



**“Baby Jesus in the Rubble of Gaza”**

**The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme**

**2 Ferry Road,  
Old Lyme, Connecticut  
(860) 434-8686  
Website: [www.fccol.org](http://www.fccol.org)**

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

Steven R. Jungkeit, Senior Minister  
Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager, Senior Associate Minister  
Carleen R. Gerber, Associate Minister  
Simon Holt, Organist and Director

**December 8, 2024**

**The Second Sunday of Advent**

**10:00 AM**

Prelude

Introit: “**Veiled in Darkness**”

by Glenn L. Rudolph (born 1951)

\*Processional Hymn: #114 “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” (use lyrics as below)

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel Refresh us at your life-giving well.  
All people long to feel your grace, Pour out your Spirit on every place.

***Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel, shall come to thee wherever you may dwell.***

2. O come to us, our Everlasting Home, Your people lost and broken, roam,  
And seek a place of welcome and peace, From war and violence, may they know  
release.

***Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel, shall come to thee wherever you may dwell.***

3. O come Beloved, hear your peoples’ plea The wounded soul, the homeless refugee.  
May ‘Welcome’ be our own heart’s call, ‘Till there be room and justice for us all.

***Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel, shall come to thee wherever you may dwell.***

(Words by Juanita L. Austin – Nov. 29 2017)

\*Call to Worship:

O day of peace that dimly shines  
through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,  
**guide us to justice, truth, and love,  
delivered from our selfish schemes.**  
May swords of hate fall from our hands,  
and hearts from envy find release,  
**till by God's grace our warring world  
shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.**  
**Let us worship God!**

\*Prayer of Invocation and The Lord's Prayer

Welcome and Announcements

Advent Wreath Lighting: The Candle of Peace

Jolene, Noah and Anderson Brant

Hymn: #113 “Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old”

*(During the hymn children and youth will leave for Sunday School.)*

A Report from the Land of Jesus’ Birth:

Dr. Mazin Qumsiyeh

Offering Invitation

Offertory Anthem: **“Basque Carol”**

arranged by Malcolm Archer (born 1952)

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.

\*Offering Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

Pastoral Prayer Response: **“Spirit of the Living God”**

The image shows a musical score for the Pastoral Prayer Response, "Spirit of the Living God". It is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). 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 piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody.

Scripture: Jeremiah 33: 14-16, Luke 3: 1-6, Malachi 3: 1-4

Sermon: **“Our Justice”**

Dr. Mark Braverman

Closing Hymn: #519 **“O Day of Peace That Dimly Shines”**

Benediction

Benediction Response

Postlude

*\*Congregation Standing*

## Scripture Readings

### **Jeremiah 33: 14-16**

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The Lord is our righteousness.”

### **Luke 3: 1-6**

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth,  
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

### **Malachi 3: 1-4**

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner’s fire and like washers’ soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years.

## Choir Anthems Today

### **Introit: “Veiled in Darkness”**

by Glenn L. Rudolph (born 1951)

Veiled in darkness Judah lay, waiting for the promised day, while across the shadowy night streamed a flood of glorious light, heavenly voices chanting then, 'Peace on earth, goodwill to men'. Still the earth in darkness lies, up from death's dark vale arise voices of a world in grief, prayers of men who seek relief; now our darkness pierce again, 'Peace on earth, goodwill to men'. Light of light, we humbly pray, shine upon Thy world today; break the gloom of our dark night, fill our souls with love and light, send thy blessed word again, 'Peace on earth, goodwill to men'.

## Offertory Anthem: “Basque Carol”

arranged by Malcolm Archer (born 1952)

The Angel Gabriel from heaven came, His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame; 'All hail!' said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary, most highly favoured lady'. Gloria!

For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be, all generations laud and honour thee, Thy son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold; most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Then gentle Mark meekly bowed her head, 'To me be as it pleaseth God', she said, 'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name': Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Of her, Immanuel, the Christ was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn, and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say 'Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!



This morning, we're pleased to welcome Dr. Mazin Qumsiyeh and Dr. Mark Braverman back to FCCOL. Both of them are long time friends of our congregation and of our Tree of Life ministry.

