



**First Christian Church**  
Disciples of Christ

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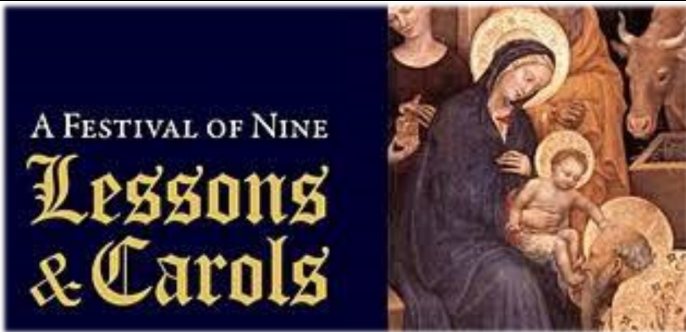
# Weekly Worship

love all • live spiritually • rejoice in hope • show hospitality

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**Week of December 18th, 2022**



During Sunday worship in the season of Advent we will be using material from our Advent devotional "Be Ready" page 34. It is our hope that as you light your own Advent Candles you will use the same material and feel connected with us as we do the same during Sunday worship.

## Bidding Prayer

*Feel free to follow along with our Bidding Prayer from today's live-streamed worship service.*

Public Worship will be held at 10:30 am Sunday morning.  
If you are not quite ready to join us for public worship, we invite you to follow along with this printed service.

## Community Prayer

God of light and hope, we give you thanks for the gift of music. As we come together in worship and prayer during this Advent season we give you thanks that the message of salvation history can be remembered through scripture and music. May we find hope, joy, peace, love and light as we await our coming.

**AMEN**

In preparation for the festival let us pray for the needs of God's whole world:

In a world fragmented by warring factions and rampant injustice, we pray for peace and goodwill over all the earth.

We pray for reconciling love and unity within the Church Christ formed to be his continuing body to minister to the world.

We pray for the poor, the helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick, and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved.

We pray for those who do not know the Lord Jesus, or who do not love him, or by sin have grieved his heart of love.

We pray for the great cloud of witnesses of all times and places whose hope is in the Word made flesh, and whose home is with you forever.

Amen.

# Reflection

## *Meditation for a Service of Lessons and Carols*

One of the gifts I value about this congregation is the intentional observance of Advent. Our culture rushes us headlong into Christmas with little thought to the important season of Advent. Advent is about anticipation and preparation for the birth of the Messiah. Advent is a time to be savored and we do that well here at FCC. During my first Advent her at FCC I jokingly said to one of the congregational leaders "I'm so glad we don't just throw up Christmas here." By that I meant I value the many ways in which we savor the preparations of this season. We begin by setting up the Christmas tree and the Advent Wreath for the First Sunday of Advent. As the season unfolds more and more decorations appear; the garlands grace the balcony, the wreaths festoon the entrances to the building and the Nativity appears in the sanctuary.

Another way in which we move gracefully through the season is with all the various expressions of music. We take our time singing the many beautiful hymns and songs of Advent. We relish "O Come, O Come Immanuel." We sing "People Look East" and "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn." Perhaps one of the most cherished musical events during Advent is "A Service of Lessons & carols." This year we will celebrate that beloved worship service on the 4th Sunday of Advent the 18th of December. I think the opening Statement of Purpose summarizes the service well.

Beloved in Christ, with delight we prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels, and go in heart and mind to Bethlehem to see Mary and Joseph with Jesus in a manger. Let us listen to the story of God's loving purpose which traces God's saving acts from humanity's first disobedience down to the glorious redemption brought to all by this Holy Child. And let us make these hallowed walls reverberate with the glad tidings of great joy which is to all the people.

As we enter this 4th week of Advent we also have the Nativity as recounted in the Gospel of Matthew. This version of the story lifts up Joseph's willingness to show compassion for Mary and trust in God. The angel of the Lord told Joseph that Mary "will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." As we gather for our Service of Lessons & Carols we will celebrate the entire span of salvation history that comes to its fullest expression in Jesus who "will

save his people from their sins." As we gather to hear God's Word and sing God's praises may we exhibit the same kind of trust in God as demonstrated by Mary and Joseph. We can embrace this period of anticipation and waiting because it comes to its fullness now as we come closer to the manger and the Christ child.

