

a son, and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

An Advent Litany

One: It is time to open our ears and open our eyes:

All: For God is giving us a sign!

One: It is time to open our hearts and open our minds:

All: For God is giving us a sign!

One: It matters not whether we are rich or poor:

All: For God is giving us a sign!

One: It matters not whether we are male or female:

All: For God is giving us a sign! Let us ready ourselves to see the sign that the Lord has given us!

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, open our hearts to you, that we may be redeemed by your reconciling love, and make ready our hearts for the arrival of the Light of the World.

Words of Welcome; Our Ministry and Mission

Anthem

The Song of Mary

Richard Shephard

Children's Moment

Spring training will be in a couple of months. The NBA finals in just a few. Then there's hockey, and best not mention, our regional football team. So, some good, some bad, most of it fun, but in the big scheme of things, not very important. The birth of Jesus is a different matter. The Christ child is a reminder that God loves us. God incarnate. Think about that. It's huge. Please remember that on Christmas morning when you exchange presents. Jesus is the gift God gives. And though his birth was long ago, Jesus remains the gift that keeps on giving.

Hymn 98 (p. 6)

To a Maid Whose Name Was Mary

Annunciation

Scripture Lessons

Micah 5:2-5a. ²But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; ⁵and he shall be the one of peace[...].

Luke 1:39-55. ³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

⁴⁶And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Sermon "A Song from the Heart" Stephen R. Silver

Hymn 123 (p. 7) *Mary, Woman of the Promise* Quem Pastores

Sharing of Joys and Concerns; Pastoral Prayer

As we hold community members in prayer, please exercise care and discretion when sharing.

Today we offer our ongoing prayers for Pete, Marcia, Arlene, Evelyn, Greg, Jan, Edith, Eileen, Waneta, Terry, Juanita, Dan, Travis, Garrett, Sue, Rick, Edward, Priscilla, Ron, Lauren, Brian, Micah, Al, Steve, Denzil, Jacobe, Reg, Chris, and Deserai.

O Holy One, we are filled with excitement. We know something big is about to happen. Help us to be prepared, to open our hearts and our minds to the love and presence of Jesus. We look forward to the birth of the Christ child, to the life he will lead, and to his sacrifice for us. Yes, we are excited. But we are also uneasy. What we proclaim has already happened. So, are we ready for this gift? Truly ready? Help us. Equip us. Bless us for this time and for your remarkable act of generosity and commitment.

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

Myn Liking

Richard Runciman Terry

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, Lord of Life, you come to us in love, bringing hope, joy, and peace. We, though, are not ready. We are distracted from doing your work and caring for your people; we avoid that which you have called us to do. Be with us during these final days of Advent, helping us to be always ready for the arrival of your Son, whose birth was a sign to the world of what you intended and wished. Let us be your agents of grace, with our gifts and our work. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Hymn 100 (*pp. 8-9*)

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Star of the County Down

Benediction

Postlude

À Minuit fut fait un Réveil

Jean-François Dandrieu

* * *

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organ/Piano • The FCC Choir • Jon Scott, Liturgist

Deb and Jon Scott, Ushers • Bob Gerlach, Zoom Greeter

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!

Doing What Is Right and Just *Many Thanks for Your 2025 Stewardship Pledges*

"To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice." —Proverbs 21:3

All are invited to prayerfully consider their commitment to FCC's mission and ministry in the coming year. We'll gratefully accept your 2025 pledges anytime in the coming weeks. Thank you!

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 2025 are available in the Parish Hall.

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 - bid! 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.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES AT FCC

In the Sanctuary and on Zoom

Family Service with Pageant, 5:00 PM—Our beloved service for families and the young-at-heart, with a nativity pageant and living creche! All are welcome to attend; if you or your children are interested in participating, please contact Rachel Silver at rachelsilver@live.com.

Service of Lessons and Carols, 8:00 PM—The story of Christ's birth in Scripture and traditional carols. Steve Silver will preach and our choir will sing, as we gather at the manger together.

98 To a Maid Whose Name Was Mary

Capo 3: (Em) (B7) (Em) (Am) (B) (Em)
 Gm D7 Gm Cm D Gm



1 To a maid whose name was Mar - y, the an - gel Ga - briel came.
 2 "For you are high - ly fa - vored by God the Lord of all,
 3 But Mar - y was most trou - bled to hear the an - gel's word.
 4 "Fear not, for God is with you, and you shall bear a child.
 5 "How shall this be?" said Mar - y, "I am not yet a wife."
 6 As Mar - y heard the an - gel, she won - dered at his words.

(Em) (B7) (Em) (G) (D) (G)
 Gm D7 Gm B^b F B^b



"Fear not," the an - gel told her, "I come to bring good news;
 who e - ven now is with you. You are on earth most blest;
 What was the an - gel say - ing? It trou - bled her to hear,
 His name shall be called Je - sus, God's off - spring from on high.
 The an - gel an - swered quick - ly, "The power of the Most High
 "Be - hold, I am your hand - maid," she said un - to her God.

