



WORSHIP AT ELEVEN
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 9, 2018

The Second Sunday of Advent

WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!

If you are visiting today and looking for a church home, welcome! *For more than 166 years our Covenant has been: We covenant with the Lord Jesus Christ and one another, and bind ourselves in the presence of God to live together in all God's ways as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit and holy scripture. The church acknowledges that all members have the right of individual interpretation of the principles of the Christian faith and respects them in their honest convictions. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord, the church recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion.*

Please silence all electronic devices.

Assistive listening devices and large-print bulletins with hymns of the day are available at the Sanctuary doors. Persons wearing a white rose or blue carnation will be happy to assist you.

Cards requesting prayer are in the Welcome Notebooks and should be placed in the offering plate.

(*) Indicates the congregation should stand as they are able.

*Enter to Worship – Depart to Serve. Please use this time for quiet preparation for worship.
 'We have waited in silence on your loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of your temple.'
 (Psalm 48:8)*

PRELUDE The Holly and the Ivy arr. Matthew Prins

ENTER TO WORSHIP Greg Kellison

Leader: The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: And also with you.

** Then all stand.*

L: A voice cries out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord!"

P: Make God's paths straight.

L: Every valley will be filled, and every mountain will be leveled.

P: The crooked will be made straight.

L: The rough and rocky ways will be smoothed.

P: All will see the salvation of God.

L: See the light from on high. The dawn is breaking.

P: The Lord is coming! The Lord is coming!

—(from Luke 1, 3)

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN 3 Comfort, comfort you my people *Psalm 42*

* INVOCATION The Rev. Emily Krause Corzine

L: God be with you.

P. And also with you.

L: Let us pray.

P: Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

* CONFESSION OF SIN The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

L: It is time to wake from sleep. Salvation is near! Let us make confession to God.

P: Faithful God, we confess that in thought, word, and deed we have turned away from you. We have not eagerly expected your coming. We have been slow to serve you and our neighbor. Restore us, God of might. Let your face shine upon us. And we shall be saved. Amen.

Silence may be observed for reflection and prayer.

* KYRIE ELEISON Healey Willan

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
 on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

* ASSURANCE OF PARDON Rev. Ahrens

L: God hears the confession of our hearts and lips. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven all our sins, and by the Holy Spirit we are empowered for new life.

P: We believe the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.

* WELCOME Rev. Corzine

Please find the attendance pad in the Welcome Notebook at the end of each pew, sign it and pass it on to your neighbor.

The congregation may be seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME Mark S. Williams

ADVENT HYMN O come, O come, Emmanuel (*2nd stanza*) *Veni Emmanuel*

O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest all things might - i - ly; to
 us the path of know - ledge show, and teach us in her ways to go. *Re -*
joice! Re - joice! Em - ma - nu - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

The Rev. Mary Kay Beall, John Carter, and Melva Fisher

HYMN O come, O come, Emmanuel (*2nd stanza*) *Veni Emmanuel*

THE REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Today, we welcome Dave Hillyard and Brittany Stricklen-Hillyard into membership.

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT (*unison*)

The church is a community of faith called to witness and to serve. We covenant with the Lord Jesus Christ and one another, and bind ourselves in the presence of God to live together in all God's ways as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit and holy scripture. The church acknowledges that all members have the right of individual interpretation of the principles of the Christian faith and respects them in their honest convictions. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord, the church recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion.

WELCOME (*unison*)

We welcome you with joy to the life and ministry of The First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ of Columbus, Ohio. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love, and be faithful witnesses to the ways of Christ, our Lord and Savior.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE Malachi 3:1-4 (O.T., p. 889) Mr. Kellison

L: The Word of God for the people of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM Thou shalt know Him Mark Sirett

Thou shalt know Him when he comes
 not by any din of drums,
 Nor his manners nor his airs,
 nor by anything he wears.
 Thou shalt know him when he comes,
 not by his crown or by his gown,
 But his coming known shall be
 by the holy harmony which his coming makes in thee.
 Thou shalt know him when he comes. Amen.
 —Anonymous

THE EPISTLE Philippians 1:3-11 (N.T., p. 196) Mr. Kellison

L: The Word of God for the people of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

* GOSPEL HYMN 13 Prepare the way, O Zion *Beredan vor Herrag*

During the hymn, children in Kindergarten through Second Grade are invited to Worship Connections in the Children's Library on the second floor of the Education Wing. They will return after the sermon. A fully staffed childcare ministry is provided during each Sunday Morning Worship Service and Education Hour for infants through age four. This ministry is located in the Nursery and Toddler Rooms on the first floor of the Education Wing.

