



"Awaken to Wonder" by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

December 5, 2021

Advent 2

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.

READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES:

Susan Goodman

Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to the temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight--indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For the messenger is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver unless they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

READING FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT:

Rev. Jason Carson Wilson

Luke 1:39-45

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

INTRODUCTION TO THE PREACHER:

Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

SERMON

"Bath Time"

Rev. Freeman Palmer

ANTHEM:

"African Noel"

Andre Thomas

OFFERING

Rev. Sam McFerran

As we worship virtually, we invite you to give in new ways. Send your check to the office, [give online](https://www.firstuccdc.org) through our website at www.firstuccdc.org, which includes options to give through PayPal or Vanco. Consider signing up for auto-giving in this time of physical distancing.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

Rev. Sam McFerran

**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.**

CELEBRATING COMMUNION

For those joining us from home, please lift your elements of bread and cup when invited so that we can witness the power of celebrating communion as one. For those worshipping in the sanctuary, please gather in a circle when invited, eat the bread and drink the cup upon receiving them, and deposit your empty cup into the basket when it comes around.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

COMMUNION PRAYER

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE BREAD OF THE CUP

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

CLOSING HYMN

"May the God of Hope Go with Us"

(see page 12)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

CHORAL BENEDICTION:

"May the Peace of Christ"

John D. Horman

CLOSING VOLUNTARY:

Love Has Come

David Cherwien

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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.

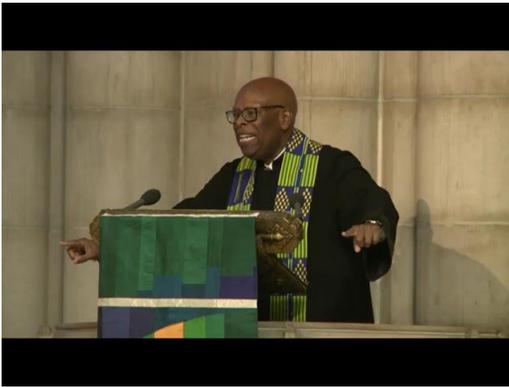
Participating in Worship

First Church Singers

Dr. Karen Bartman, Guest Musician

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

Guest Preacher December 5, 2021: Rev. Freeman Palmer



Rev. Freeman L. Palmer serves as Conference Minister for the Central Atlantic Conference United Church of Christ. Rev Palmer began this call in February 2019 after serving nine years as Associate Conference Minister, Congregational Development for the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ. Originally from Washington DC and a proud alumnus of Georgetown Day School, Rev. Palmer is a second career minister, attending Seminary after a fifteen year career as a broadcasting

executive with CBS Inc. Rev. Palmer's educational background includes a BA in Economics from Swarthmore College, an MBA from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Master's in Divinity with Honors from New York Theological Seminary. Rev. Palmer was ordained at New York City's Riverside Church in 2004 to his first call as an Associate Minister at Middle Collegiate Church in Manhattan. After living twenty years in Jersey City NJ, Rev. Palmer relocated with his spouse Donal, an 549ordained ELCA minister, to Baltimore MD, where in February of this year they welcomed their puppy Pooh. A prayer that Rev. Palmer offers daily is Psalm 143:10, "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. May your Good Spirit lead me on level ground (NIV).



First Church is very excited to bring Christmas cheer to DC children and youth through our Christmas Toy and Gift Drive. This will be the fifth year that we will collect funds, toys and gifts for Washington families. There are many exciting ways for you to support this toy drive. Please let Rev. Sam know you plan to support. He would love to keep the congregation updated and tally our results as we meet each goal.

We will be supporting three wonderful partners:

- 1) **Shaw Community Center** – this UCC ministry provides tutoring, mentoring and support to youth in the Shaw, DC neighborhood. Our goal is raise \$650 to enable the executive director to purchase the perfect gifts for each youth. We are already off to a great start. At the outdoor service on Sunday, November 21st, First Church and

People's UCC were able to raise \$101. To support this cause, you can either send a check or paypal to First Church with "SCM" in the note.

- 2) **A Wider Circle** – this national leader in helping reduce poverty provides over 10,000 gifts to children in DC public housing. You can learn more about their holiday program at their website. <https://awidercircle.org/holiday> . The easiest way to support this cause is to purchase gifts from their [Wish List](#). Our goal is to purchase 50 gifts toward this cause.
- 3) **Friends of First Church** – Last Christmas, several families experiencing poverty or homelessness reached out to First Church directly to provide gifts for their children. These families are hoping we can help them out again this year. Our goal is to provide each child with the gifts their families have identified. We would love for 2 families to support each child. Please let Rev. Sam know if you or your family would like to support one of these children.
 - a. A 4 year old boy: Learning toys and clothing (4T)
 - b. A 10 year old boy: Learning toys and clothing (10-12t)
 - c. A 9 year old girl: Clothes (pants/shirts in 10T), Shoes (Size 3 in Big Kid shoes), Toy
 - d. A 6 year old boy: Clothes (pants/shirts in 8T), Shoes (Size 2 in Big Kid shoes), Toy

Palestinian Oil Sale: An Opportunity to Support SAAC

As you ponder holiday gifts, consider our Palestinian Oil Ministry. In partnership with local congregations, we sell olive oil and other items produced in the West Bank and Gaza to support family farms, food security, and peace.



For Palestinian Framers: Through Anera, from 2020 earnings, \$5,000 provided emergency medical supplies in Gaza after Israeli attacks in April; \$2,500 provided an emergency room monitor and mobile mammography unit to serve women in the West Bank; \$316 to the Gaza Food Security Program + a family garden; 20 bottles for resale helped the Museum of the Palestinian People in DC.

