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## The Un-Pageant

## FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE

Congregational 1633-1636  
United Church of Christ  
Garden and Mason Streets  
Cambridge, Massachusetts



SILENCE

ADVENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Let us pray for healing, pardon, and peace.

**All: In this congregation of your people,  
we confess to you, O God,  
that sometimes we say and do things that hurt others.  
We are sorry, and we ask your forgiveness.  
We want to be like Jesus: kind, loving, and true,  
but we do not always know how.  
Help us find comfort when we are afraid,  
and courage when we need to speak out.  
Show us the way and help us learn and grow in love.  
Amen.**

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

REFLECTION

Karin Case

THE UNPAGEANT

NARRATION

READING

Isaiah 11:1-2 & 6-9

Taj Smith

NARRATION

ANTHEM

*The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*  
(Hymn 123)

arr. Edgar Pettman

NARRATION

READING

Luke 2:1-5

Kate Layzer

HYMN

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*  
**(Mary & Joseph approach the crèche during the anthem.)**

*Oh little town of Bethlehem, how still we see the lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!*

NARRATION

READING

Luke 2: 6-7

Karen McArthur

FAMILY CHOIR ANTHEM

*The Friendly Beasts*  
(Hymn 143)

arr. Marshall Barron

**(Baby is brought forward by the Star.)**

NARRATION

READING

Luke 2:8-14

Dan Smith

\*HYMN (with bells)

*Angels Have Heard on High*  
**(Angels approach the crèche during the hymn.)**

*Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.  
Glo - - - - ria in excelsis Deo! Glo - - - - ria in excelsis Deo!*

*Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be, which inspire your heavenly song.  
Glo - - - - ria in excelsis Deo! Glo - - - - ria in excelsis Deo!*

*Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;  
come adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.  
Glo - - - - ria in excelsis Deo! Glo - - - - ria in excelsis Deo!*

NARRATION

READING

Luke 2:15-20

\*HYMN

*The First Nowell*

**(Shepherds & sheep approach the crèche during the hymn.)**

*The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay;  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
Born is the King of Israel.*

*They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the east, beyond them far,  
And to the earth it gave great light,  
And so it continued both day and night.  
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
Born is the King of Israel.*

*And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
And to follow the star wherever it went.  
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, Born is the King of Israel.*

NARRATION

READING

Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11

\*HYMN

*We Three Kings of Orient Are*

**(Magi approach the crèche during the hymn.)**

*We three kings of Orient are,  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.  
O, star of wonder, star of night,  
Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding,  
Guide us to thy perfect light.*

*Born a king on Bethlehem's plain,  
Gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never over us all to reign.  
O, star of wonder, star of night,  
Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding,  
Guide us to thy perfect light.*

*Glorious now behold him arise,  
King and God and Sacrifice;  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Sounds through the earth and skies.  
O, star of wonder, star of night,  
Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding,  
Guide us to thy perfect light.*

NARRATION

\*OFFERTORY

*On This Day Earth Shall Ring*  
**(Villagers approach the crèche during the music)**

\*CONCLUDING PRAYER

\*HYMN

*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 earth, 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.*

\*BENEDICTION

\*GREETING OF PEACE

*The manger scene on today's bulletin cover was drawn by Leo Neurath, age six. He tells us that the gold steps leading to the barn were made by the donkey, and the manger turned a golden color for the Baby Jesus.*

## **WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE...**

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, we are thankful that you are with us today, and we hope that you will stay for a bit after worship for refreshments and conversation. First Church is an open and affirming, just peace congregation of the United Church of Christ. If you'd like to know more about us, please introduce yourself to one of the ministers after church and explore our website at [www.firstchurchcambridge.org](http://www.firstchurchcambridge.org).

**Large print bulletins and assistive listening devices are available.  
Please ask a greeter for assistance.**

Children of all ages are welcome in our worship. Picture books, children's Bibles, and activity packets can be found in the Children's Book Corner located by the door to the parish building (to the right of the chancel). Children may visit the Book Corner at any point during worship. Nursery care for infants and toddlers is located through that door and down the hallway (up four stairs to the door on the right). Fussy babies and their caregivers are invited to the Hastings Room, just across the hall from that same door, where the service is broadcast through speakers.

