

**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
CANTON CENTER, CT**

**December 24, 2023 ~ 5:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve**

In Person & Live Streamed



And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time. ~Jesus Christ

Please stand, if able. **Bold denotes unison response.*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENT

Brief announcements are welcome, please be in the front pews at the start of the announcements. Offerings and prayer request on the yellow prayer cards found in the pews may be placed in the offering plate at the time of the offering or in the designated boxes on the back table.

PRELUDE

We Three Kings
Cherry Brook Chimes Handbell Choir

Cynthia Dobrinsky

CALL TO WORSHIP

The night we've been waiting for! Christmas Eve bursting with twinkling lights and bubbling laughter where childhood wonder spills into every snowflake and whispered wish. We hear once again from the prophets of old who spoke of God's coming to them in Emmanuel.

**Lord God come among us in new ways;
we are expecting creative holiness to be born right here!**

Faithful people of God, lift your voices of praise and thanksgiving to the Prince of Peace.

**The life of God comes in the flesh spreading
grace, wonder, mercy and love.**

Come and celebrate children of God for tomorrow is Christmas Day!

*CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Pilgrim (red), 132

*PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

God of love, draw us closer to each other on this Christmas Eve. Let us cherish the moments we share with family and friends and may our hearts overflow with love and understanding. Lord Jesus, we come to You tonight with hearts full of excitement and optimism. We wait for peace on earth, for understanding and compassion, and may your promise of hope fill us with strength and courage. Amen.

Deacon: Christmas is more than hearing scripture – it is about reacting to the incredibly wonderful news that God loved us so much He sent Jesus into our world to be our Savior, spreading the Good News of amazing, unconditional love offered to all. Listen to some of the first people to encounter the news of the birth of Jesus and how it changed the world!

READING FROM SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:2,6-7 Pew Bible pg. 555
Matthew 1:18-25 Pew Bible pg. 783

INTRODUCTION & READING OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Luke 2:1-20 Pew Bible pg.832

ANTHEM *Child of the Poor* (from The Christmas Carol)
Jerry Alonzy & Judy Robinson

***CAROL** *Away in a Manger* Chalice (Blue) 147

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

ANTHEM *O Holy Night* Adolph Adam
Jerry Alonzy

CAROL (seated) *Silent Night* Chalice (Blue) 145

The light is passed from the Christ candle into the congregation, symbolizing the light of Christ within us all. As you pass the light to the next person, please be sure that you tip only unlit candles and that lit candles remain upright. For safety purposes, we ask that children under age 10 not handle lit candles by themselves.

BENEDICTION

The shepherds returned to their fields, glorifying, and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Lord, grant us the will to praise You daily and spread peace and love to all people every day for Your glory.

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE** (*sung by all*) *Joy to the World* Pilgrim (red), 130 vs.1 & 3

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come: Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.*

POSTLUDE (please remain seated) *Come Rejoice* Judy Collins
Soloist - Jim Todd

The Worship Is Ended...

Our Service Now Begins

Interim Minister: Rev. Kurt Satherlie

Ministers: Every Member

Director of Music: Mary Lou Keefe

Dir. of Faith Formation: Dr. Hollace Bristol

Asst. of Faith Formation: Karen Needham

Sexton: Walt LeGeyt

Office Manager: Kristen DiMattia

Duty Deacons: Kristin Oswald/Tim Lundgren

Camera: Casey Levine



First Congregational Church

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www.cantoncenterchurch.org

WELCOME

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 church office during the week.

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Thank you for joining us on this Christmas Eve, we welcome you warmly!

*If you are visiting with us this evening,
we extend our special welcome and hope you will worship with us again.*

Offerings will be donated to the Canton Fuel Bank.

Please make checks payable to: FCCCC with memo: Canton Fuel Bank.

Thank you to all who have given poinsettias - you may take them after tonight's service.

And our thanks to:

Marianne Burbank and Tim LeGeyt for providing for our Christmas tree, from Case's Farm, in memory of Marianne's grandfather, Harry Humphrey, and father, Sam Humphrey, and Tim's grandfather Mort Bristol.

Jim Potter and family for decorating the church for the season and ***Nancy Alford*** for the seasonal arrangements on the front steps and other assistance with flowers through the season.

Karen Needham, who has loaned the crèche set on our Communion table.

For the beautiful music from the ***Senior Choir, Handbell Choir and Children's Choir.***

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING ~ SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 2024

NOTICE OF A SPECIAL MEETING: of the First Congregational Church, Canton Center, Sunday, January 21, 2024 after the 10 am service, *OR* on subsequent Sundays until a Quorum is obtained.

AGENDA

1. Approval of the proposed 2024 budget.
2. Any other business proper to come before said meeting.

Respectfully Submitted, *Bev Sealand*, Clerk

POINSETTIAS 2023



In Loving Memory Of:

My parents, Sam & Mary Humphrey
and Aunt Ruthie Humphrey

Our parents, Lester & Dorothy Chamberlin
and Edward & Dorothy Keefe

Muriel LeGeyt

Chris Bibby

Leon & Vera Turner

Alden & Ruth Tyrol

Burton Turner

Norman, Barbara & Erick Erickson

Ev & Louise Erickson

Dick Berry

Jan Galusza, Eileen Lyons, Ken & Marge King

Bob Oswald - A wonderful husband,
father and giving church member

Phil & Kathy Worley, with love

My sister, Holly Smith French

Marion & Henry Lundgren

Our parents, Margueriette Baran
and Gwen and John Johnson

Patricia Ann Howson

Lt. Col. Richard G. Howson (USAF)

Our mothers, Ruth Wilkins and Joan Prince

Given By:

Marianne Burbank
Marianne Burbank

Peter & Mary Lou Keefe
Peter & Mary Lou Keefe

Tim & Cary LeGeyt

Peggy & Bill Borchert

Susan Turner

Susan Turner

Susan Turner

Susan Turner

Susan Turner

Susan Turner

Susan Turner

The Oswald Family

The McCormick Family

Mary Lee Dunn

Kathleen Lundgren

Craig & Linda McAllister
Craig & Linda McAllister

Bob Howson

Bob Howson

Martha & Paul Stansel



POINSETTIAS 2023



In Loving Memory Of:

Casey LeGeyt
Brett E. Hooper
Denise Perkins Humphrey
My Little Angel
Mom & Dad

Ned Bunnell
John & Anna Bunnell, Franklin & Helen Andrews

In Celebration Of:

Abigail and John & Mallory

My family near and far

Our grandkids Will, Rob, John, Laila & Collin

Family and friends

My grandson, Greyson Penn

My family - past and present

Our family - past and present

Our family - past and present

Our daughters, Cailyn, Lauren and their families

In Honor Of:

Pastor Kurt

Given By:

Mommy & Daddy
Mom & Dad
Mom & Phil
Daddy
Phil LeGeyt

Geri Bunnell
Geri Bunnell

Given By:

Peggy & Bill Borchert

Jan Tanner

The Dunns'

Gail Macbeth

Darryl Haberern

Evelyn Sealand

Charles & Donna Hammond

Skip & Nancy Alford

Craig & Linda McAllister

Given By:

The McCormick Family