



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

The Feast of the Epiphany (Observed)

January 5, 2025

I cannot be awake, for nothing looks to me as it did before, or else
I am awake for the first time, and all before has been a mean sleep.

–Walt Whitman

Kindly silence cell phones and other devices during worship. All hymns are included on pages 5-7.

Prelude *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, BUXWV 233 Dieterich Buxtehude

Call to Worship Adapted from Psalm 72

One: Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son.

All: May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.

One: In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

All: For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper.

One: He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy.

All: From oppression and violence he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight.

Hymn 143 (p. 5) *We Three Kings of Orient Are* Kings of Orient

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.

Words of Welcome; Our Ministry and Mission

Anthem *Long, Long Ago* Richard Shephard

Children's Moment

Hymn 119 (p. 6) *As With Gladness Men of Old* Dix

Scripture Lessons

Isaiah 60:1-6. Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. ²For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. ³Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. ⁵Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. ⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

Matthew 2:1-12. In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Sermon

"It's Been a Long Road"

Stephen R. Silver

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.

On this day when we read of the Magi and their quest for truth, we ask that we be similarly motivated. We hope that like those travelers, we will go wherever you call us

to go, that we will resist being led astray, that we will be open to your Spirit. Though we have no star to guide us, we do have your Word, and it is with gladness and thanks that we receive it and hope to share it with others.

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

What Is This Lovely Fragrance?

French, arr. Healey Willan

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*)

We are like weary travelers, ready to arrive, no longer focused on the journey but its end. We confess that we have shut ourselves off from you, and from what you would have us learn. Be with us this Epiphany, and accept our gifts as a sign of our desire to travel the way of your Son, the Christ-child. In his name we pray. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

For communion, you are invited to have some bread and juice on hand. We will share in the bread and cup at the appointed time. If you would like to receive a blessing, please let the officiant know.

Invitation and Communion Prayer

Sanctus

Ho - ly, Ho - ly Ho - ly, Lord God of Hosts:
Heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Glo - ry be to you, O Lord most
High. Bless-ed is the one that comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, Ho - san - na in the high - est, Ho -
san - na in the high - est.

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving (*Unison*)

Because the broken bread has meant our healing, because the outpoured cup has meant our life, because our common sharing has meant the communion of our souls, and because we have here been graced by your presence, God, we give you thanks and pray that our lives may be renewed in the life and the love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hymn 488 (p. 7) *Go, Tell It on the Mountain* Go Tell It on the Mountain

Benediction

Postlude *The Fifers* Jean-François Dandrieu

* * *

Leading Worship This Week

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organ/Piano • The FCC Choir • Linda Jacobs, Liturgist

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.

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THE SOUPER BOWL IS BACK!

With pro football's championship game coming up early next month, it's time once again for the SOUPER BOWL! We'll tackle local hunger with a collection of soup and other non-perishable items, to be split among HEADREST, the UV HAVEN, and LISTEN COMMUNITY SERVICES.

Donations may be left in the boxes in the Parish Hall until February 9. You may also bring them directly to any of the three beneficiaries (please let us know if you do so). THANK YOU!!

Please Note: CONTENT FOR THE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT DUE MONDAY, JANUARY 13

Materials for FCC's 2024 Annual Report must be submitted to the Church Administrator by January 13, 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 2025 Annual Meeting will be Sunday, February 9, Following Worship

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We Three Kings of Orient Are

John H. Hopkins, Jr., 1820-1891, alt.

KINGS OF ORIENT 8.8.8.6. with Refrain

John H. Hopkins, Jr.; 1820-1891

In unison

1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are, Bear - ing gifts we trav - erse a -- far
 2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, Gold I bring to crown him a - gain,
 3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I, In - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;
 4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume Breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom:
 5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice;



Field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, Fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er O - ver us all to reign.
 Prayer and prais - ing, all men rais - ing, Wor - ship him, God on high.
 Sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, Sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Sounds through the earth and skies



REFRAIN



O star of won - der, star of night, Star with roy - al beau - ty bright,



West - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, Guide us to thy per - fect light.



As With Gladness Men of Old

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William C. Dix, 1837-1898, alt.

DIX 7.7.7.7.7.

Adapted from a chorale by Conrad Kocher, 1786-1872

1 As with glad-ness men of old Did the guid-ing star be - hold;
2 As with joy - ful steps they sped To that low - ly man - ger - bed,
3 As they of - fered gifts most rare, At the man - ger rude and bare,
4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - ery day Keep us in the nar - row way;

As with joy they hailed its light, Lead-ing on - ward, beam-ing bright;
There to bend the knee be - fore Him whom heaven and earth a - dore;
So may we with ho - ly joy, Pure and free from sin's al - loy,
And, when earth-ly things are past, Bring our ran-somed souls at last

So, most gra-cious Lord, may we Ev - er-more be led to thee.
So may we with will-ing feet Ev - er seek thy mer - cy seat.
All our cost-liest treas-ures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav-en-ly King.
Where they need no star to guide, Where no clouds thy glo - ry hide. A-men.

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.

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Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Negro Spiritual

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN *Irregular*
Negro Melody

REFRAIN

Go, tell it on the moun - tain, O - ver the hills and ev - ery-where;

Go, tell it on the moun - tain That Je - sus Christ is born!

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si - lent flocks by night, Be -
2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled When lo! a - bove the earth Rang
3 Down in a low - ly man - ger The hum-ble Christ was born, And

hold through-out the heav - ens There shone a ho - ly light.
out the an - gel cho - rus That hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
God sent us sal - va - tion That bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

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 an update of 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
Directed by Allison Pollard and accompanied by Will Ögmundson, this delightful ensemble of kids shares an informal concert with family and friends. *Free admission; more at uvmusic.org.*

Cantabile Women’s Voices: Night and Day—Sunday, February 2, at 3:00 pm
This superb ensemble offers choral music celebrating the simple beauty in the passing hours of an ordinary day. Music of Sergei Rachmaninoff, Irving Berlin, Jocelyn Hagen, Gwyneth Walker, Eric Whitacre, and more. *Adults \$15 suggested donation, online or at the door; more at cantabilewomen.org.*

LOH on Location: Dom Flemons—Saturday, February 15, at 7:30 pm
Reviving our pre-pandemic relationship across the Green, Lebanon Opera House brings us Dom Flemons, Grammy-winning cofounder of the Carolina Chocolate Drops. A versatile musician, scholar, and historian, “The American Songster” will share his influential take on folk, blues, bluegrass, and old-time country music. *General admission \$27; tickets and more at lebanonoperahouse.org.*



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 • 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@fcclieb.org • prayer@fcclieb.org • music@fcclieb.org • www.fcclieb.org