



The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme
2 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut
(860) 434-8686
Website: www.fccol.org

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Steven R. Jungkeit, Senior Minister
Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager, Senior Associate Minister
Carleen R. Gerber, Associate Minister
Simon D. Holt, Director of Music

December 24, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM

Prelude

Introit: *Bring a Torch*

arr. M. & S. Eithun

Handbell Quartet: Lisa Feltes, Cindy Hautaniemi, Gary and Pat Jungkeit
Rachael Jungkeit, piano

*Processional Hymn: #130 “O Christ, How Shall I Meet You”

*Call to Worship:

We gather to prepare for the eruption of the holy into the world.

As it has been written,

By the tender mercy of our God,

The dawn from on high will break upon us.

The dawn shall bring light to those who sit in darkness,

Guiding our feet into the way of peace.

Let us ready ourselves,

For the Prince of Peace, Mary's child, draws near.

Let us worship God!

*Prayer of Invocation and The Lord's Prayer

Welcome and Announcements

Advent Wreath Lighting: The Candle of Love

Dennis Fitzpatrick &
Maureen Plumleigh

Refrain:

The dark is not an end. It is a door. It is the way a new beginning comes.

*Hymn: #129 “Of Eternal Love Begotten”

Scripture Reading: Luke 2: 7

*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.*

A Christmas Reading: The Birth, by Frederick Buechner (The Innkeeper)

Offertory Invitation

Offertory Anthem: *Mary's Magnificat*

Andrew Carter

Lisa Feltes, *soprano soloist*

*Softly a light is stealing, sweetly a maiden sings, ever wakeful, ever wistful,
watching faithfully, thankfully, tenderly her King of kings.*

*My soul doth magnify, doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced,
rejoiced in God my Savior,
Mary her song to Jesus, softly, serenely sings: 'I will love you, I will serve you,
may my lullaby glorify, magnify my King of kings'*

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

*Offertory Prayer

Scripture: Matthew 2: 1-2

*In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from
the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king
of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him
homage.*

A Christmas Reading: The Birth, by Frederick Buechner (The Wise Man)

*Hymn: #151 "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Pastoral Prayer

Pastoral Prayer Response: *Spirit of the Living God*

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Spirit of the Living God". It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall a - fresh on me; Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall a - fresh on me. Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spir - it of the liv - ing God, fall a - fresh on me." The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Scripture: Luke 2: 8-18

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, and on earth peace and good will toward all people."

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.

A Christmas Reading: The Birth, by Frederick Buechner (The Shepherd)

*Hymn: #136 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

Benediction

Benediction Response

Postlude

**Congregation Standing*

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*We thank you for worshipping with us. Following the life and teachings of Jesus, we are a church that strives to be a place of grace, welcoming all regardless of theological expression, age, race, gender, sexual identity, national origin or financial means. In our Church Constitution we recognize that "each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the word of God according to the dictates of his or her own conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit." The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme, established in 1665, cherishes this proud Pilgrim tradition. We are honored by your presence among us, and we invite you to help us become what we endeavor to be.*

# Christmas Eve Services

5:00 PM - The Living Manger

Service for families with young children

8:00 PM and 10:00 PM - Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols

*The image on the cover of the bulletin is an icon from the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition,  
date and artist unknown*

*The white poinsettia is given by Sue & Breck Lardner, in memory of their parents  
Mr & Mrs Richard Lardner; Mr & Mrs Ray Hibbert.*

*The host for the Fellowship Hour this morning is Wendy Knight.*

The Nursery is open today with Miss Miriame.

**Meetinghouse Christmas Tree:** The Meetinghouse Christmas Tree is in place. Once again we are collecting gifts to place under the tree to help the Homeless Hospitality Center in New London. Donations of hats and gloves and coffee would be most helpful. There seem to be plenty of socks already in hand!

