



# THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CANTON CENTER, CT

December 11, 2022 ~ 10:00 a.m.



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## ORDER OF WORSHIP

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*\*All who are able, please stand. **Bold** denotes unison voice.*

### CHIMES

Karen Needham

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Brief announcements from the congregation are welcome. **Those wishing to make an announcement** are asked to be in the front pews at the start of the announcement period. **Prayer request cards** may be found on the tables at the back of the church. **Offerings** may be placed in the marked boxes on the tables at the back of the church.*

**PRELUDE** *A Maiden Most Gentle*

French tune

arr. Andrew Carter

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Friends, as we journey deeper into Advent, let us hear its holy promise:

**that those who walk in darkness will see light,**

that those who hope in God will see justice,

**that sorrowing hearts will be touched by joy.**

Wherever our spirits are in this moment,

**let them awaken to the God already among us.**

Let us welcome the gift of this day and the gift of this season,

**the gift of our faith and the gift of our gathering.**

### \*HYMN

*One Candle Is Lit*

Chalice (blue), 128

Verses 1,2 & 3

*Come surely, Lord Jesus, as dawn follows night,  
our hearts long to greet you, as roses the light.  
Salvation, draw near us, our vision engage,  
One candle is lit for the hope of the age.*

*Come quickly, shalom, teach us how to prepare  
for a gift that compels us with justice to care.  
Our spirits are restless 'til sin and war cease.  
One candle is lit for the reign of God's peace.*

*Come, festively sing while awaiting the birth,  
Join angels in dancing from heaven to earth.  
Wave banners of good news, lift high thankful praise.  
One candle is lit for the joy of these days.*

## \*GATHERING PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

God of Advent, your people gather once more  
and ready our hearts for your truth.  
Speak to us again through sacred story,  
that it might reach us, move us, inspire us.  
Stir us away from devotion to things that do not matter,  
and help stay committed to all that does:  
hope and peace, joy and love,  
justice, compassion and faithfulness.  
Help us awaken to Advent's light in all we are,  
and carry it into the world in all we do.  
This we ask in Christ's name and spirit, as we also pray together:

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.

## LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE: JOY

*Tim and Cary LeGeyt*

Today we light the third candle of Advent,  
as we remember the first candle, for hope, and the second, for peace.

**Today the light increases: *hope and peace add joy.***

Through the church's long tradition of Advent, the pink candle on the third Sunday  
reminds us that in the midst of our waiting,

**joy is already visible, we glimpse it ahead of time.**

We remember that even in times of uncertainty, worry or struggle,

**God's joy can find us.**

Isaiah says it this way: "The Lord sends comfort to all who mourn,  
good news to the poor and broken-hearted, joy and gladness instead  
of grief, a song of praise instead of sorrow."

**Joy is persistent, joy is contagious.**

**It opens us to seeing good and seeing God,  
and to welcoming the spirit of Christ.**

*The first three candles are lit.*

**Sung response:** *Gloria*

① Dm Gm C F ② Dm Gm C F  
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!  
③ Dm Gm C F ④ Dm Gm C F  
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

**ANTHEM** *Prepare Thyself, Zion*  
Senior Choir

Johann Sebastian Bach

**ASSEMBLING OF THE CRECHE**

*When prompted, the congregation will sing (seated):*

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.*

*The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes;  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky  
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.*

.....

*For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold;  
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling.  
And the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.*

*Following this, children may go out to church school.*

**READING FROM SCRIPTURE**

Luke 1:26-38

Pew Bible, p. 831

**SERMON** *On the Way*

**DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS**

The God of every goodness blesses us abundantly,  
**giving us gifts to use for the blessing of the world.**

From our own lives into the lives of others,  
**may the offerings we make,  
in all the forms they take,  
help us be the hands and feet of Christ in the world.**

\*Doxology            Tune: Old Hundredth

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ all creatures here below,  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore,  
One God, triune, whom we adore*

\*Prayer of Dedication

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Joys & Concerns, Pastoral Prayer

\*HYMN            *People, Look East*            Chalice (blue), 142

*People, look east, the time is near of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth & set the table.  
People, look east, and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.*

*Furrows, be glad, though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.*

*Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Star, is on the way.*

*Angels announce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming!  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord is on the way.*

## \*BENEDICTION

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE            *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*  
Senior Choir

\*POSTLUDE            *Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion*            Kenneth Kosche

## WELCOME

We're glad you've joined us for worship today.

