



CHRISTMAS DAY AT TEN
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 25, 2022

Christmas Day at 10 a.m.

WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH!

*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

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”
“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”

J. S. Bach
J. Pachelbel

WELCOME

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

ENTER TO WORSHIP

Rev. Ahrens

Leader: Our Sovereign and Savior now draws near.

People: O come, let us adore Him!

** Then all stand*

L: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

P: Those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined.

L: To us a child is born. To us a son is given.

P: And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Everlasting God, Prince of Peace.

* OPENING CAROL

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Mendelssohn

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 th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing “Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th’incarnate Deity.
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing “Glory to the newborn King!”

* INVOCATION

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson

L: God be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Let us pray.

P: O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

* CAROL

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

Carol

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, goodwill to all, from heaven’s all-gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

* PASSING THE CHRISTMAS PEACE

Rev. Ahrens

L: The peace of Christ be with you all.

P: And also with you.

L: Let us greet one another with the sign of Christ's peace.

* CAROL

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Go, Tell It

Go, tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere;

Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

Go, tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere;

Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

The Congregation may be seated.

LIGHTING THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

Barry, Ramona, and Sarah Moenter

CAROL

Away in a Manger

Mueller

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me forever, and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 52:7-10

Rev. Samuelson

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices; together they shout for joy, for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth; shout together for joy, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

CAROL

Angels We Have Heard on High

Gloria

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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 in the guest room.

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When 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." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem

St. Louis

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.

THE THIRD READING

John 1:1-14

Rev. Samuelson

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And 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.

CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Adeste Fideles

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;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord.

CHRISTMAS PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Samuelson

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

THE OFFERTORY

To give online, please scan the QR code link:



MISSION INVITATION

Rev. Ahrens

Designated gifts go to support **Bethlehem on Broad Street (BOBS)**. BOBS started nearly 40 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.

* OFFERTORY HYMN 53

What Child is This

Greensleeves

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?

2 Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading. [Refrain]

Refrain:
This, this is Christ the King
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing
Haste, haste to bring him laud
The babe, the son of Mary

3 So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him. [Refrain]

* BENEDICTION

Rev. Ahrens

L: Holy God, you came to earth to show us how to live. Bless us in this holy season and brighten our hearts with the light of Christ.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: Holy God, you sent your angels to proclaim your birth, fill us with joy and make us heralds of the Gospel.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: Holy God, in the Word made flesh you joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, grant us your peace.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: Jesus is born! God is with us! Let us go forth rejoicing in the love of God and the peace of Christ.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth receive her King:
let every heart prepare him room, and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns: let us our songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

BENEDICTION

Rev. Ahrens

POSTLUDE

“A Merry Christmas”

A. Warrell

It is our custom to remain seated quietly for the postlude.

The Congregation, Council, and Staff wish you a Merry Christmas!

PARTICIPANTS IN THE SERVICE

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens and The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *officiants*
Barry Moenter, *Interim Organist*
Barry, Ramona, and Sarah Moenter, *Christ Candle lighters*

† The flowers this morning are given to the glory of God and in memory of Chris “CP” Parsons by John Parsons and Karin Sandell.

Welcome Statement

You are welcomed, affirmed, and loved here; our faith informs us that you are a child of a loving God. Your characteristics and gifts will enrich our congregation. In this community, you will be celebrated, embraced, and honored, no matter how you identify or how your identity may evolve. Wherever you are on your faith journey, we invite you to join us in our diverse yet united experience.

Open and Affirming Statement

We, the members of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Columbus, Ohio, welcome and affirm all. We believe we are all created in God's image and called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us. We believe we are many members, but one body in Christ, called to unite all people in God's love. We are a community seeking God's presence and love in our lives. We seek to unite persons of all ages, races, nationalities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, sexes, gender identities and expressions, family structures, mental, intellectual and physical conditions, economic circumstances, political, theological and faith 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
Revisions adopted January 27, 2019 by the congregation

LEADERSHIP

Senior Minister, Timothy C. Ahrens, D.Min., M.Div.
Interim Associate Minister, Joanna Samuelson
Interim Organist, Barry Moenter
Director of Christian Education, Mark S. Williams, M.Ed.
Commissioned Minister for Social Justice, Tom Brownfield
Commissioned Minister for Spiritual Formation and Direction, Jacquelyn Dean
Nursery Staff, Miranda Brooks, Shelly Gies, Courtney Palmer
Organist-Choirmaster Emeritus, G. Dene Barnard, S.M.M.

DIACONATE

Senior Deacon, Martha Wilson
Senior Deacon-elect, Lynn Wallich
Scott Graham, Greg Halbe, Tom Kiesel, Antoinette Koolemans-Beynen, Nan Kreimer,
Gail Lowe, James Lowe, Allison Lowery Palmer, Dayna McCrary, Hank Wilson, Marty Worth

CHURCH STAFF

Business Administrator, Annette McCormick
Administrative Manager, Amy Wagner
Office Assistant, Patricia Patterson
Communications Consultant, Melissa Kulwicky
Buildings and Grounds Superintendent, Mark Dahnke
Custodians, Jenkins Smith, Alexis Wayne
Wedding Coordinators, Amy Wagner, Shelly Gies, Margaret Cipriani



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