During the past year, **Dr. Mazin Qumsiyeh** has reported from the site of an ongoing catastrophe, chronicling the carnage of Gaza from his home in Bethlehem. His dispatches have been essential tools for comprehending the inhumanity of that scene, while reminding his many readers that another way, more just and humane, remains possible. Indeed, for the past twenty years, Mazin has been doing just that from the Palestine Natural History Museum, a space of incomparable beauty surrounded by the horror of a military occupation. From there, Mazin has welcomed countless Tree of Life and FCCOL travelers over the years, sharing his singular vision blending the natural sciences and the work of human rights. Mazin is the author of several books, most notably *Popular Resistance in Palestine: A History of Hope and Empowerment* (2011). In this season of Advent, as we grapple with a widening crisis throughout the Middle East, Mazin's perspective from Bethlehem is one that we desperately need to hear.

**Dr. Mark Braverman** too has been a long time friend of Tree of Life and of FCCOL. Mark comes to us from the Jewish tradition, and he is the executive director of Kairos, USA, an organization dedicated to helping Christians, Jews, and Muslims recover the moral and prophetic dimensions of their faith. He is the author of two books, *Fatal Embrace: Christians, Jews, and the Search for Peace in the Holy Land* (2010), and *A Wall in Jerusalem: Hope, Healing and the Struggle for Justice in Israel and Palestine* (2013). During the present crisis, Mark's voice has been crucial in disentangling Judaism and Christianity in particular from the logic and practices of nationalism, militarization, colonialism, and genocide. Mark's reverence for the Bible has led him to find surprising and beautiful insights providing hope in a time of devastation.

*The flowers today are given by Christine Darnell  
with gratitude for the Church and the congregation.*

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

*The nursery is open today with Miss Tiffany Goss.*

## **Events and Meeting**

**Musical Masterworks Concert** today at 3:00 pm. in the Meetinghouse.

**Brown Bag Lunchtime Bible Study with Mark Braverman** Monday, December 9th at 12:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

**Ladies Who Stitch** Monday, December 9th at 10:00 am in the Sheffield Auditorium.

**Board of Trustees Meeting** Tuesday, December 10th at 5:30 pm in the Library.

**Old Lyme Ringers Rehearsal** Wednesday, December 11th at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

**Senior Choir Rehearsal** Wednesday, December 11th at 5:30 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium.

**Parent and Families Care Group** Wednesday, Dec. 11th at 5:30 pm in the Hoag Parlor.

**Bible Study** Thursday, December 12th at 11:00 am in the Library.

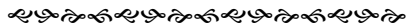
**Blood Drive** Thursday, December 12th at 1:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

**Family Christmas Potluck** Friday, December 13th at 6:00 pm in the Meetinghouse.

**Youth Group Pajama and Movie Party** Friday, December 13th at 6:00 pm in Sheffield.

**Food Pantry** Saturday, December 14th at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.

**Grief Group** Tuesday, December 17th at 5:00 pm in the Hoag Parlor.



### **Gifts for the Homeless Hospitality Center of New London**

Under our Meetinghouse Christmas tree we are gathering gifts for the folks at HHC. They would appreciate socks (any kind – for men or women ) and also coffee (ground, please). A check made out to HHC is always welcome. You could place it in an envelope under the tree. Presents need not be wrapped. Thank You!

### **Christmas Potluck Supper**

We'll gather from 6 to 8 next Friday night (Dec 13) in Fellowship Hall to celebrate Christmas together. Bring whatever dish you'd like to share. And if you have a crèche you're willing to bring, maybe from a different country or culture, we'd love for you to share it by placing it on the table where you eat. You could write a note to share about where your crèche is from, and you can take it home with you afterward. We'll sing carols together with the help of some of our choir members. And our annual tradition of an interactive "Twelve Days of Christmas" will once again be a highlight. Please come join in the fun.

**Pajama Party hosted by** God's Neighborhood and the Youth group on Friday, December 13th at 6:00 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium with a Christmas movie, pizza, hot cocoa and more!

