

First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

*"No matter who you are,
or where you are
on life's journey,
you are welcome here."*

Senior Minister
Rev. Tim Vander Haar

Sunday, December 15, 2024

1201 Jefferson Street
Muskegon, Michigan 49441
231-726-3254

www.fccmuskegon.org

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 15, 2024**

WELCOME AND NEWS OF THE COMMUNITY

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

PRELUDE

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, by J.S. Bach



LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

The Wikman Family
Dave, Nita, Melissa & Diane

GATHERING PRAYER

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

**Stir up your power, O God,
and come among us with great might.**

**As we welcome you, fill us with the joy of your
saving presence that we may be in word and in deed
the bearers of Good News which you call us to be.**

**This we ask through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you**

**and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.**

Amen.

Those who wish may stand

OPENING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

Come, O Long Expected Jesus

Come, O long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set all
Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope to all the
Born all peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, you
By your own e - ter - nal Spir - it, come to claim us

peo - ple free; From our fears and sins re - lease us;
earth im - part; Dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion,
came to reign! Born to rule on earth for - ev - er,
as your own; By your all - suf - fi - cient mer - it,

grant us your true lib - er - ty.
en - ter ev - ery long - ing heart.
come, be known to us a - gain.
let us share your cross and crown.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1744, alt., Tune: STUTTGART, Melody attrib. to Christian F. Witt (1660-1716) from *Psalmodia Sacra*, Gotha, 1715.

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:46-56

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." And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

ANTHEM

Ave Maria, by Alfred Fedak
Merijo Dulyea, *Soloist*

*Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum.
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.*

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

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MESSAGE

IS MARY'S SONG OURS AS WELL?

Those who wish may stand

HYMN OF RESPONSE

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart

Those who wish may stand

1 Re - joice, ye pure in heart, re - joice, give thanks and sing;
2 Bright youth and snow-crowned age, strong souls and spir - its meek,
3 With voice as full and strong as o - cean's surg - ing praise,
4 Yes, on through life's long path, still chant - ing as you go,

your fes - tal ban - ner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King.
raise high your free, ex - ult - ing song, God's won-drous prais-es speak.
send forth the hymns the saints have loved, the psalms of an - cient days.
from youth to age, by night and day, in glad-ness and in woe.

Refrain

Re - joice, re - joice, re - joice, give thanks and sing.
Re - joice, re - joice,

WORDS: Edward H. Plumptre (1821-1891), alt.
MUSIC: Arthur H. Messiter (1834-1916)

MARION
S.M.Ref.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

. . . ending with the Lord's Prayer:

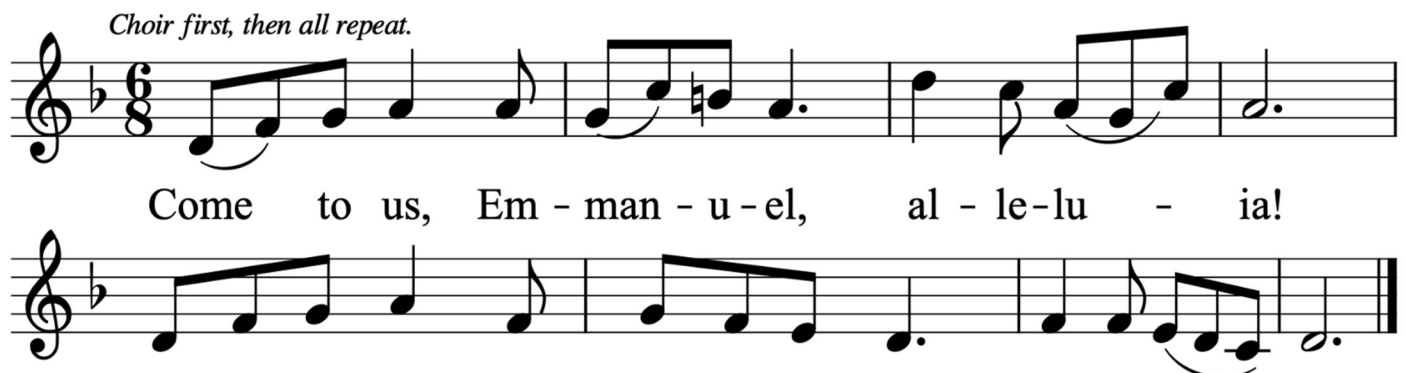
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we
forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us
from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

OFFERTORY INVITATION

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Chant for Advent, by Steven Van Wye

Choir first, then all repeat.



Come to us, Em - man - u - el, al - le - lu - ia!

Shine in our dark - ness, Hope of the world, al - le - lu - ia!

Text and Music by Stephen Van Wye, © 2015 by GIA Publications, Inc.