Please know that whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

**If you're visiting, we invite you to fill out a visitor's card** (found in the pews or on the back tables) and place it in an offering box, to help us better connect with you.

Looking for more information about the church?

Please feel free to ask the pastor or contact the church office during the week.

## Announcements

*Thank you to Karen Needham, who has loaned the beautiful crèche for this Advent / Christmas season.*

**NEXT SUN., DEC. 18 – A SPECIAL SERVICE FOR ADVENT 4** - As our sanctuary is adorned with poinsettias, our service will be filled with special music by the vocal and handbell choirs.

**REMINDER: 2023 PLEDGES DUE IN ASAP** - as our Trustees & Church Council plan for the coming year. *Thank you for your faithful support of our church!*

**Poinsettia orders due today** - If you would like to purchase poinsettias to decorate for our December 18 & 24 services, please fill out a form from the table near bulletin board.

**Food Collection** - Next Sunday, we will have our monthly food collection to donate to The Canton Food Bank.

**Ho! Ho! Ho! Time's Running Low!** - The last day to place a gift card order through Scrip and guarantee it's here before Christmas is Tuesday, 12/13. Stop by the Scrip table today during coffee hour for a printed list of available retailers and place your order. Cards will be available for pick-up by next Sunday, 12/18.

**Hat & Glove Collection** - We will be continuing our long-standing tradition of collecting warm hats and gloves to decorate the Christmas tree in the sanctuary starting today. Please bring items in a plastic bag so they don't get pine needles or sap on them. These will be donated to Canton Social Services and Gifts of Love.

**Families in Need -Canton Social Services** -The Canton Social Services Department has several families in need this season. They are asking for gift cards in any denomination to any of the following stores: Walmart, Amazon, Shop Rite, Stop and Shop or Big Y. These can either be purchased through our Scrip program or directly at the store. We need to deliver the cards to the Social Services department at the very latest, on Friday, December 16 to give the receiving families time to shop for their children. Cards can be handed directly to any Missions Committee member or left with Casey Levine at the Scrip table. Thank you for your thoughtfulness!

**Brian's Angels** -The next opportunities to help make food for Brian's Angels have been scheduled. We will meet on December 9th from 11:00 to approximately 12:30 to make sandwiches. On January 20th, we will meet from 10:00 to approximately 12:30 to make a hot meal. If we have enough volunteers, we will also make sandwiches on this date. Sign-up sheets will be on the kitchen door. Thank you for helping with this important mission.

**Prime Timers' Annual Christmas Potluck Luncheon** - will be held on FRIDAY, December 16, 2022, at 11:30 am in the Parish Hall. The Canton High School Chamber Singers will join us for lunch, weather permitting, and present a concert following lunch. If school is canceled then the luncheon and concert will be canceled. Note the change of day to FRIDAY to accommodate the schedule of the chorus. Please note that due to the early arrival of the Chamber Singers, we are requesting that Prime Timers' arrive at 11:00 a.m. with a casserole of your choice. Also, you do not have to belong to Prime Timers' to attend. All are welcome. If you are not a member and wish to attend or have any questions, you may contact Donna Hammond at 860-693-8676.

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

**DECEMBER 24 at 7:00 p.m.**



Sunday 11	Monday 12	Tuesday 13	Wednesday 14	Thursday 15	Friday 16	Saturday 17
<p><b>Worship 10:00 am</b></p> <p><i>Court of Honor 2:00 pm</i></p>	<p><b>Choir 5 pm</b> <b>Trustees 7 pm</b></p> <p>ACA 7 pm Al-Anon 7 pm</p>	<p>AA 7 pm</p>	<p><b>Council Meeting 7 pm</b></p>	<p><b>Bell Choir 5:30 pm</b></p>	<p><b>Prime Timers Luncheon/ Concert 11:30 am</b></p>	<p>AA 11:00 pm</p>

