



December 16, 2021

Blue Christmas

First Congregational United Church of Christ

945 G Street NW, Washington, DC

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

renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

REFLECTION: Olivia Hoynes

MUSICAL OFFERING: "In the Bleak Midwinter/The Star Carol" Holst/Burt,
arranged by Michael Hopkins

SCRIPTURE READING
John 1:1-5, 14 David Greer

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was in the beginning with God, all things were made through the Word, and without the Word was not anything made that was made. In the Word was life, and the life was the light of all. The light shines in the deepest night, and the night has not overcome it...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."

REFLECTION: Dwan Reece

HYMN: "What Child is This" (see page 7)

RITUAL OF PRAYER: Rev. Laura Johnson

Take the time to write a personal prayer containing the lament and hope of your heart. Imagine this is a prayer you might save to read again next year at this time. When you have finished your prayer, focus for a moment on the Advent candles as a sign of God's light.

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR: Rev. Laura Johnson

**Our God, 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.**

REFLECTION: Ellen Bushmiller

MUSICAL OFFERING: "Wayfaring Stranger" "Andrew Hamilton &
The Marsh Family Singers

BENEDICTION: Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

CLOSING VOLUNTARY: How Can I Keep From Singing Marcia Wells

Music reprinted with permission by OneLicense A-720443.

Connect with us!

Connect with us! If you are worshipping from afar but would like to connect with the First Church community, please [click here](#) to fill out a Visitor's Card and check out our newsletters on our website www.firstuccdc.org.

We are so grateful to be extending our reach beyond the DC region and welcome you warmly! With gratitude we thank Alyx Cheng and Allison Truhlar for serving as our Zoom moderators each week. Their work makes our worship possible! We also thank Tom Sowers and Graham Marsh, our sound designers in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings.

Participating in Worship

The First Church Choir
Michael Hopkins

Andrew Hamilton & The Marsh Family Singers

(All pre-recorded hymns were created under the direction of John Horman)



Memorial Service for Peg Lorenz: Saturday, December 18 at 1:30 PM

Join us in the sanctuary or by Zoom on Saturday, December 18 at 1:30 PM to mourn the loss and celebrate the life and friendship of Peg Lorenz. Rev. Amanda and Rev. Sam will lead the service, with John Horman serving as our musician. Polly and Judith will offer special music, and Barbara Gerlach will reflect on Peg's life, along with members of her family. We will also enjoy a slideshow treasure trove of photographs from Peg's life, put together lovingly by Rev. Sam. Byron Adams will arrange the flowers. A reception hosted by Care of Parish will

follow in the Community Room. [Click here](#) to view Peg's obituary, where you can also leave a message for her family. Please note that while masks will be required for this Memorial Service and we strongly encourage all who attend to be vaccinated (and boosted), there will be congregational singing in the second half of the service and we are anticipating up to 75 people joining us in the sanctuary. Please assess your own comfort and risk level to decide how you will participate, and feel free to be in touch with Rev. Amanda with any questions.



In-Person Christmas Cookie Exchange is Back—Dec. 19!

We welcome you to bring approximately 2 dozen cookies to Church on December 19 for our annual cookie exchange. In order to minimize the spread of germs, Care of Parish will take the cookies and return your plate/platter/tin/etc. with a variety of cookies after the church service/Christmas pageant. We will have labels prepared so that you can indicate if your cookies are nut free and if you would only like to receive cookies back that are nut free. No RSVP needed. Please

contact Kristy Goodfellow Mills with any questions (Kristy.a.goodfellow@gmail.com, 563.580.5558).



Christmas Eve Offering for Olaiya's Cradle

On Christmas Eve please donate generously to support young mothers and their babies in the Olaiya's Cradle program. Olaiya's Cradle is a supportive, independent living program for homeless young mothers ages 18-21 and their children, for up to 18 months. Women are self-referred, and receive individual counseling, comprehensive maternal and infant health care, life skills training,

education and career guidance, and child care support and parenting training to enable them to achieve self-sufficiency. Residents graduating from the program receive follow-up support and housing assistance to help them maintain stability. Olaiya's Cradle is a program run by Sasha Bruce Youthwork, our partner in carrying out the Youth Drop In Center here at First Church for youth who do not have secure housing.