**PREACHING TODAY** is Karin Case, Minister. Assisting with worship are Sarah Higginbotham, Director of Creative Worship and Arts; Dan Smith, Senior Minister; Kate Layzer, Minister of Street Outreach; Karen McArthur, Minister of Stewardship and Finance; Katie Omberg and Taj Smith, Ministerial Interns. Peter Sykes, Director of Music, is playing the organ and directing the choir. The Advent candles will be lit by Marian Smith, the Kroft family, Harmon family. The Bell Choir is directed by Susie Longfield. The Family Choir is accompanied by Christian Blanc, guitar. Ella Simons is Mary; Jake Matias is Joseph; Oscar Togi Yates is Baby Jesus; and Si Nae Park is the Star of Bethlehem.

**YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED** Please pray for our nation as we confront an epidemic of fear and violence against Muslims and persons of color. Pray for the peace of Israel and Palestine in the face of continued violence. Please pray for relief for migrants and refugees from Syria and other regions. Please keep in your prayers people struggling with grief, illness, addiction or mental health concerns, job related transitions, marital or relationship troubles, or loneliness. Please keep in your prayers all who are undergoing treatment for cancer.

Portions of the **YOUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED** section of the bulletin are omitted in the online version to protect the privacy of those mentioned. To find out who we are praying for this week, please contact the church offices at [parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org](mailto:parishadmin@firstchurchcambridge.org) or by calling 617-547-2724.

## **TODAY'S HAPPENINGS**

**IMAGO DIVINA Today at 10:00 in the Hastings Room** Join us today for the last session of an Advent series we are calling "Imago Divina." Adapted from the spiritual practice of lectio divina, in which prayerful time is spent with a text, in imago divina we will be spending time with images of the birth narrative of Jesus. Packets are available to take home for your own individual practice. Newcomers welcome!

**FIRST CHURCH UN-PAGEANT Today** The Un-Pageant is a creative and fun tradition at First Church! On the fourth Sunday of Advent, during Morning Worship, we tell the Christmas story together as a congregation by donning costumes and accessories (think halos and wooly sheep's ears) that transform us into angels, shepherds, sheep, wise folks, and villagers of Bethlehem. We sing the well-loved carols and gather close around the Baby Jesus to experience once again that miraculous love and light and hope and peace. Because it's unrehearsed, expect a few surprises and expect joyful hearts!

**FIRST CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY POTLUCK Today**, following the Un-Pageant we will have a feast together in preparation for Jesus' birth! We will also have fun together singing Christmas carols. Our menu will feature sliced ham and roast turkey, and you can help provide the rest! You are invited to bring a side dish (last name beginning A-P) or a dessert (Q-Z). Please make enough to serve 8-10 people and bring to Margaret Jewett Hall prior to worship. Also please indicate the ingredients in your offering so those with food allergies can make good choices.

**NEWCOMERS TABLE Today at 12:30 p.m., in MJH** Interested in learning more about First Church — our history — our community? Interested in meeting other folks who are new to First Church? Join our Newcomers Table during the Potluck today.

**YOUTH GROUP AND CONFIRMATION CLASS Meet Today** Youth group (grades 8-12) will gather today at a special table at our Christmas Party after church. Don't forget our tradition of Yankee Swap. Please bring a gift worth no more than \$10 if you can and no worries if you forget (we'll have a few extras). Confirmation Class will meet after the party at 1:30 in the Well (a.k.a Room 22).

**NIGHT SONG: Solemn Mystical Compline Tonight at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary** If you missed the splendid sounds of Beneficia lucis last week, join us this Sunday for a burst of excitement on the final Sunday in Advent. We'll have a mixed vocal ensemble of 10 singers presenting 6- and 8-part motets, there will be sacred dance, and the inspiring improvisations of inventive pianist Ben Schwendener. You will hear Gregorian chant; Daryl Bichel's plainchant setting for compline in the lydian mode; Three Renaissance motets: Gaudete omnes by Hieronymus Praetorius; Magnificat by Giovanni Gabrieli; Rorate coeli by Jacobus Handl; Canticum vespertinum. Alison LaRosa Montez, cantor with Ben Schwendener, piano; Elodi Rose, Shari Repasz and Blue Richardson, dancers. We will offer Night Song on the Sunday after Christmas.

