

Prelude

Welcome

Deacon Martha Spencer

Call to Worship

Led by Deacon Martha Spencer

In this weary world,
we sing of joy.
In this fragile world,
we lift each other up.
In this beautiful world,
we look for God.
In this tender world,

we hold onto hope.
This is the invitation of faith.
So in this time of worship,
may we sing, lift up, look for, and hold
onto our with-us God.
With hope in our hearts, amen!



Narrated by Margaret Lindsey Sanborn & Sophia Berry

The Word Read

Luke 2:1-5

In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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. This is the story of like for the people of God.

Narration

O Little Town of Bethlehem

SEATED

No. 134 in the Red Hymnal

- 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.
- 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.

Narration

- 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 th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem."

Refrain: Hark, the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

- 3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace,
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n 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 us second birth. [Refrain]

Narration**O Come, All Ye Faithful**

SEATED

- 1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Beth-le-hem;
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]

Narration**Silent Night**

SEATED

No. 138 in the Red Hymnal

- 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 dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth Jesus Lord, at Thy birth

Narration

We Three Kings, verses 1 & 4

SEATED

No. 143 in the Red Hymnal

1 We three kings of Orient are Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, Following yonder star.

*Refrain: O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright, Westward leading, still
proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.*

4 Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and sacrifice; Alleluia!, Alleluia!,
Sounds through the earth and skies. [Refrain]

Narration

Joy To The World, verses 1,2, & 4

SEATED

No. 130 in the Red Hymnal

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 world! 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.

4 He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the nations prove
The glories of his right-eous-ness,
And wonders of his love, And wonders of his love, And wonders, wonders of his love.

We Pass the Peace of Christ

We Light the Candle of Love

Laura Cleveland & Audri Wilcher

In a weary and worn world,
how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

**Let us begin with tenderness.
Let us begin with our hearts on our sleeve.
Let us begin from a place of vulnerability
and hope.
Let us begin with love.**

Yes, let us start with love.
Today we light the candles of hope, peace,
joy, and love.
**May the warmth of these lights be
our cornerstone.**
**May the truth in these lights help us
begin again.**
May it be so! Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God,
You paint pictures of what could be,
but we declare those visions impossible.
You speak of the lion lying down with the lamb,
but we spout skepticism and uncertainty.
You dream of a more just day,
but we poke holes in the plan, unable to fathom that horizon.
Forgive us for losing sight of hope.
Forgive us for assuming that what we see is all there is.
Open up our hearts to see the world as you see it.
**Open up our hearts to risk hope, to dream dreams,
and to not be afraid of either.**
With gratitude we pray, amen.

Words of Assurance

Friends,
No matter what you hold onto,
and no matter what you let slip through your hands,
God is holding onto you.
That good news will never change.
So hear and believe the good news of the Gospel:
Today is a new day. Today, we have reason to hope. Today, we are forgiven.
And the same will be true tomorrow.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.
Amen.

Celebration of Gratitude

"If the only prayer you said was thank you, that would be enough."-Meister Eckhart

As we name the abundant blessings of our lives (anniversaries, birthdays, clean-and-sober milestones, and many more!), we offer a gratitude gift in any amount, so that the blessings we have received from God may be multiplied and shared with all who long to experience God's extravagant welcome in this church and beyond.

We Sound the Bell

Sharing Our Sacred Story

Read by Judy Oberg & JoAnne Kane

Reader: Friends, hear what the Spirit is saying to the church today.

- Matthew 1:18-25
- Luke 1:46-55

Inclusive Bible Translation

Inclusive Bible Translation

Reader: This is the story of life for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God

Advent Reflection

The Rev. Emily C. Goodnow

•Hymn

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Insert

Prayers of the People

The 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 sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.

An Offering of Love and Promise

Deacon Martha Spencer

Offertory Music

Reader, Lilliana Niles

•Words of Thanksgiving

**Praise God, from whom blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that Love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.**

Prayer of Dedication

**Loving and Holy God, we ask that You would pour out Your blessing on this offering today.
Guide us in Your way and use these gifts to make our church and our world even more:**

We call out words like "joyful, kind, just" to bless our church and world

Benediction

Postlude

If you would like to maintain quiet meditative time during the postlude, please feel free to move to the front two pews by the piano.

