

First Congregational Church & South Congregational Church

Soon to be
Granby Congregational Church, UCC.



Christmas Eve

December 24, 2022

Prelude *"Once in Royal David's City"*
Arr. Richard Proulx (1937-2010)

Norman McFarlane

Welcome Rev. Chris Mereschuk & Chad Henze

***Carol** *"Joy to the World"*
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 songs 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

Lighting the Christ Candle Becky Sielman, Charlie Kuchenbrod, Bob Giles, Peg Giles

Offering *This evening's Offering will benefit the Granby Fuel Bank.*

Invitation

Carol *"O Come, All Ye Faithful"*
Oh come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem;
come and behold Him, born the king of angels;
Oh come let us adore him, oh come let us adore him,
Oh 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;
Oh come let us adore him, oh come let us adore him,
Oh come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born for our salvation,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;
Oh come let us adore him, oh come let us adore him,
Oh come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

Prayer of Dedication God of every good and perfect gift, we thank you for your greatest
(Unison) gift, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. In this season when so many gifts
are given and received, we pray that you will receive the gifts we offer
now. Use them according to your purposes and plans, bringing your
good news of great joy to all people; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

First Lesson

Heather Dobbert

Matthew 1:18-23

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by God through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"
which means, "God is with us."

Carol

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

***O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns
in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.***

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

***O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine
advent here;***

***Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's deep shadows
put to flight.***

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

***O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things,
far and nigh; To us the path of knowledge show,***

And cause us in her ways to go.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

***O come Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease;***

Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

Luke 1:26-33, 39-55

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! God is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and Almighty God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

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 the Messiah 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 Almighty God."

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 Sarah and Abraham and to their descendants forever."

Carol *"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"*

*It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious King.
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.*

*And you, beneath life's crushing load whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way, with painful steps and slow,
Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!*

*For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years come round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling.
And the whole world send back the song which now the angels
sing.*

Third Lesson

Chad Henze

Luke 2:1-7

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. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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 for them in the inn.

Carol *"What Child is This, Who, Laid to Rest"*

*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, rich and poor, to own him;
The King of Kings salvation brings let loving hearts enthrone 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.*

Luke 2:8-20

In that 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 heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

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. But 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, as it had been told them.

Carol *"Angels We Have Heard on High"*

***Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.***

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

***Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song?***

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ, who comes in lowly birth.

Come adore on bended knee Jesus, joy of heav'n and earth.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Bidding Prayer

Rev. Chris Mereschuk & Bill Ross

Leader: God in your mercy...

People: Hear our prayer.

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, now and forever. Amen.

Carol *"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"*
Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming as saints of old have sung.
It came, a floweret 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 us a Savior,
When half spent was the night.

Fifth Lesson *"First Coming"* by Madeleine L'Engle

Anthem *"O Holy Night"* Roger Barrette, Soloist
Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)

Sharing the Light of Christ *Please be mindful of your surroundings while we join in this moving ritual. Tip your unlit candle toward the lit candle to receive the flame.*

***Candle Carol** *"Silent Night, Holy Night"*
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
Heavenly 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**

Rev. Chris Mereschuk

Worship Leadership:

Bridge Pastor: Rev. Chris Mereschuk

Choir Director/Organist: Norman McFarlane

Soloist: Roger Barrette

Liturgists: Chad Henze, Becky Sielman, Charlie Kuchenbrod, Bob Giles, Peg Giles, Heather Dobbert, The Scotto Family, Lewis Kuester, Bill Ross

Deacons: Jamie Scotto, Chad Henze, Bob Giles

The Worship Liturgy for Christmas Eve 2022 Lessons & Carols was written by Rev. Chris Mereschuk, with Scripture readings from:

The New Revised Standard Version Bible (NRSV)

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"First Coming" by Madeleine L'Engle, from "The Ordering of Love: The New & Collected Poems of Madeleine L'Engle," expansive language adaptations by Rev. Chris Mereschuk.

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This is an Open and Affirming Church

We affirm the dignity and worth of every person, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, race, mental or physical ability or sexual orientation. We offer sacraments and rites to all who enter our circle of faith. We celebrate the gifts that each person brings to Granby Congregational Church and invite them to share in all areas of its service, leadership, activities, responsibilities and privileges.

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