## **FUTURE HAPPENINGS**

**BETHEL TABERNACLE CHRISTMAS PARTY** Today at 3:00 p.m. carpools will leave from in front of First Church to take volunteers to spread Christmas cheer and enjoy a Christmas Party with children and parents at Bethel Tabernacle Pentecostal Church in South Dorchester. Volunteers are needed to play games, distribute presents, and be hall monitors. Able to volunteer? Contact Alice or Dave Kidder at (617) 276-6227 or flintkiddr@aol.com. This is a fun time for children and adults alike. Or donate a gift to be delivered to a child.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO STAFF AND GUESTS OF THE FIRST CHURCH SHELTER**, who lobbied and testified at the State House in July in support of a Homeless Bill of Rights for Massachusetts. That bill was passed by the House on Tuesday, and will be taken up by both houses in the coming session.

**ALTERNATIVE GIVING IDEA** The holiday season this year comes amidst great human suffering, at home and abroad. In the US, we have seen our young men killing each other, or being killed by the public servants we pay to protect them and us. In the Middle East and Europe, we are witnessing the largest refugee crisis since the end of the WWII. This time it is our Muslim brothers and sisters fleeing the war zones of the Middle East. The Missions and Social Justice Committee invites you to celebrate Jesus' birth by giving donations in honor of our friends and families to charities that have proven their effectiveness in supporting Syrian refugees, (<https://www.charitywatch.org/charitywatch-hot-topic/syrian-humanitarian-relief/4>). In so doing you can honor their love and the refuge they give you, by creating the possibility of a haven for those who are so much in danger. Alternatively, you might write a check to First Church in Cambridge, with the notation "Syrian Refugees." Kudos to Pauline, Hillary and Ann, who have raised funds already. Our gifts may be small, but the grace of our God, the God who stands with and for the scapegoats, will multiply them to God's glory. Thank you for considering this invitation.

### **FRIDAY CAFÉ CHRISTMAS**

Do you like to cook? Here are two opportunities to make Christmas (a Friday!) special for homeless neighbors this year.

**Make a dish**—We are collaborating with Community Cooks to serve up a full Christmas dinner. Sign up to contribute a dish or some cider at [mealtrain.com/mdg486](http://mealtrain.com/mdg486)

**Christmas treats**—Each year we put together goodie bags of home-made cookies and candy for our guests to take with them. Bring goodies to church any day before Christmas and put them in the kitchen freezer. Please make sure they're labeled Friday Café. We will be assembling the bags on Christmas Eve.

Questions: Ask Kate Layzer ([klayzer@gmail.com](mailto:klayzer@gmail.com)).

**BE SURE TO ADD A FEW THINGS** for the Rindge Towers Food Pantry collection to your weekly shopping list, things like peanut butter, cooking oil, canned veggies and fruits, and maybe even a little package of cookies for the kids. Collection is on the first Sunday of the month in a basket in the Narthex. An easy way to do good works! BUT be sure that none of your contributions are expired, opened, or breakable, 'cause if they are they have to be discarded. Thanks so much.

## The Week Ahead

### Sunday, December 20

- 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 9:45 a.m. Coffee/Gathering Time, MJH
- 9:50 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 10:20 a.m. Family Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Advent Study, Hastings Room
- 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, The Un-Pageant, Karin Case preaching
- 12:15 p.m. All-Church Christmas Party and Potluck, MJH
- 12:15 p.m. Newcomers and Youth Group Tables, MJH
- 1:30 p.m. Confirmation Class, Room 22 (The Well)
- 7:00 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary

### Wednesday, December 23

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Dan Smith's office

### Thursday, December 24

- 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Sanctuary

### Friday, December 25

- 11:00 p.m. Christmas Day Worship Service and Communion, Lindsay Chapel
- 1:00 p.m. Friday Café, Margaret Jewett Hall

### Sunday, December 27

- 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship, Multigenerational Service, Sacrament of Baptism, Dan Smith preaching
- 7:00 p.m. Night Song, Sanctuary

**EPIPHANY POTLUCK DINNER AND WORSHIP Wednesday, January 6** Save the date and join us in a candlelit sanctuary for this First Church traditional celebration of Epiphany. Details in the next issue of EVENT.

## The Staff of First Church in Cambridge

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**First Church in Cambridge, Congregational**  
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