

First Church of Christ in Mansfield (Congregational) United Church of Christ

549 Storrs Rd. P.O. Box 36 Mansfield Center, CT 06250 860.423.9008 + www.myfcc.info
All the Members, Ministers
Rev. Joseph Blotz, Pastor + Erik Haeger, Organist

Olivia Russell, Worship Circle Coordinator

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT + DECEMBER 19, 2021

Welcome to Our Guests!

We're delighted you have joined us for worship; the members are the ministers of this church... if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask us!

Waiting for the Light

O Christ, you are like a candle burning

You are the flame that guides our way.

We await the dawning of your presence

We long to see you face to face.

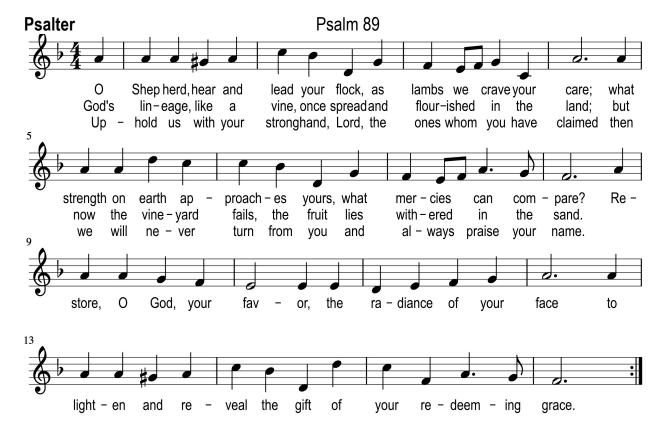


Opening Prayer

God of hope, you call us home from the exile of selfish oppression to the freedom of justice, the balm of healing, and the joy of sharing. Make us strong to join you in your holy work, as friends of strangers and victims, companions of those whom others shun, and as the happiness of those whose hearts are broken. We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Welcome and Greeting

Hymn People Look East CH142



Gospel Luke 1:39-55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Musical Response

Candle Burning

Pat Mayberry, adapted

Reflection



Prayers of the People and the Prayer of Jesus

For the Church: that our hearts may leap for joy as we recognize God-with-us in the people and events of our lives

For all who live in Bethlehem and the hill country of Judah; for Christians, Jews, and Muslims: that God's Spirit will open new pathways of peace and bring forth new hope for all who live in fear

For refugees who have fled violence or oppression: that God will protect them from harm, give them strength to face their challenges, and guide them to places of safety

For anyone experiencing fear, anxiety, or depression: that the birth of Christ may bring light into their lives and freedom to their hearts

For a spirit of joy: that we may be grateful for all the gifts and opportunities that God offers us and rejoice in the blessings which come to us each day

For all children who are at risk, who have run away, who are in institutional settings, or who have been trafficked: that God will guide them to someone whom they can trust and bring them to safety

For all who are traveling during this season: that they may arrive safely and have renewing visits with family and friends

For all who were injured or lost homes or businesses in the recent tornadoes: that God will heal their wounds, keep them safe from further harm, and help them access the resources that they need

For the sick: that God will heal all who are suffering, give them hope, and renew the strength of all who are caring for them

For a spirit of joy: that we may be grateful for all the gifts and opportunities that God offers us and rejoice in the blessings which come to us each day

Please pray the Prayer of Jesus in whatever language is most comfortable for you.

Our Father/Mother/Creator, 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/sins/trespasses, as we forgive our debtors/those who sin/trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

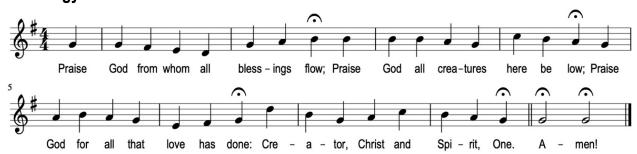
Musical Offering

Advent Carol of Hope

Don Besig & Nancy Price

Offerings may be placed in the passed plates, mailed to: First Church of Christ in Mansfield UCC. Box 36. Mansfield Center, CT 06250, or given online at www.myfcc.info

Doxology



Prayer of Dedication

Accept, O God, this money offered, these gifts given, the goodwill of our hearts, that disappointment may be turned to hope, and worry may be turned to anticipation, as we await with wonder the birth of Christ. Amen.



Benediction

The Week Ahead...

Monday, December 20 10am First Church leads Worship at St Joseph Living Center

Tuesday, December 21 6pm Adult Education on Zoom

7pm Prayers at the End of the Day on Facebook

Wednesday, December 22 11am-1pm Open Office Hours

1pm Book Group in Fellowship Hall

Thursday, December 23 7pm Music Ministry in Fellowship Hall

Friday, December 24 7pm Christmas Eve Worship

Sunday, December 26 10:15am Worship and Worship Circle