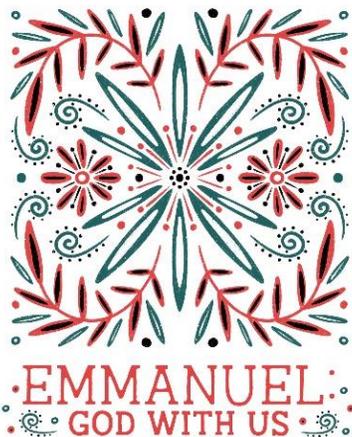


Family Worship on Christmas Eve: 5:30 PM

Join us at 5:30 PM on Christmas Eve by Zoom or in the sanctuary for our family-friendly Christmas Eve worship service. This simple service will feature scripture readings focused on the story of Jesus' birth, pre-recorded Christmas carols (dancing welcome), and it will end with lighting candles and singing Silent Night. We expect the service to last 45 minutes. Join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with the children of our congregation.

Candle-Light Christmas Service: 7:30 PM

Join us at 7:30 PM on Christmas Eve by Zoom or in the sanctuary for our traditional lessons and carols candle-light service. The service will include a brief meditation from Rev. Amanda, exquisite instrumentalists, and a choral anthem. It will end with the lighting of our candles as we sing Silent Night. In Bethlehem is born the one who is for all, the light of the world, the hope of the ages, as God's love comes to us once more.



Virtual Worship on Sunday, December 26

[Click here](#) to join us for worship on Sunday, December 26th by Zoom at 10:30 AM. Please note this service will be completely virtual, with no sanctuary presence on this date. Join us for a Christmas-tide service put together by the Central Atlantic Conference as our pastoral staff takes the Sunday off to be with their families. Our Moderator John Smeltzer will offer a personal welcome to begin the service. Join us!

Prayer List

Prayers of comfort for the family and friends of Peg Lorenz, following her death.

Prayers of comfort for the family of Cindy Dobbs following the death of her husband Will.

Prayers of strength for LaTayna Purnell as she provides care for her ailing parents.

Prayers of healing for Hugh Bushmiller.

Prayers of healing for Liz and Lance Warren, as Liz recovers from a fall and Lance recovers from surgery.

Prayers of healing for Diane Brenneman's daughter Sara as she recovers from surgery.

Prayers of mercy for the people of Afghanistan and Afghan families resettling in the U.S.

Prayers of comfort for the family of Joan King, following her death, and for this community who loved her.

Prayers for Monte Hillis and her husband Bert, as she faces the rapid onset of dementia.

Prayers of peace and liberation for Nicaragua, Cuba, and Haiti.

Prayers of healing for Dwan Reece as she recovers from surgery.

Prayers of comfort for Grace Bassler following Don's death.

Byron Adams' niece, Valerie, undergoing treatment for breast cancer.

Prayers of hope for our Racial Justice Audit yearlong process.

All those who mourn the loss of a beloved one.

Families struggling to eat and make ends meet.

People's UCC, our sibling congregation.

Emmanuel Okorie-Dunn and Ellen Bushmiller, who serve as nurses.

Rev. Laura Johnson and Rev. Diana Gomez de Molina, who serve as chaplains.

What Child Is This

Em G D Em Am B

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed-ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, pea-sant, king, to own him.

Em G D Em B Esus Em

Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead-ing.
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.

Bm G D Em Am B

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep-herds guard and an-gels sing;
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;

Bm G D Em B Esus Em

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar-y!
 hail, hail for Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar-y!
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar-y.

Words: William C. Dix (1837-1898), P.D.

Music (GREENSLEEVES 8.7.8.7.6.8.6.7): English ballad, 16th c., P.D.

Blue Christmas: Thursday, December 16:

- *masking required for all over the age of 2
- *please observe distancing
- *up to 25 (plus 10 worship leaders) in-person
- *hum, rather than sing, the hymn



Welcome to First Congregational UCC. We were founded in 1865 by abolitionists as the first racially integrated church in Washington, D.C. In 1867 our mission committee played a prominent role in the founding of Howard University. The church has been located at its present site at 10th and G Streets NW since 1868. In more recent years, the church affirmed its vision as an Open and Affirming (ONA) Church (1987), a Just Peace Church (1985), and a Multiracial/Multicultural Church (2003). Our new building, constructed according to Gold LEED standards, was dedicated in 2012.

First Church continues to follow its faith journey into the future, and to be a prophetic voice for the Spirit in the nation's capital. If you would like to know more about First Church or would like to make it your spiritual home and community, please contact churchoffice@FirstUCCDC.org or 202.628.4317.

Ministers – Friends & Members of the Church
Senior Minister – Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss
Associate Minister – Rev. Sam McFerran
Building Manager – Mr. Byron Adams
Administrative Assistant – Ms. Trista Dunlap
Sexton – Ms. Ines Marquez
Members in Discernment – Lynaya Morris, LaTayna Purnell



945 G Street NW, Washington DC 20001
Phone: 202.628.4317 • Fax: 202.347.4911

www.firstuccdc.org