

**Christmas Eve:
December 24, 2020
#BiggerBalcony**



first  **congregational**
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
timeless worship + modern faith

CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2020

5:00 pm

#BiggerBalcony

Please sign in to Worship Connect to let us know you're here!

<http://tiny.cc/worshipconnect>

PRELUDE

"Easy Fantasia on Two Christmas Songs"
Op.83, Franz Wohlfahrt

Rylan, Violin

WELCOME

Sharon

CAROL

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"
Traditional Carol

Skyler, Piano

CALL TO WORSHIP

by Laurie Walke

David & Sharon

One: This year, we kept waiting for things to return to normal.

We thought, "Surely by Christmas Eve" we'll be back in the sanctuary.

There's no way we'll be apart on this most Holy Night.

All: But here we are, in our homes instead of our church, in part loving that we can be in our house-shoes, but desperately missing sitting shoulder-to-shoulder in the pews, our voices singing our beloved Christmas hymns and tipping our candle towards the next person's to pass the light.

One: All of this is to say that it would have been easy to have opted out.

It would have been understandable to be a no-show. Everything too hard, too painful, too different, to be present on this night in such a different way.

All: But we come from a long tradition of showing up - the star, the angels, the shepherds, the magi, and more, who showed up even though the night wasn't what they thought it would be.

One: Friends, siblings, beloved of God, come close. Lean in.

Let this night be what it is, instead of what it is not.

Let us celebrate the birth of Jesus.

For indeed, we have everything we need – God with Us, Emmanuel.

CAROL

“Once in Royal David’s City” Oscar, Trumpet
by Kenneth Friedrich. Used with permission. Bryce, Trombone



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
2 Je - sus came to earth from heav - en, who is God and Head of all,



Where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for a bed:
Shel - tered in a rus - tic sta - ble, cra - dled in a com - mon stall;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
With the poor and meek and low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.

Cecil Frances Alexander, wife of the bishop of Ireland, wrote a series of children's hymns commenting on the Apostles' Creed. This hymn, elaborating on the words "... born of the Virgin Mary," tells the whole life of Christ.

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Tune: IRBY 8.7.8.7.7.7.
Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849
Harm. A. H. Mann, 1919

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

Craig, Sarah, Jude, Eliza, Wilder, Tate

CAROL

“Light a Candle for Peace” Miles
by Shelley Murley

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Rowan, The Ground Floor Manager

100% of tonight's Christmas offering will go to emergency cold weather supplies for young people at The Ground Floor, the Northwest Youth Services' daytime program space for young people experiencing homelessness. We hope they will be able to buy many coats, sleeping bags, tarps, and tents for some of the most vulnerable in our community

There are several options for giving: 1) Mail checks to First Congregational Church, 2401 Cornwall Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225. 2) Give at our website, <https://fccb.net/giving/>.

3) Use the GivePlus app. Download from your app store, set up an account, and give!

4) Give by text. Text a dollar amount to 208-516-2657, and set up your account. You're ready for easy giving by text! 5) Give by PayPal. Our easy link is [PayPal.Me/fccbucc](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?url=https://www.fccb.net/giving/).

OFFERTORY

"God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman"
Traditional Carol

Avery, Violin

CAROL

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

Christmas Choir

Descant by John Rutter; 1981 Hinshaw Music Inc. Used under OneLicense #A718199.



1 It came up-on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,
 3 And you, be-neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
 4 For lo, the days are hasten - ing on, by proph - et bards fore - told,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
 and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world;
 who toil a - long the climb - ing way, with pain - ful steps and slow,
 when with the ev - er - cir - cling years comes round the age of gold;



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, great news of joy we bring."
 A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hover - ing wing,
 Look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
 When peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
 and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
 O rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing!
 and all the world send back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Edmund Sears, a Unitarian minister who served a number of congregations in the Boston area, wrote this Christmas hymn emphasizing the social implications of the Gospel for his congregation at Wayland, Massachusetts.

Tune: CAROL C.M.D.
 Richard S. Willis, 1850

CAROL

“Silent Night”
Traditional carol

David & Nancy



1. Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright Round yon
2. Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Shep-herds quake at the sight; Glo - ries
3. Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light Ra - diant



1. Vir - gin Moth-er and child! Ho - ly In - fant so ten-der and mild,
2. stream__ from heav-en a - far; Heav'n-ly hosts__ sing "Al - le - lu - ia!
3. beams__ from thy ho - ly face, With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,



1. Sleep in heav-en-ly peace,__ Sleep__ in heav-en-ly peace.
2. Christ the Sav - ior is born,__ Christ__ the Sav - ior is born.
3. Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth,__ Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. by John F. Young, 1820-1885, Music: Franz X. Gruber, 1787-1863.

BENEDICTION

CAROL

"Joy to the World"
Traditional carol

ANTIOCH



1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth its
 2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the



prais - es bring; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Christ room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of God's righ - teous - ness



and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 and won - ders of God's love, and won - ders of God's



sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of God's love.

Stanza 1 may be sung, "Joy to the world! the Sovereign comes: . . ."

*Isaac Watts, an English Congregationalist, freely paraphrased
 Old Testament psalms to glorify Christ and here develops a
 hymn of advent and nativity from a psalm.*

Tune: ANTIOCH C.M.
 Lowell Mason, 1836

POSTLUDE

"Joy to the World"

Judy

by John Carter. Used under OneLicense #A718199.

Christmas blessings to you!

Open and Affirming (ONA): As an Open and Affirming congregation believing in a loving God, all people are welcome in this church without regard to gender, race, ethnicity, economic or social status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

We Try To Use Language which will help people feel included in our worship. Since not everyone is comfortable with the same language, we invite you to amend the words of the service as we sing and pray if they do not adequately express your faith. We invite you to assist us in creating new expressions of our common faith and life together.

Technical Support: If you need help streaming our worship services or connecting in other ways, please let us know.

VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS WITH PASTORAL STAFF

In the before time, our pastoral staff were available by appointment. In COVID-19 time, they are available for virtual meetings by appointment. Contact them by email or call the pastoral care line, 360-733-4255

Sharon: sharon@fccb.net

David: david@fccb.net

Sharry: sharry@fccb.net

You can also email our Office Manager
Cydne at office@fccb.net
and she'll pass your message on.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH United Church of Christ

An Open & Affirming Congregation

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24/7 Emergency Pastoral Care: 360-733-4255

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Facebook: facebook.com/fccbucc

Twitter: @BhamUCC

Office Hours: 9:00 am-5:00 pm

LEAD PASTOR: Sharon Benton

PASTOR FOR YOUTH, YOUNG ADULTS,

& MISSION: David Weasley

MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION:

Sharry Nyberg

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Lucy Bledig

NURSERY ATTENDANT: Lisa Vaughn

ORGANIST: Judy Widrig

HANDBELL CHOIR DIRECTOR: Allison Thomas

OFFICE MANAGER: Cydne Cochran

ACCOUNTANT: Renée Relin

CUSTODIAN/MAINTENANCE: Kurt Aagard

CARE ADMIN. SUPPORT: Laura Norton

FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE:

Alanna Steele

HEALTH MINISTER: Carol Nicolay

MODERATOR: Caryl Dunavan

VICE MODERATOR: Bill Henkel

PAST MODERATOR: Scout Mitchell

CLERK: Dorothy Shimer

TREASURER: Laurie Hoyt

HISTORIAN: Stacy Miller

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