**West Africa Trip:** On December 28th, 11 members and friends of our church will begin a journey to West Africa, visiting Ghana, Togo and Benin. We will learn about the origins of the slave trade in western Africa, and explore the faith traditions (the indigenous practice of Vodun) that helped sustain the enslaved peoples as they made their painful journey into the unknown. This is a faith practice that is still vibrant today, and about which we hope to learn more. We will return on January 12th.

Our travelers are:

Kevin Booker, Jr.

Jolene Brant

Lee Carpenter

Dana Dixon

Carleen Gerber

Lecia Harbison

Drew Johnson

Steve Jungkeit

Miriame Kazadi

Cathy Mathis

Susan Switzer

Please keep all of them in your prayers, as they stretch their minds, their hearts, and their imaginations, considering the many ways of exercising faith in our world.

**Senior Center Luncheons:** The Lymes' Senior Center will be holding their luncheons in the Church's Fellowship Hall on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays each week for the foreseeable future while their facility on Town Woods Road undergoes a major renovation. Any questions about attending the luncheons should be directed to the Senior Center's executive Director, Stephanie Gould, 860-514-5425.

**New Year's Eve Service** is on December 31st at 10:00 am. Join us as we celebrate the New Year!

**Epiphany Party:** There is an Epiphany Party during Fellowship Hour on Sunday, January 7th. Cultures all over the world celebrate Three Kings Day and Epiphany. Bring a treat to share and a picture of someone or something that inspires you on the cusp of this new year!

**God's Neighborhood:** The nursery will remain open every Sunday. The Sunday School is on winter break and will plan to return January 14th with the start of the new session of our curriculum.

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

On Sunday, January 28, at 11:15 am, the church will hold its annual meeting, during which, among other things, we will elect officers and board members, and approve the church budget for the coming year.

The "2023 Annual Report" available later in the month contains the agenda for the meeting and other informative materials. All Board and Committee chairs, please submit your annual reports by the deadline of January 10.

The purpose of the annual meeting is to:

- receive the reports of the ministers, boards and committees, and church officers for the year 2024;
- receive and approve the report of the nominating committee;
- elect officers and board members for the coming year;
- approve the church budget for the year 2024; and
- conduct such other old or new business as shall properly come before the meeting.

**Interested in Confirmation?** Confirmation classes for 1st, 2nd or 3rd year high school students will begin on Sunday, January 28th from 4-6 pm. Classes will meet January-May and include field trips, films and a service project. Confirmation is offered every other year. For more information contact Laura at 860-304-9096 or [lfitz.nager@gmail.com](mailto:lfitz.nager@gmail.com).

**Chili Cookoff:** Calling all chefs for the Ground Hog Day Chili Cookoff tentatively scheduled for Friday, February 2nd at 5:30-7:00 pm

**Save the Date:** Walking in their Footsteps: A Civil Rights Learning Trip for Teens during April vacation from April 6th—11th. This is a 5-day journey. We'll fly round trip to Atlanta, Georgia and visit sights there and drive to Birmingham, Alabama among other places. For more information or to reserve a spot, email Jolene Brant at [jmbrant2023@gmail.com](mailto:jmbrant2023@gmail.com).

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### **Calendar of Events and Meetings**

**Christmas Eve Service** *Sunday, December 24th at 5:00 pm.*

**Christmas Eve Service** *Sunday, December 24th at 8:00 pm.*

**Christmas Eve Service** *Sunday, December 24th at 10:00 pm.*

**Office Closed** *Monday, December 25th.*

**Senior Center Luncheon** *Tuesday, December 26th at 12:00 pm* in Fellowship Hall.

**Senior Center Luncheon** *Wednesday, December 27th at 12:00 pm* in Fellowship Hall.

**Senior Center Luncheon** *Thursday, December 28th at 12:00 pm* in Fellowship Hall.

**Departure of West Africa Trip** *Thursday, December 28th at 12:00 pm.*

**No Food Pantry** *Saturday, December 30st at 12:00 pm* in Fellowship Hall.

**Office Closed** *Monday, January 1st.*