(Em) (Am) (B) (Em) (Am) (B) (Em)
 Gm Cm D Gm Cm D Gm



good news I come to tell you, good news, I say, good news."
 you are most blest, most bless - ed; God chose you, you are blest!"
 to hear the an - gel's mes - sage, it trou - bled her to hear.
 And he shall reign for - ev - er, for - ev - er reign on high."
 will come up - on you short - ly, your child shall be God's child."
 "So be it; I am read - y ac - cord - ing to your word."

This 20th-century ballad-like retelling of the Annunciation (Luke 1:26–38) displays many characteristics of a folksong style, especially repetition in both text and tune and short quotations included in the narrative. Such features help to make a song both memorable and singable.

TEXT: Gracia Grindal, 1982, alt.

MUSIC: Rusty Edwards, 1982

Text and Music © 1984 Hope Publishing Company

ANNUNCIATION

7.6.7.6.7.6

Candlelight Vigil and Memorial for the Homeless—Friday at 5:30, WRJ

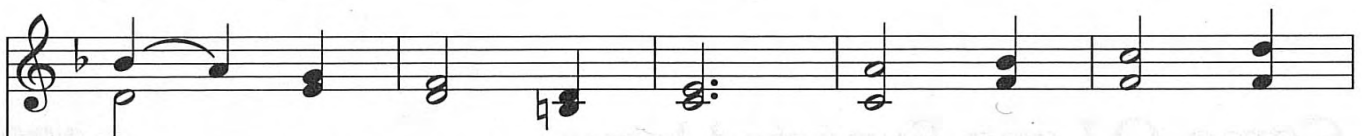
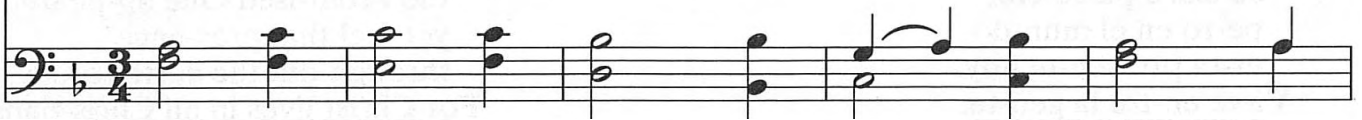
All are invited to gather this Friday in the LISTEN parking lot in White River Junction to remember all those in our community whose lives have been cut short by homelessness in the past year.

Luke 1:39-55

Mary Frances Fleischaker, 1988



1 Mar - y; wom - an of the prom - ise; ves - sel
 2 Mar - y, song of ho - ly wis - dom sung be -
 3 Mar - y, morn - ing star of jus - tice; mir - ror
 4 Mar - y, mod - el of com - pas - sion; wound - ed
 5 Mar - y, wom - an of the gos - pel; hum - ble



of your peo - ple's dreams: Through your o - pen,
 fore the world be - gan: Faith - ful to the
 of the Ra - diant Light: In the shad - ows
 by your off - spring's pain: When our hearts are
 home for trea - sured seed: Help us to be



will - ing spir - it wa - ters of God's good - ness streamed.
 Word with - in you, as you bore God's won - drous plan.
 of life's jour - ney, be a bea - con for our sight.
 torn by sor - row, teach us how to love a - gain.
 true dis - ci - ples, bear - ing fruit in word and deed.



This text, selected as the winner in a regional Hymn Society competition seeking contemporary Marian hymns, portrays Mary's many roles in fulfilling God's promise. The author is an Adrian Dominican sister whose ministry has focused on worship and the arts.

Tune: QUEM PASTORES 8.7.8.7.
 German carol, 14th century
 Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

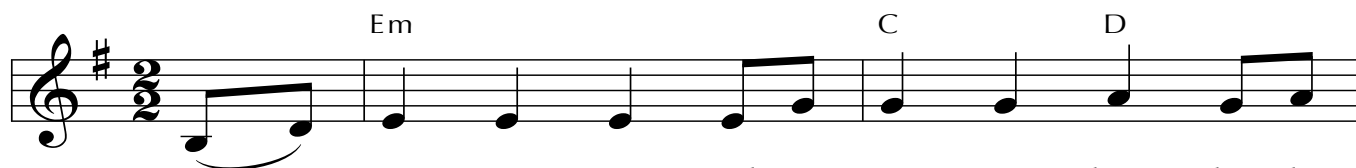
Harmonization Copyright ©, Oxford University Press. From *The English Hymnal 1906*.

The Longest Night—Ecumenical Blue Christmas Service at LUMC

This Friday, December 20, at 5:00 pm, Lebanon United Methodist Church, 18 School St

100 My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

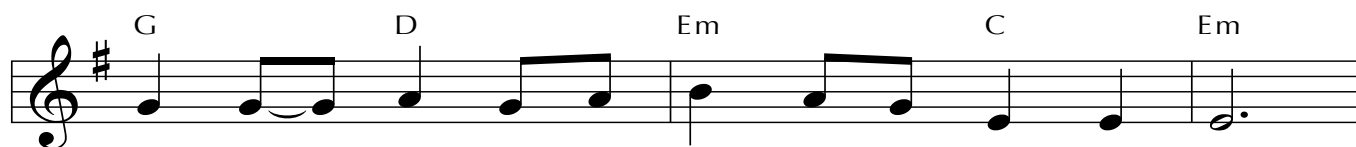
Canticle of the Turning



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you
 3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - ery ty - rant from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.

