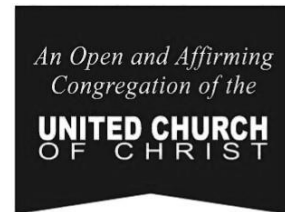




38 South Winooski Avenue
Burlington, Vermont



firstchurchburlington.org

December 18, 2022
Fourth Sunday of Advent

*The prevalence of candles and shiny ornaments this time of year remind us that the sacred is illuminated in each and every day. "Incarnation" is a word that means that God's presence came to dwell among all people, and we believe this happened in a special way in the birth of Jesus. All creation has always been imbued with the Creator's brilliance.
This season, we will remember the call to shine with this holy light.*

PRELUDE

Silent Night
O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Asa Jorgenson, xylophone
Aven Jorgenson, violin

*Online worshipers (live stream) are invited to greet the congregation by writing your name in the YouTube chat.
Please also submit any prayer requests via the YouTube chat.
As today's worship is adapted to allow for the Christmas Pageant - prayer requests will be shared with Rev. Johnk following worship.*

WORDS OF WELCOME

The Rev. Elissa Johnk

***OPENING HYMN**

Gently Joseph, Joseph Dear

#105 NCH

PRAYER CONCERNS

This week's "Celebrations & Prayer's" list is available for you on the front page of our website - <https://firstchurchburlington.org/> - and among the links under the title of the YouTube live stream throughout this morning's live stream of the worship service.

***LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE (LOVE)**

The Baker Niles Family

One: Living God, Christ Mystery, Spirit of Love,
we give you thanks for this gathering of your beloveds.

**All: As we take in the love you offer,
may we be a reflection of your light,
expanding the sacred presence you have promised
into the sacred presence we can offer.**

One: All of this we pray, using the words Jesus taught us:

**All: Our Father, 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.**

PASSING OF THE LOVE

PAGEANT SCENE 1:

The People's Hope, Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

ANTHEM

Prepare The Way Pat Mayberry
Mary-Elizabeth MacDonald, piano and the Children's Choir

PAGEANT SCENE 2: God's Good News, Luke 1:26-38
A difficult Journey, Luke 2 1-7

* **HYMN** *O Little Town of Bethlehem* #133 Vv 1-3 NCH

PAGEANT SCENE 3: Messengers in the Sky, Luke 2:8-14
The Shepherds See for Themselves, Luke 2:15-16

* **HYMN** *Angels We Have Heard on High* #125 Vv 1,3-4 NCH

PAGEANT SCENE 4: Sharing the Good News, Luke 2:17-20

ANTHEM *Wexford Carol* arr. Floyd and YoYo Ma
Emy Stapleton, *violin*, Ariel Toohey, *cello*
Asa Jorgenson, *bohran*, and Tess Barker, *soloist*

PAGEANT SCENE 5: Good News for All People

COVENANT SERVICE OF MEMBERSHIP AND RITE OF BAPTISM

RITE OF BAPTISM

QUESTION OF THE CANDIDATE

QUESTION OF THE CONGREGATION: Do you who witness and celebrate this sacrament promise your love, support and care to Jack as he lives and grows in Christ?

(UNISON) We, as the church, promise our love, support and care

ACT AND PRAYERS OF BAPTISM AND BLESSING

QUESTION OF THE CONGREGATION

Before you stand God's people, God's gift to you, as you are to them.

Will you welcome them with open hearts?

Will you confirm the promises made to them at the time of baptism, offering them the love and support of the Christian church?

And will you welcome the new challenges, questions, gifts and insights they bring, as together we grow in faith?

(UNISON) We will, with the help of God.

WELCOME AND RECEPTION

Deacon: Let us, the members and friends of the First Congregational Church of Burlington, United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ. Since with them we are changed in body, we reunite ourselves by reciting our church's historic covenant together:

(UNISON) We covenant with the Lord and with one another to respond to God's call that we be people of God in the name of Jesus Christ. We take this to be our Church, promising to walk with our fellow members in faithfulness and Christian love. We accept as our responsibility the worship of God, the fellowship of this community, and the witness of our church. We claim as our mission the promotion of justice, human dignity and peace, and participation in meeting the unfolding needs of God's people. We bind ourselves to follow the leadings of God's spirit as God reveals them to us.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

* **HYMN** *Go Tell it on the Mountain* #154 NCH

CALL TO THE OFFERING

*You are invited to offer monetary gifts
online using this link: <https://bit.ly/fcbonlinegiving>
(also under the video title on YouTube)
or by texting FCCBUCC to 73256 - or mail a check payable to:
First Congregational Church at 38 South Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401*

OFFERTORY *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks* Arr. Sandra Eithun
Emilia “Emy” Berger, *flute* and the Austin Handbell Choir

***SONG OF PRAISE** What Child is This? #148 NCH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God all heavens and the earth reflecting the sacred story.
This, this is Christ the One, who mirrors love for all of us.
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the Word of time eternal.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

***BIDDING TO MISSION AND BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE *O Come, Little Children*

**Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit.*

Virtual Fellowship: Worship is followed by Fellowship at First Church – and remotely on [ZOOM](https://bit.ly/sundayfellowship) -
the link is: <https://bit.ly/sundayfellowship>

NOTES ON TODAY’S SERVICE

Portions of today’s liturgy come from the Worship Design Studio,
written by Mark Burrows, Marcia McFee.

Portions of this morning’s pageant are from the Rev. John Gage, adapted.
Special thanks to Mary-Elizabeth MacDonald, Asa Jorgenson, Aven Jorgenson, Tess
Barker, Emy Stapleton, Ariel Toohey,
and all the adults who made today’s Pop-Up Pageant a success!

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**JOINING TODAY**



**Paul Bloomhardt:** I grew up in Burlington, attended Edmunds Jr. High and Burlington High School and was actually confirmed as a member of First Congregational Church in 1965! After college I spent 25 years as a TV producer in Pittsburgh and Boston, returning to Vermont in 1994, where I worked in media and at Johnson State College. Since retiring in 2013 I have pursued a hobby of international travel, visiting over 25 countries before Covid hit. I live in Shelburne and have two adult children, one in Boston and one in Washington, DC. I am looking forward to rejoining the First Church.



**Kristen Elder Connors:** I’m back!! I’m thrilled to be able to return to Burlington to start my legal career. I’m super excited to return to the church I grew up in.



**William Gunger:** I was born in Syracuse, NY and chose Vermont for my home. I'm a proud alumnus of Alfred University, and am now pursuing a Masters of Arts in Teaching from Saint Michael's College with the intention to teach middle school social studies. I love hiking, reading, family and friends.



**Jack Lynch:** I am a Senior at the University of Vermont studying philosophy. I am grateful to have met so many kind and thoughtful people at First Church.