THE GOSPEL Luke 3:1-6 (N.T., p. 60) Rev. Ahrens

L: The Word of God for the people of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

SERMON "Prepared for Grace" Rev. Ahrens

Part II of the Advent/Christmas Sermon Series, "Grace"

A time of reflection follows.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Corzine

OUR LORD'S PRAYER

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

THE OFFERTORY

Want to give online? Please see the Depart to Serve insert for more information and a QR link.

MISSION INVITATION

Cash and designated checks go to the **Bethlehem on Broad Street program (BOBS)**. BOBS started more than 30 years ago in response to a single request for dinner on Christmas Day. BOBS provides Christmas for many each year. For information about volunteering visit the website: bethlehemonbroadstreet.org. Thank you for your generosity.

ANTHEM

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Kevin Jones

Comfort, comfort ye my people,
speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
comfort those who sit in darkness,
mourning 'neath their sorrow's load;
speak ye to Jerusalem
of the peace that waits for them;
tell her that her sins I cover,
and her warfare now is over.

Hark, the voice of one that crieth
in the desert far and near,
calling us to new repentance,
since the kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way!
Let the valleys rise to meet him,
and the hills bow down to greet him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked,
make the rougher places plain:
let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits his holy reign,
For the glory of the Lord
now o'er earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token
that his word is never broken.
—Johann Olearius, trans. Catherine Winkworth

* PRESENTATION HYMN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow

sung to *Tallis' Canon*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

COMMUNITY NOTICES – DEPART TO SERVE

Mark S. Williams

L: Let us depart with a heart to serve.

P: Thanks be to God.

* CLOSING HYMN 14

Savior of the nations, come

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

* BENEDICTION

Rev. Ahrens

POSTLUDE

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 661

J.S. Bach

Please be seated for the Postlude

Thank you for attending worship this morning. We hope that you have found peace and grace here and invite you to return often. If you would like more information or have any questions about First Church, please ask anyone wearing a nametag. We'd be delighted to assist you. Before joining us for Fellowship Hour in the Parish Hall immediately after worship, please come to the Chancel Steps to welcome and greet those taken into membership today.

CRUCIFER: Samantha Myers

ACOLYTES: Ethan Murray and Maggie Myers

MUSIC: The First Church Ringers; The First Church Choir, Kevin Jones, organist & director

THE FLOWERS THIS MORNING are given by Lynn Wallich to the glory of God and to the families and friends who have lost loved ones during this year.

GREETING AT THE EXITS TODAY:

Broad Street – Rev. Ahrens

Ninth Street – Mr. Williams

Education Wing – Rev. Corzine

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

First Church is a faith community:

- Called together by God, the Creator and Sustainer of life, to worship, pray and serve;
- Led by Jesus Christ, our Teacher and Savior, to learn the faith and welcome all God's children;
- Empowered by the Holy Spirit to witness to God's love and justice between ourselves, and throughout the world.

Open and Affirming Statement

We, the members of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio, believe the following represents our commitment and desire to reach out and welcome all those in need of and searching for God's love: We believe that we are all created in God's image, female and male, and we are called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us. We believe we are many members, but one body in Christ, and called to unite all people in God's love. We welcome and affirm all people. We invite those who are seeking God's presence in their lives to join us on our common journey. Our faith community seeks to unite persons of all ages, races, nationalities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, mental and physical abilities, socioeconomic levels and political and theological backgrounds. Together in our diversity, and being empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit, we will "do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8)

(adopted September 8, 2002 by the congregation)



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