

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 24, 2017, 11:00 p.m.

On this most special night of joy and expectation, come to worship God; warmly greeting those who worship with you and quietly praying for the re-birth of the Spirit of Christ in your life.

**Those who are able, please stand in body or spirit.*

*(The congregation is invited to join in speaking or singing **items in bold.**)*

INTROIT *Christmas Introit* S. Walters

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us come, just as we are, for Emmanuel – God with us – is born to us this Christmas night!
Come, let us find the one of whom the angels sing; proclaiming the truth of God’s love!
Let us come with those who have been humbled by life; the weak in mind, body, and spirit.
Come, let us see the Glory of God; wrapped in swaddling cloth and placed in a manger.
Let us come with friends and family; neighbors and strangers; all of God’s children together.
Come, let us adore him; Christ, our Lord; who restores our relationship with God.
Let us gather at the side of the Christ child and meet the one for whom we have waited;
Jesus, our Christ ... the Messiah ... our Lord and Savior ... the Son of God ... Hallelujah!

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH AND OPENING PRAYER

Great God of love and light, we thank you tonight for the light of that special star so many years ago that guided humble shepherds and scholarly wise men to the presence of the Holy Child. Lead us by the light of your eternal love, that we may also follow you to new life in Jesus, our Christ; born to set all people free. In celebration and remembrance of the birth of our Lord and Savior, we gather in the light of this night to give you all glory, praise, worship, and honor. Hear us as we pray in the name of our Christ; Emmanuel, God with us, amen.

*CAROL 133 *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, who comes to us as perfect love in Jesus, the Messiah, forgive us when our shadowed lives dim your light that shines within us; when the decorations and lights of the Christmas season mean more to us than your love, grace, and mercy; when our hearts of stone resist feeling the pain and brokenness around us; when we care more about what is under the tree than the damage we do each day to your creation and to one another.

Loving God, as we welcome the presence of your love in Jesus Christ, have mercy upon us in your loving kindness. Strengthen us by your Holy Spirit so that we may tear down the walls we build to keep your love away, and instead seek justice and mercy for our sisters and brothers in Christ. Transform our hearts to serve as living cradles for your Son, the Lord and Savior of life, Jesus, our Christ; in whose name we pray, amen.

HYMN 551 (Kyrie Eleison) *Lord, Have Mercy*

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE (Hymn 113, verse 3) *Angels We Have Heard on High*

**Come to Bethlehem and see, him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ, the Lord, the newborn King:
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

*PASSING THE PEACE

The peace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, be with you.

And also with you.

Let us greet one another with signs of Christ’s peace.

The Birth of Jesus Proclaimed in Scripture

The Angel Gabriel Visits the Virgin Mary Luke 1:26-38, New Testament, p.56 / P.69

ANTHEM *Breath of Heaven (Mary’s Song)* C. Courtney

The Birth of Jesus, Our Christ, Is Proclaimed Luke 2:1-7, New Testament, p.58 / P.71

*CAROL 119 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

The Shepherds Come to Worship the Christ Child Luke 2:8-20, New Testament, p.58 / P.71

*CAROL 136 *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

The Wise Men Are Led by the Star to Jesus Matthew 2:1-12, New Testament, p.2 / P.2

ANTHEM *Forever Changed* D. Lantz III

MESSAGE ***“Merry Christmas!”***

*CAROL 134 *Joy to the World!*

We Respond to God's Gift of Love in Jesus, Our Christ

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS TO GOD'S WORK AMONG US

Offertory *Jesus Child* J. Rutter
* Congregational Response (Hymnal, 593) *Doxology*
* Prayer of Dedication

CHRISTMAS PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

SPECIAL MUSIC *When Love Was Born* Herms, Schultz, & Lewis
Ken Duncan, Tenor

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLES

*Our candles are lit from the Christ candle, symbolizing the light of Christ shared with the world.
As the flame is passed between individuals, please tip the unlit candle toward the flame.
At the end of "Silent Night," please extinguish the candles and depart the sanctuary in silence.*

*CAROL 122 *Silent Night, Holy Night!*

***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.***

***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."***

***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.***

***Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light; with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King; Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.***

*On behalf of the friends, members, and staff of Old First Church:
"God bless you and Merry Christmas!" May the Christmas season fill
you with the hope, peace, joy, and love of our God in Jesus Christ!*

*Our celebration of the birth of Jesus and his presence among us as our Christ
has just begun! We invite you to continue to join in worshipping the
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace,
Emmanuel ... **God with us** ... on Sunday, December 31st at 10:00 am.*