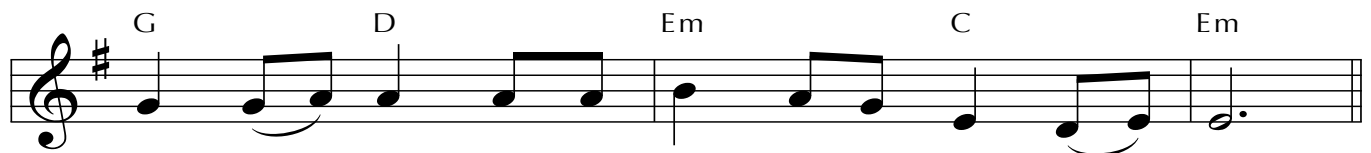


You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread; ev - ery
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be

By employing an energetic Irish folk song for its melody, this ballad-like paraphrase of the *Magnificat*, Mary's song at her meeting with her relative Elizabeth (Luke 1:46-55), recaptures both the wonder and the faith of the young woman who first recognized what God was doing.



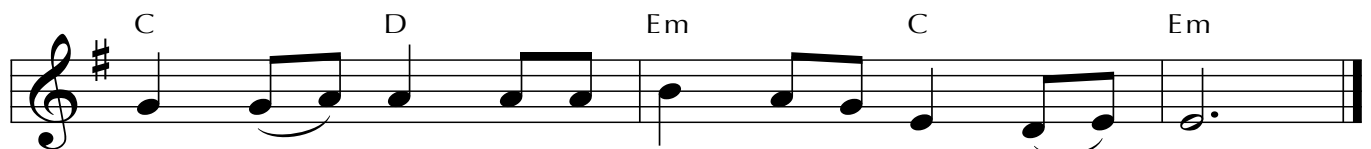
name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the



fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the



dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.



Music
at the
Meetinghouse

UPCOMING CONCERTS

All in the FCC Sanctuary

Upper Valley Music Center Messiah Sing!—Sunday, December 22, at 3:00 pm

Organized by UVMC's voice faculty and directed by Mark Nelson, this annual performance of G. F. Handel's beloved oratorio features student soloists and chamber orchestra. All are welcome to join the chorus (scores are available!) or just listen. *Free-will donation (\$20 suggested); more at uvmusic.org.*

The Anonymous Coffeehouse—Fridays, Jan. 3, 17, 31, Feb. 14 and 28 (etc.), all at 7:30 pm

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

Benjamin Kulp, Cello: Sign of the Times—Sunday, January 12, at 3:00 pm

UVMC cellist Ben Kulp offers a program of music reflecting the current moment, from pieces by contemporary women to a take on Jimi Hendrix. *Adults \$20, under-18 free; more at uvmusic.org.*

Jennifer Koh, Violin: Masterclass and Conversation—Tuesday, January 14, at 7:00 pm

Internationally renowned violinist Jennifer Koh joins UVMC students and faculty to explore technique, interpretation, and approaches to new repertoire. *Donations welcome; more at uvmusic.org.*

UVMC Children's Chorus Celebration of Song—Saturday, January 25, at 2:00 pm

Cantabile Women's Voices: Night and Day—Sunday, February 2, at 3:00 pm

LOH on Location: Dom Flemons—Saturday, February 15, at 7:30 pm



Merry Christmas!

Many, many thanks to all those who generously offered contributions to our **OPEN DOOR MINISTRY** for community assistance, in honor or memory of their loved ones listed below.

IN HONOR OF...

Mom/DeAnn/Mema—*Brian, Amy, Katie, and Grace*

Duncan Hilton—*Karen and George Hilton*

Craig Jacobs (our son), Carey Jacobs (our daughter), Betty Adams (Ike's mom), Terri Reese (Ike's aunt), and our dear friend Ginny Bennett—*Linda and Ike Jacobs*

Our caring, hard-working, and loving congregation—*Barb Jones*

Our family and loved ones—*The Silver Family*

Juliet and Dominic, God's greatest gifts to me—*Stacey Steele*

IN MEMORY OF...

Barbara Fisher Nevel—*Ron Bailey*

Mary Fortmiller Cornwell—*Lola Baldwin*

Sandy Driscoll, Bill Driscoll, and Maury Clancy—*Brian, DeAnn, Amy, Katie, and Grace*

Laura and Gordon Place—*Sue and Ken Gould and Family*

Gloria P. Hammond, Pike Ancestors, and Hammond Ancestors—*Phil Hammond*

Barbara and Maurice Sumner (Linda's parents), Ruby Sumner (Linda's Gram), Betty Sumner King (Linda's aunt), Raymond Adams (Ike's dad)—*Linda and Ike Jacobs*

Our family and loved ones—*The Silver Family*

Grandpa Hezekiah, Grandma Gladys, Uncle Noel, and Aunts Dulcey, Heather, Sonia, and Doris—*Juliet Steele, Stacey Steele, and Dominic Watson*



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