Service Credits:

Liturgy for this service from A Sanctified Art, LLC



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jeanette's Closet Donation Requests

Jeanette's Closet is in need of some clothing! Do you have any of the following items you could donate?

Mittens and gloves

Children's:

Jackets

Infant clothing

Toddler clothing

Men's:

Jackets

Sweaters and sweatshirts

Long-sleeved shirts

Jerseys

Flannels

Missions Thanks You

Your missions committee thanks you for all your generosity over this past year. Our year end missions collection is this Sunday, Dec 22. Every Christmas season during Advent, we support the Christmas Fund which provides direct financial assistance to retired and active UCC ministers, church workers, and their families. You will find these special collection envelopes in your Sunday Bulletin. Blessings, gratitude, and peace to you all.

Save the Date

Grant Planning Event, Feb. 2nd

Have you ever prayed outside? Maybe you have and you didn't know it. Whether you've familiar with praying outside or want to learn more, you are invited to bring your hopes, dreams, prayers, and creativity to the fellowship hall after worship on February 2, where we'll imagine and start to design what will become our new outdoor prayer and worship area. We'll gather all our ideas and resources, and with prayerful collective discernment, we'll start planning for the construction of our new outdoor space while keeping our hearts and minds open to the Spirit's movement around and through each of us.

Advent & Christmas at First Church



December 24th

4 pm- Service of Light & Joy, crafted with children in mind!

7 pm- Contemplative Service of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 29th

Worship 10 am, First Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, January 5th

Worship 10 am, Epiphany Sunday & Communion



First Church Ministry Leaders

Ministers

All of Us

Senior Pastor

Rev. Emily C. Goodnow

Minister for

Intergenerational Innovation

Pastor Spencer Law

C.E. Coordinator

Sandy Wissmann

Music Director

Deborah Owen

Organist & Pianist

Oren Varess

Youth Choir Director

Cassie Cooper

Moderator

Megan Sawyer

Treasurer - Asst. Treasurer

Peter Clark, Gail McBride

Trustee of the Week

Carly Hall

Deacon of the Week

Martha Spencer

Greeters-Hospitality

Price Hutchins, Eileen Perry,
Karen McNutt, & Pete Oberg

Office Manager

Kylie Morel

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

This Sunday, December 22

- Worship, 10 am,
Christmas Pageant
- Snack & Chat, 11 am
- Council Meeting, 11:30 am
- Confirmation Class Lock
In

Tuesday, December 24

- Christmas Eve
- Service of Light & Joy,
crafted with children in
mind, 4 pm
- Service of Contemplative
Lessons & Carols, 7 pm

Wednesday, December 25

- Merry Christmas
- Church Office Closed

Next Sunday, December 29

- Worship, 10 am,
- Snack & Chat, 11 am

Church office is open 9 am - 12 pm, Mon-Fri

33 S. High St., Bridgton ME 04009 | 647-3936 bridgtonucc.org |
office@bridgtonucc.org

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Canticle of the Turning

22

1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you
 3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -

God of my heart is work great things in stone will be left on mem ber who holds us great, me, stone. fast: and my spir it - sings of the and your mer cy will last from the Let the king be ware for your God's mer cy must de -

won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You
 depths of the past to ev - ery end of the age to be. Your
 jus - tice tears from the ty - rant from his throne. The
 liv - erus con quer or's crush ing grasp. This

fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 hun - gry poor shall our weep no more, for the
 sav - ing word that fore - bears heard is the

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

weak ness you did not spurn,
those who would for you yearn,
food they can nev er earn;
prom ise which holds us bound,

so from east to west shall my
you will show your might, put the
there are ta bles spread; ev ery
till the spear and rod can be

name be blest. Could the world be a bout to turn?
strong to flight, the world is a bout to turn.
mouth be fed, the world is a bout to turn.
crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

Refrain

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn. Wipe a-

way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.