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father (Creator), Son (Christ), and Holy Ghost.
Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Those who wish may stand

CLOSING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

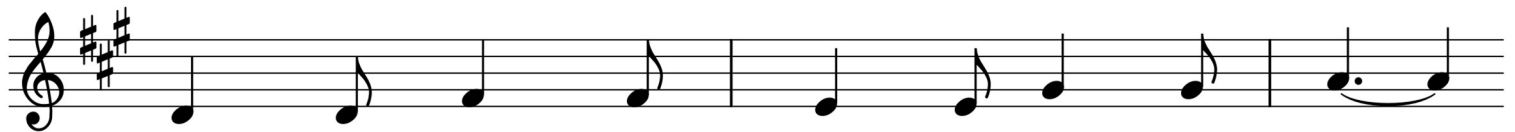
My Heart Sing Out with Joyful Praise



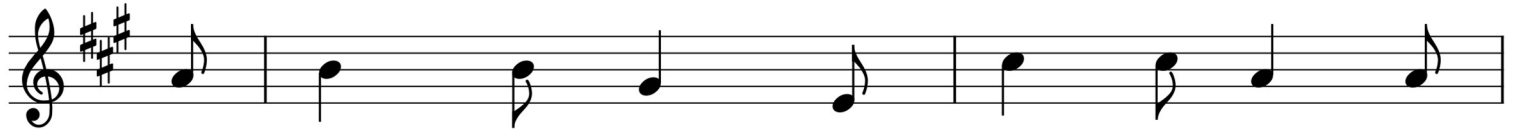
My heart sings out with joy - ful praise to
The arm of God is strong and just to
The prom - ise made in a - ges past at



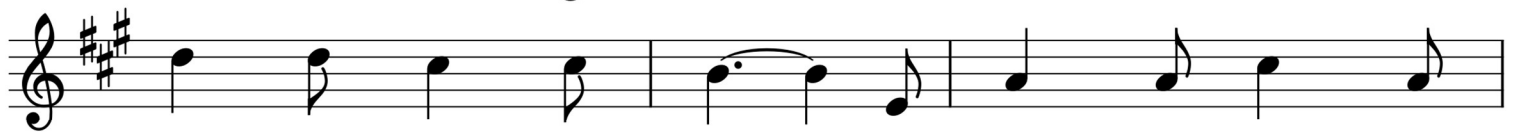
God who rais - es me, Who came to me when
scat - ter all the proud. The ty - rants tum - ble
last has come to be, for God has come in



I was low and changed my des - ti - ny.
from their thrones and van - ish like a cloud.
power to save, to set all peo - ple free.



The Ho - ly One, the Liv - ing God, is
The hun - gry all are sat - is - fied; the
Re - mem - bering those who wait to see sal -



al - ways full of grace To those who seek their
rich are sent a - way. The poor of earth who
va - tion's dawn - ing day, Our Sav - ior comes to



Mak - er's will in ev - ery time and place.
suf - fer long will wel - come God's new day.
all who weep to wipe their tears a - way.

BLESSING AND SENDING

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo, by J.S. Bach

Today's Service

Rev. Tim Vander Haar	Pastor
Dr. Michael Match	Music Director
John Mattson	Organist
The Motet Choir	Song Leaders
Tom "Cowboy" Hardy	Liturgist/Prayers of the People
Blake Filius	Audio and Video

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A White Carnation is placed in memory of FCC member Richard (Dick) McEwen. Richard passed away on Sunday, December 8th Our sympathy and prayers to his family.

Cookies for Sunday Fellowship - Those whose last names begin with the letters E through J please bring cookies or treats during the month of December.

Our **Interactive Christmas Pageant** is next Sunday! All Children are invited to play the animal roles. Meet at 10:00 am in the Parlor to get into a costume. Children will return to the Sanctuary with their parents. Members of the congregation will be prompted to participate in a modern re-telling of the Nativity.

Let's Paint Class will be held December 18 at 1pm. Please sign up at the Welcome Center and pick up your material list. Newcomers, we will have extra tiles from our Nov. class!

Please join us for **Muskegon Chamber Choir** Concert today at 3:00 pm here at FCC.

Winter Hours for the Church Office will be Monday, Tuesday, Thursday from 10 am to 2 pm beginning in January.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, December 15: Muskegon Chamber Choir Concert (3:00 PM today)

Sunday, December 22: Interactive Christmas Pageant (10:30 AM)

Children please meet in parlor at 10:00 am to get into costume

Tuesday, December 24: Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols (11:00 PM)

First Congregational Church, UCC is an Open and Affirming Community "We, the people of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of Muskegon, care for the welfare of our community and welcome everyone, no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey. We welcome into our community people of every age, race, nationality, mental and physical ability, economic and social status, faith background, marital standing, family structure, gender identity and expression, and sexual orientation. We also invite you to share in the life, leadership, worship, fellowship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our congregation as we seek to grow together in faith and love.

Adopted by congregational vote 10/17/21