**Bible Study Goodness, Greed and Grace: Journeys through Genesis and Exodus**

Bible Study will be Thursday, December 5th and 12th at 11:00 am. And resume again in January. In person and on Zoom. Our companion book this fall will be "*Reading Genesis*" by Marilynne Robinson. Email: [fccol@fccol](mailto:fccol@fccol) for the zoom link.

**A Quiet Christmas Service to Light up the Darkness:**

Tuesday, December 17th at 6:30 pm in the Meetinghouse.

The weeks leading up to Christmas can be a time of joy and hectic anticipation as well as pain and loss. For some, it can be a season of hardship and illness, disappointment or anxiety. Many of us, too, are acutely aware of the chaos of our world and looking for hope in the darkness.

Join us for a contemplative service of music, prayer and candle lighting as we gather to create sacred space for one another this Advent. We'll honor the blessings that come from attending to what is deepest and most in need of healing. Featuring the music of Elm City Winds, a woodwind quintet from New Haven. All are welcome!

**Christmas Pageant and Rehearsal (Rehearsal Sat. 21st, Pageant Sun. December 22nd)**

Over the next few weeks, God's Neighborhood will begin rehearsals during Sunday school for the Christmas Pageant scheduled for Sunday, December 22nd! On Saturday December 21st at 3:00 pm the players of God's Neighborhood will take the stage for a dress rehearsal. Arrayed in their garb and demonstrating all they've learned, they will present their artistic interpretation in preparation for the next morning's pageant production! Pizza served at rehearsal, too!

**Christmas Eve Service Memorial Music & Flowers**

If you would like to contribute to our special Christmas Eve music and flowers in memory of a loved one, please email or call the church office, [fccol@fccol.org](mailto:fccol@fccol.org) or 860-434-8686. Our deadline for preparing the memorial list is Friday, December 20th.

**Sunday Flowers**

We're scheduling members and friends who would like to provide pulpit flowers for Sundays. To sign up, call Jill Harned, 603-398-9004. Thank you!

**Housing Wanted**

We regularly hear from folks who are in need of an affordable rental. If you have any information that could be helpful, please let Anne in the office know. Even for a room to rent for a period of time would be greatly appreciated.

**Diaper Bank First Saturday of Every Month**

The diaper bank inventory is low. We are in need of sizes 4, 5, and 6. Any donation: package or case, is greatly appreciated. Consider adding diapers to your Christmas list. Thank you, on behalf of our babies and toddlers who receive these items. Diapers can be left at or near the food pantry box at the top of the basement stairs.

## **CHRISTMAS POTLUCK AT FCCOL**

Friday, December 13th from 6:00 - 8:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.  
At the same time all the young people are invited to a PJ's party with  
hot chocolate, pizza and a movie in the Sheffield Auditorium.

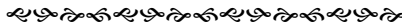
## **A QUIET CHRISTMAS SERVICE TO LIGHT UP THE DARKNESS**

Tuesday, December 17th at 6:30pm.

For those of us desiring a more contemplative  
and meditative Christmas, please join us for a quiet  
Advent service of music, prayer and candle lighting  
in the name of healing and peace for one another and the world.  
Featuring the wonderful woodwind quintet, Elm City Winds, from New Haven.

## **ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

Sunday, December 22nd at 10:00 AM



## **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES**

Tuesday, December 24th:

### ***THE LIVING MANGER***

5:00 pm Service for families with young children

### ***CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS***

8:00 PM and 10:00 PM Services



## **CHRISTMAS DAY**

Wednesday, December 25th  
the church will be open for prayer and meditation.

## **EPIPHANY SERVICE AND BRUNCH**

Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am  
in celebration of 3 Kings Day

**A Note from the Treasurer:** As we approach the end of the year, we hope that everyone will be able to satisfy their pledge commitments for 2024. Almost a year ago we reluctantly had to present a deficit budget to the congregation since our projected income was not forecast to cover expected expenses. As always, and especially this year, additional contributions are welcome and needed. Early in December we will be mailing 2024 contributions statements to ensure our records match yours. Please call Julie or me in the church office (860-434-8686) with any questions or concerns.

Thanks to all who faithfully support our church!

Bob McCracken, Treasurer