

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 31, 2023

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

www.fccmuskegon.org

<p>FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 31, 2023</p>

WELCOME AND NEWS OF THE COMMUNITY

PRELUDE

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

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.

**O God, help us to live
as a family united in love and respect.
May the love you have shown in Jesus
be our model always of what
it means to love.**

**May we find peace and joy
in learning to see ourselves
and each other through your eyes.**

Amen.

Those who wish may stand

OPENING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

O Come, All Ye Faithful

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
3 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing,

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove;
Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry given;

come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
glo - ry to the God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

Refrain
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord.

WORDS: Attr. John F. Wade (1711-1786); tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880)
MUSIC: John F. Wade's *Cantus Diversi*, 1751

ADESTE FIDELES
Irregular

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too." There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

MESSAGE

HAVE YOU SEEN IT?

Those who wish may stand

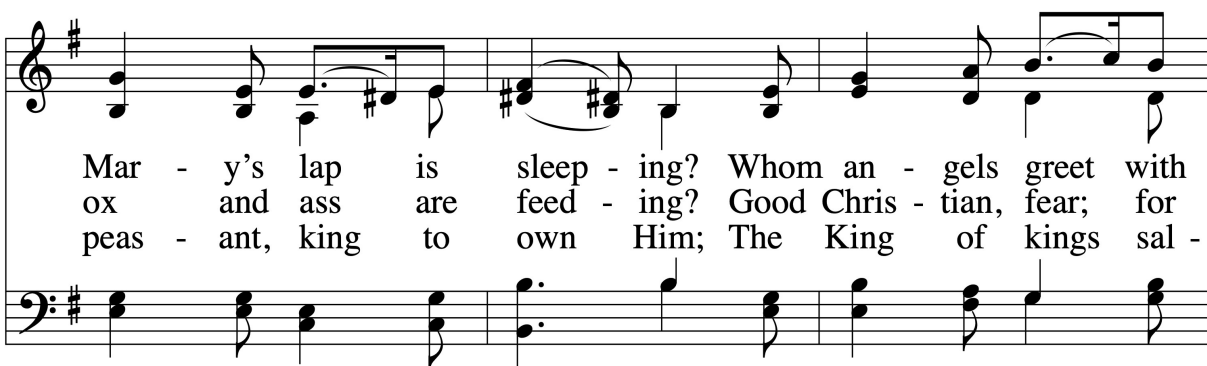
HYMN

Those who wish may stand

What Child Is This?



1. What Child is this, who, laid to rest, On
2. Why lies He in such low es - tate Where
3. So bring Him in - cense, gold and myrrh, Come



Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with
ox and ass are feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for
peas - ant, king to own Him; The King of kings sal -



an - thems sweet, While shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
sin - ners here The si - lent Word is plead - ing.
va - tion brings, Let lov - ing hearts en - throne Him.



This, this is Christ the King, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;



Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mar - y.

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

What Is This Lovely Fragrance, by Paul Manz

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

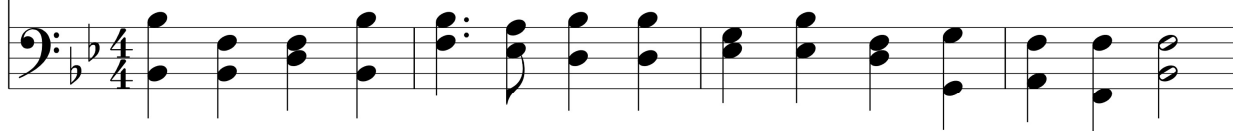
CLOSING HYMN

Those who wish may stand

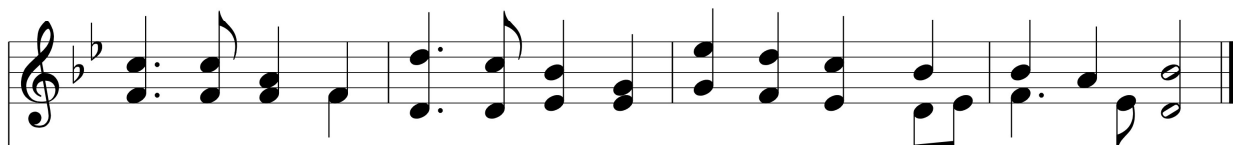
Angels, from the Realms of Glory



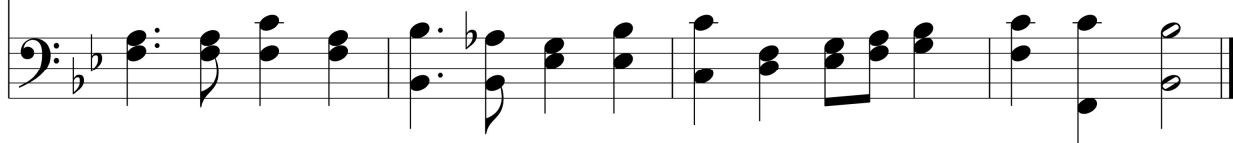
1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem-pla-tions, bright-er vi - sions beam a - far;
4 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend-ing, watch-ing long in hope and fear,



you who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro-claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light:
seek the great De - sire of na - tions, you have seen the na - tal star:
sud - den - ly the Lord, de-scend-ing, in his tem - ple shall ap - pear:



Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ, the new-born King.



WORDS: James Montgomery (1771-1854)

MUSIC: Henry T. Smart (1813-1879)

REGENT SQUARE

8.7.8.7.8.7

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo, by J.S. Bach

Today's Service

Rev. Tim Vander Haar

Senior Minister

John Mattson

Organist

Merijo Dulyea

Cantor

Joyce Bond & Rod Puseman

Liturgists/Prayers of the People

Blake Filius

Audio and Video

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Westshore GSA Youth Group will be meeting on Monday, Jan. 8th. from 7 to 8 pm.

Cookies for Sunday Fellowship - Those whose last names begin with the letters K through N please bring cookies or treats during the month of January. Home made; Gluten free and/or sugar free cookies are also appreciated.

We hope to begin the No Name monthly dinners in January and we're looking for individuals/couples willing to serve as hosts who will select the restaurant. In the past this event has been held on the second Thursday of the month. Interested individuals can sign up at the Welcome Center or contact the church office for more details.

The Women's Single Group will meet at the Valkyrie Restaurant at the 4 corners in North Muskegon on January 2, 2024, at 1 PM.

A signup sheet is in the welcome center or contact Judy Dewall.

*Is Amazon really about to close your account unless you reset your password? Or is it a **phishing attacker** trying to collect your security information? How can you tell? Please join Elisabeth Major after worship service on Sunday January 7th in Fellowship Hall for How to Spot Phishing Scam Emails - A Tech Talk. This will be the first in a series of 3 very brief presentations about specific technology subjects. The 10-minute presentation (plus a question/answer time) packs lots of useful information without a huge time commitment. Plus, there'll be snacks!*

*Let's Make A Mess! Painting Class will be January 17, 2024 – 1:00 pm
This class is an Acrylic Liquid Pour Art. Please sign up for the class at the Welcome Center if you can join us. Look for a material list of items to bring to class.*

Souper Bowl Sunday after Church on Feb. 11th. Please sign up at the Welcome Center if you are able to join us. If you can contribute a soup or chili, please let us know what kind. Price of admission is a canned good or goods. Sponsored by Congregational Life.

*Mark your Calendar: Communion Sunday, January 14 (second Sunday in Jan.)
St. Patrick's Day Talent Show and Trivia Event, March 17 (details later)*

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