For SAAC: We helped fund our work on housing, immigration and anti-racism.

Time is Short: Order by December 10th

OILs for sale:

- **Nabali Olive Oil** – from the Nablus region. Smooth, delicate, sweet and fruity; mild flavor perfect for salad dressings. **\$25 per half-liter bottle.**
- **Rumi Olive Oil** – from Surri olive trees. Tangy, hints of bitter, and a spicy finish for dipping or enhancing flavor in cooking. **\$25/half-liter bottle.**

- **Jenin Olive Oil** – from farms near Jenin, each batch has distinctive flavors for any salad or spread. **\$25/half-liter bottle; \$30/one-liter tin.**
- **Tomato or Olive Tapenade** – a spread for toast, dip, or condiment for pasta or meat. **\$7 per 130 gram jar.**
- **Za'atar** – beloved Palestinian spice mix of dried oregano, toasted sesame seeds, and sumac. **\$6 per 2.3 gram package.**

How to Pay:

1. **Place an order.** Email Susan at saudeksusan@gmail.com. State "olive oil" in the subject line. Provide the item(s) and number of each. We will confirm.
2. **Make payment.** Pay electronically on the [church website](#), using the "olive oil ministry" tab via "Vanco," or by noting "olive oil" when paying via PayPal. Or mail a check—memo line "olive oil"—to [945 G Street NW, Washington, DC 20001](#). *For credit card payments, please add \$1/item for processing.*
3. **Sit back and relax!** We'll drop off your order at church or deliver to your doorstep by December 15, 2020. We will contact you to confirm.



Christmas Pageant December 12thth, 10:30 AM

Please join us for the wonderful tradition of the Children's pageant! This year, the story of Jesus' birth will be how God is with each of us on our journey with God. It will be wonderful! Please note that we invite children and their families to worship in-person, and ask all others to join us by zoom.



Blue Christmas Service: December 16 at 7:00 PM

Join us for a Blue Christmas service on Thursday, December 16 at 7:00 PM. As we approach the longest night of the year on winter solstice, we await the birth of an inner light and dare to imagine that God will come to us again. The Blue Christmas service is traditionally a time to acknowledge the underside of "the most wonderful time of the year." This year, we are even more mindful of the stress, the amplified grief of loss, the sorrows of those living on life's edge, and the realities of a

world in which violence is a lived experience for too many. From the coronavirus pandemic to bleak isolation, a racial reckoning, a challenging election season, and lowered

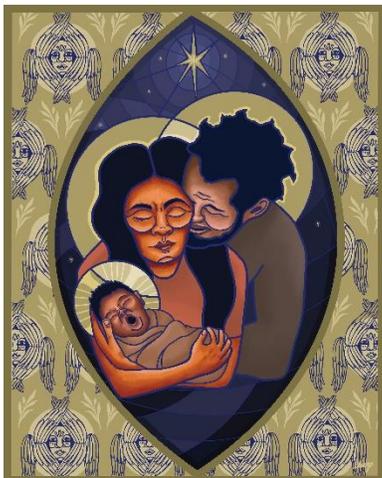
expectations for what is possible this holiday season, we will lean into the ancient lament of our tradition as well as God's comfort. This service will meet us in our grief and struggle and lead us out toward the light with healing music, words that nurture, and the warmth of community. Join us and tend to your soul.



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.



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.

Prayer List

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

Prayers of healing for Hugh Bushmiller.

Prayer for the mother of Cynthia Hobbs as Cynthia cares for her.

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 strength for the people of Haiti as they mourn those lost in the earthquake and begin to rebuild.

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's daughter, Maya, with long haul COVID.

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

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

1 Come, thou long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,

The first system of music consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains the vocal melody with lyrics. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The music concludes with a double bar line.

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

The second system of music continues the melody and accompaniment. It concludes with a double bar line.

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

The third system of music continues the melody and accompaniment. It concludes with a double bar line.

dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

The fourth system of music concludes the piece. It features a final cadence in the treble staff and a double bar line.

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When God Is a Child

Unison

1. Hope is a star that shines in the night,
 2. Peace is a ribbon that cir - cles the earth,
 3. Joy is a song that wel - comes the dawn,
 4. Love is a flame that burns in our heart.

lead - ing us on till the morn - ing is bright.
 giv - ing a prom - ise of safe - ty and worth.
 tell - ing the world that the Sav - ior is born.
 Je - sus has come and will nev - er de - part.

Refrain

When God is a child there's joy in our song. The last shall be

first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be a - fraid.

WORDS: Brain Wren, 1985
 MUSIC: Joan Collier Fogg, 1987

MOON BEAMS
 lrr. w. refrain

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May the God of Hope Go with Us

May the God of hope go with us ev - ery day, —
 ¡Dios de la es - pe - ran - za, da - nos go - zo y paz! —

fill - ing all our lives with love and joy and peace. — May the God of
 Al mun - do en cri - sis, ha - bla tu ver - dad. — Dios de la jus -

jus - tice speed us on our way, — bring - ing light and hope to ev - ery
 ti - cia, mán - da - nos tu luz, — luz y es - pe - ran - za en la os -

Refrain

land and race. — Pray - ing, let us work for peace; —
 cu - ri - dad. — O - re - mos por la paz, —

sing - ing, share our joy with all; — work - ing for a
 can - te - mos de tu a - mor. — Lu - che - mos

world that's new, — faith - ful when we hear Christ's call. —
 por la paz, — fie - les a ti, Se - ñor. —



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**



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



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