wade, 1711-1786
Tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, and others

ADESTE FIDELES Irregular
John F. Wade's "Cantus Diversi," 1751

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
3 Child, for us sin - ners poor and in the man - ger,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing,

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!
We would em - brace thee, with love and awe;
Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry given;

Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
Who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord! A - men.

Traditional French Carol

GLORIA 7.7.7.7. with Refrain
French Carol Melody

1 An - gels we have heard on high Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;

And the moun - tains in re - ply Ech - o back their joy - ous strains.
Say what may the ti - dings be, Which in - spire your heaven - ly song.
Come a - dore on bend - ed knee, Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

REFRAIN

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo - - - - -

- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

What Star Is This, With Beams So Bright

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Charles Coffin, 1676-1749
Tr. John Chandler, 1806-1876, alt.

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR L.M.
Adapted by Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621
Harm. by George R. Woodward, 1848-1934

1 What star is this, with beams so bright, More love - ly
2 'Tis now ful - filled what God de - creed, "From Ja - cob
3 O Je - sus, while the star of grace Im - pels us
4 To God the Fa - ther, heaven - ly Light, To Christ, re -

than the noon - day light? 'Tis sent to announce a new - born
shall a star pro - ceed"; And lo! the east - ern sa - ges
on to seek thy face, Let not our sloth - ful hearts re -
vealed in earth - ly night, To God the Ho - ly Ghost we

king, Glad ti - dings of our God to bring.
stand, To read in heaven the Lord's com - mand.
fuse The guid - ance of thy light to use.
raise An end - less song of thank - ful praise! A - men.

Angels, From the Realms of Glory

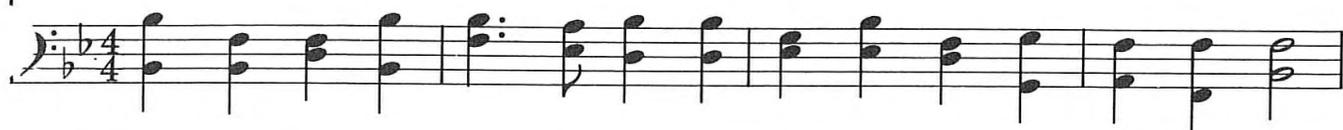
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James Montgomery, 1771-1854

REGENT SQUARE 8.7.8.7.8.7.
Henry T. Smart, 1813-1879



1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, Bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
4 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, Watch - ing long in hope and fear,



Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
God with man is now re - sid - ing, Yon - der shines the in - fant light:
Seek the great De - sire of na - tions, Ye have seen his na - tal star:
Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing, In his tem - ple shall ap - pear:



REFRAIN



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King. A - men.



Don't Bury Your Treasure *Many Thanks for Your 2024 Stewardship Pledges*
"For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance." —Matthew 25:29

All are invited to prayerfully consider their commitment to FCC's mission and ministry in the coming year. We have so far received 26 pledges for 2024, and we will gratefully continue to accept more anytime in the coming weeks. Thank you for your support of our church!

*Please either place your pledge form in the offering plate or return it to the church office by mail.
Box sets (#1-20) of offering envelopes for 2024 are available in the Parish Hall.*

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.



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@fcclleb.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 • Brian Clancy, Church Administrator

Jon Scott, Chair of Church Council • Linda Gerlach, Chair of Deacons • Barbara Jones, Moderator

Church Office Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9:00-12:00 (or by appointment as needed)

603-448-4281 • church@fcclleb.org • prayer@fcclleb.org • music@fcclleb.org • www.fcclleb.org