



First Congregational Church of Lebanon

United Church of Christ – Open and Affirming

CHRISTMAS EVE 2020

Candlelight Communion Service, 11:00 pm

All of this evening's hymns are taken from the Pilgrim Hymnal.

Prelude *Noël No. 10, Grand Jeu et Duo* L.-C. d'Aquin

Words of Welcome

Hymn 132 *O Come, All Ye Faithful* Adeste Fideles

- (1) O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the King of angels.
(Refrain) O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!
- (2) Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest! *(Refrain)*
- (3) Child, for us sinners poor and in the manger,
We would embrace thee, with love and awe;
Who would not love thee, loving us so dearly? *(Refrain)*
- (4) Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing. *(Refrain)*

Call to Worship

Leader: Come away, come away, come today to Bethlehem.

People: **Come adore on bended knee, one whose birth the angels sing.**

Leader: Come away, come away, from your noisy celebration, to a place of quietness and peace.

People: **Come with wonder, come with awe. Take your place among the sheep and cattle.**

Leader: Sing with joy, praise God, for the time of promise has come. Sing the good news of Emmanuel: God-with-us! The Christ has come!

People: **Come away, come away, come today to Bethlehem.**

Prayer of Invocation

Prayer

The First Lesson

The Birth of Christ Foretold

Luke 1:26-35

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.

Hymn 120

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Mendelssohn

- (1) Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"
- (2) Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"
- (3) Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Hymn 134*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

St. Louis

(1) O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by;

Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

(2) For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,

While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!

And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

(3) How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

(4) O holy Child of Bethlehem! Descend to us, we pray,
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

The Third Lesson

The Revelation of God's Grace

John 1:1-5,14-17

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and
without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was
life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the
darkness did not overcome it.

[...] ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the
glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried
out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because
he was before me.'") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The
law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Hymn 130

Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come

Antioch

- (1) Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing;
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.
- (2) Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns: let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy;
Repeat the sounding joy; repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- (3) He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love;
And wonders of his love; and wonders, wonders of his love.

Meditation

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver

A Christmas Prayer

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.

The Offering of Our Gifts

The Call to Stewardship

Doxology (*Unison*)

Old Hundredth

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

Prayer of Dedication (*Unison*)

May these gifts bear testimony to the light we have received in Jesus Christ. May the grace and truth communicated to us be shared with others. Bless and multiply our giving, to your honor and glory and the service of all your people, here and throughout the world. Amen.

A Service of Holy Communion

The Invitation

Prayer of Confession (*Unison*)

Light of the World: you gave us the transforming birth of the child Jesus as a light for our path. Yet we confess that we shut our eyes to the light. We admit that we do not want to see the gift you have given us. We acknowledge our reluctance to see and share our gifts with our sisters and brothers. We are often dazzled and distracted by the glitter and tinsel the world has made of Christ's birth. We pray that your Spirit be lit within us, that we may share your life-giving gifts of peace and justice with all people. We seek to receive and share the gift of Christ's birth and death, again and again. Amen.

Words of Assurance

A Litany of Remembrance and Consecration

Leader: God of Light, in whom there is no shadow, your gifts to us are from the beginning of time.

People: **They began with Creation, when your spirit gave form to the chaos of energy and matter, when your word brought forth light on the face of the earth.**

Leader: They continued with our ancient forebears, like Noah, whom you blessed with the radiant promise of the rainbow,

People: And like Sarah and Abraham, whom you blessed with a child whose descendants, as many as the stars in the sky, were to be a light to the nations.

Leader: In the desert, you gave the gifts of manna and living water to the weary pilgrims, whom you led by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

People: At last, you sent your light into the world in the form of a tiny child, fragile and vulnerable, who grew to be the very Light of Light, full of grace and truth, revealing your glory on earth.

All: We thank you, O God, that you have sent Jesus Christ to bring true life and the life everlasting to light. Help us to receive your gifts with joy and humility. As we share this bread and cup, may we open our hearts to receive your love and grace in Jesus Christ, and receive the love and support of one another. Be born among us, that we may give Christ's love to the world, through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Gathering at the Table

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.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison)

As we receive the gift of the bread and cup, O God, we give you thanks that you have come to us in Jesus Christ, both in the midst of time and history in Bethlehem and in the timeless presence of Christ's spirit. Send us out into the world rejoicing, ready to share your love with the people we meet, through the grace of your Son, whose birth we remember this night. Amen.

Sharing the Light of Christ

Please join in lighting candles as you're able, to bring the light of the Christ Candle into your own homes and families. You may extinguish them anytime you wish after we join together in singing "Silent Night."

Hymn 138

Silent Night, Holy Night

Stille Nacht

(1) Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

(2) Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

(3) Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace.
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Charge and Dismissal

Minister: Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Michaut qui causoit ce grand bruit (Nöels Suite IV)

M. Corrette

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Leading Worship This Evening

The Rev. Stephen R. Silver, Pastor

Ernie Drown, Organist • Members of the FCC Choir

THE CHRISTMAS FUND

We are grateful to accept donations 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!

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, Church School Superintendent

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@fcclleb.org • prayer@fcclleb.org • music@fcclleb.org • www.fcclleb.org



Merry Christmas!

While we have no poinsettias in our Sanctuary this year, we are grateful to all those who offered contributions to our **OPEN DOOR MINISTRY** in loving honor or memory of all those listed below.

IN HONOR OF...

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

All first-responders, medical personnel, and teachers—*Marcia Corkins and Pete Mason*

Betty Adams, Ike's mother—*Linda and Ike Jacobs*

The caring, kind, compassionate congregation of FCC-Lebanon—*Barbara H. Jones*

Marcia Corkins, Louise Parsons (G.G.), Larry Kirkpatrick (Grandpap), Shawna Osmer (Mommy), and David Rappaport (Daddy)—*Nan Parsons and Kailyn Rappaport*

Phyllis, Ron, Kathy, and Aunt Jeanie—*Deb and Jon Scott*

Our families—*The Silver Family*

IN MEMORY OF...

Florence and Bill Beckett—*Kathy Beckett*

Our parents, and a cherished friend, Laura Place—*Kathy and Warren Belding*

Grandma Callahan and Roy Westmoreland—*The Callahan Family*

Grandma Zickler, as she joins our other grandparents, and our fathers—*Brian, Amy, Katie, and Grace*

Linda's parents and grandparents; Ike's cousin Gayle Cavalier; the Places and Howards; Gracie Morse; Claude Young; and so many other loved ones who are also gone but never forgotten—*Linda and Ike Jacobs*

Emily and Earle Pike; Ruth and Ralph Hammond—*Gloria and Phil Hammond*

My parents, Helen and Alfred Walling—*Susan Pratt*

Our daughter, Carol S. Mistretta, and our son, Charles L. Sargent—*Barbara and Gordon Sargent*

Ken, Jim, Roger, and our grandparents—*Deb and Jon Scott*

Our loved ones—*The Silver Family*

My mother, Eunice Sleeper—*Jerry Sleeper*