Our season of preparation and waiting will come to a close as we enter the following weekend. We will make our way to Bethlehem in heart and mind as we gather for worship on Christmas Eve to hear the story of the Nativity in our candlelight service. Then we mark the fullness of the incarnation on Christmas Day as we hear and reflect on the Prologue to the Gospel of John that tells us of the coming of the Word of God through the life, ministry, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The 1st Sunday after Christmas will provide an opportunity to sing those beloved Christmas carols that proclaim the Good News of God's incarnation through the Son. Music will once again fill the sanctuary with joy and gladness. I look forward to joining you in these celebrations of God's advent into the world as it comes to us in Scripture and song.

AMEN

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## Matthew 1:18-25

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 the Lord 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 fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

## Lessons & Carols

### *Isaiah 9:2, 6-7*

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.  
<sup>6</sup> For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
<sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onwards and for evermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

### *Jesus Christ the Apple Tree*

The tree of life my soul hath seen,  
Laden with fruit and always green:  
The trees of nature fruitless be  
Compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel:  
By faith I know, but ne'er can tell  
The glory which I now can see  
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought,  
And pleasure dearly I have bought:  
I missed of all; but now I see  
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil,  
Here I will sit and rest awhile:  
Under the shadow I will be,  
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,  
It keeps my dying faith alive;  
Which makes my soul in haste to be  
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

### *Luke 2:8-16*

<sup>8</sup> In that region there were shepherds living in  
the fields, keeping watch over their flock by  
night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before  
them, and the glory of the Lord shone around  
them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> 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: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of Da-  
vid a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This  
will be a sign for you: you will find a child  
wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a man-  
ger.' <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a  
multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and  
saying,

<sup>14</sup> 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he  
favors!'

<sup>15</sup> 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.' <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and  
found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in  
the manger.

### *In The Bleak Midwinter*

In the bleak mid-winter  
Frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron,  
Water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
Snow on snow,  
In the bleak mid-winter  
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him  
Nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away  
When He comes to reign:  
In the bleak mid-winter  
A stable-place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty,  
Jesus Christ.

# Prayers & Praises

## December 18th, 2022

Enough for Him, whom cherubim  
Worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk  
And a mangerful of hay;  
Enough for Him, whom angels  
Fall down before,  
The ox and ass and camel  
Which adore.

Angels and archangels  
May have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim  
Thronged the air,  
But only His mother!  
In her maiden bliss,  
Worshipped the Beloved  
With a kiss.

What can I give Him,  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb,  
If I were a wise man  
I would do my part,  
Yet what I can I give Him,  
Give my heart.

### *John 1:1-14*

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

<sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

#### In Our Church Family:

- Marvin Thurber
- William Deterding
- Vic Burgess
- Jessica Vocasek
- Donna Baker
- Polly Putney
- Lois Frogge
- Joan Dietrich
- Mildred Brockemeyer

#### Relatives:

- Friends and Family of *Vic Burgess*
- Laurie Aufdemberge, with *breast cancer*,  
*sister of Kristi Bowker*

#### Friends:

- Cedric Gibb, *healing prayers, friend of Cec Burkhart*
- Carson Mousel, *grandson of Bob and Eileen Kunz*,  
*from Mildred Brockemeyer*

#### Our Timothys:

- Bruce Frogge at *Cypress Creek CC in Spring, TX*
- Glenda Dietrich Moore, *Creative Arts Ministry in Lincoln, NE*

#### In the Nebraska Region:

- Children and Youth of our Congregations

#### Our Global Ministries Missionaries:

- Fiona Kendall serving in Italy

Find more information and stories about our  
Global Ministry partners at

[www.globalministries.org](http://www.globalministries.org)

