

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
3 Gray Road, North Yarmouth, Maine 04097
Organized in 1806



Christmas Eve
December 24, 2022 ~ 11:00 pm

Welcome to Worship at First Congregational Church of North Yarmouth.
May you be blessed through our worship and fellowship together.

We continue to follow the suggested guidelines for COVID-19, flu, and other respiratory viruses. Each person should be up to date on vaccines, including boosters. Wear masks and practice social distancing when necessary.

If you are not feeling well, please stay home. Sunday worship services may be viewed on YouTube – live streamed and recorded for later viewing. If you test positive for COVID-19, please isolate for a full 5 days, then take two antigen tests, 48 hours apart. If they are both negative, you may resume normal social interactions. Thank You.

Staff

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Paul A. Day
Administrative Assistant: Lyn Glassock
Organist: Peter Dickson*
Organist: Jesse Myers-Wakeman
Choir Director: David Myers-Wakeman
Sexton: Mark R.H. Heath
Treasurer: Liz McGlinn, CPA, CGMA

Church Phone: 829-3644
Church e-mail: nyarmouthccucc@gmail.com

Pastor Day's phone: 207 712-9896
Pastor Day's email: revpaulday@gmail.com

Church Website: <http://nyccucc.com>
Maine Conference Website: www.maineucc.org
YouTube: youtube.com/c/nyccucc

Note: this service will be recorded and streamed on YouTube.

If you are not receiving church emails and would like to, please send an email to nyarmouthccucc@gmail.com asking to be added to the list. Like the NYCC FB page and you will be notified of what is happening there, too!
Offering can also be made online through Tithely at <https://tithe.ly/give?c=1301940> or text "Give" to 833-751-0314.

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A Service of Lessons and Carols

When the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. **Titus 3:4-7**

Prelude – Music of the Season

Peter Dickson

Welcome

Call to Worship

Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13

One: O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

All: **Sing to the LORD, bless God's name; tell of salvation from day to day.**

One: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

All: **Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it.**

One: Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD; for God is coming—coming to judge the earth.

All: **The Lord will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with truth.**

***Carol – Joy to the World**

CH # 143

Words: Isaac Watts; Music: G. F. Handel; arr. Lowell Mason

**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.**

**Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their tongues employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding
joy; repeat the sounding joy; repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations
prove the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love;
and wonders of his love; and wonders, wonders of his love.**

***Invocation (in unison)**

O God, you have made this holy night to shine with the true Light. We thank you for your gift of Jesus Christ to the whole world. Grant us also your Holy Spirit to empower us to do our part to bring peace and goodwill to our families, our communities, and the world. In the blessed name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

One: We light the first candle as a sign of our hope in God and in the promise of God's kingdom. That we may patiently wait and prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord —

All: **Jesus Christ, Light of the world, shine in our lives and shine among us now.**

One: We light the second candle as a sign of God's promised peace. That we may always work and pray for God's *shalom*—justice, mercy, and peace for all —

All: **Jesus Christ, Light of the world, shine in our lives and shine among us now.**

One: We light the third candle as in anticipation of the joy God promises for all people. That we may joyfully bear witness to the work of God's Spirit among us —

All: **Jesus Christ, Light of the world, shine in our lives and shine among us now.**

One: We light the fourth candle as a sign of God's love for us in Christ, now and always. That we may trust that God is with us and live in the light of Christ —

All: **Jesus Christ, Light of the world, shine in our lives and shine among us now.**

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

One: We light the Christ candle as a sign of the Good News of great joy! For the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to put it out. That we may know the warmth and brightness of Jesus Christ, and show Christ's love to the world —

All: **Jesus Christ, Light of the world, shine in our lives and shine among us now. Alleluia! Amen.**

Carol – O Come, All Ye Faithful – vv. 1 & 2

CH # 148

Words & Music: John Francis Wade

**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!**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!**

The Birth Is Foretold

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Carol – Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

CH # 160

Words: German carol; tr. Theodore Baker; Music: arr. Praetorius

**Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming As men of old have sung.
It came, a flower bright, Amid the cold of winter
When half-spent was the night.**

**Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The Rose I have in mind:
With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright She bore to men a Savior
When half-spent was the night.**

The Child Is Born

Luke 2:1-7

Carol

David Meyers-Wakeman & Jesse Meyers-Wakeman

Gesù Bambino

Pietro A. Yon; arr. Stephen DeCesare.

Angels Announce the Birth

Luke 2:8-14

Carol – Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Ch # 150

Words: Charles Wesley; Music: Felix Mendelssohn; arr. Wm. Cummings

**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 hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

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

**Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel.**

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

Shepherds Visit the Mother and Child

Luke 2:15-20

Silent Reflection

A Christmas Prayer

My sisters and brothers in the peace of God, all the gifts we shall give and receive in these days are but small tokens of the gift that shines forth in God's word made flesh this night. From grateful hearts let us intercede for all who find themselves longing for this deepest, truest gift, saying:

Let the heavens rejoice; and let the earth be glad.

That the peace proclaimed by angels in the shepherds' field might be realized in every place of conflict and on every street of violence:

Let the heavens rejoice; and let the earth be glad.

That the child born to us might find in our hearts warm welcome by our openness to the needs of the homeless and the hungry and our willingness to nourish the growth of our souls:

Let the heavens rejoice; and let the earth be glad.

That in this season of goodwill we might become more responsive to the abandoned, the despairing, and the mourning.

Let the heavens rejoice; and let the earth be glad.

That the rejoicing of this day might be a bond leading us to true communion of life and worship through the fellowship of the Church.

Let the heavens rejoice; and let the earth be glad.

That the healing presence of the Great Physician might come to all who are living with disease or illness.

That the guidance and comfort of the Wonderful Counselor might redirect the path of those who are lost or seeking their way through difficulties in life.

That the angels may join in our chorus of gratitude and thanksgiving for our loved ones; and that the blessed hope we celebrate this night might be the fulfillment of all who have gone before us in faith.

Let the heavens rejoice; and let the earth be glad. Alleluia. Amen.

The Offering

The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of giving. God gave us the greatest gift in the Birth of Jesus. The Wise Men brought their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. We bring our regular gifts and tithes to support God's continuing work through the Church. Our special Christmas Offering remembers retired pastors of the United Church of Christ.

Please remain seated and join in singing the carol as the offering plates are passed.

Carol – What Child Is This

CH # 162

Words: William Dix; Music: GREENSLEEVES English Melody

**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?**

**This, this is Christ, the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels
sing: Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!**

**Why lies He in such mean estate, Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.
This, this is Christ, the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels
sing: Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!**

**So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh, Come, peasant, king to
own Him. The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts
enthroned Him.**

**This, this is Christ, the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels
sing: Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!**

Prayer of Dedication

Lord God, you have pierced the darkness of the night with the coming of the True Light; you have broken the silence with Word made flesh. May our words of praise and our very lives reflect the rays of your holy light, and may our petitions and acts of mercy be strong echoes of your Christmas word, so that all might come to the peace you promise in Jesus, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, this night and forever.

Amen.

Lighting our Candles

John 8:12; Matthew 5:14a, 16

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." And he said, "You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

Please form a circle around the sanctuary. As we pass the light, keep the lit candle upright. Tilt the unlit candle to the flame of the lit candle.

Carol – Silent Night, Holy Night – vv. 1, 2 & 3

CH # 145

Words: Joseph Mohr; tr. John Young; Music: Franz Gruber

**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.**

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight.

**Glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!**

Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

**Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face**

**with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

Benediction

Glory to God in the highest! And on earth, peace, goodwill to all.
Merry and Blessed Christmas!