THE FIRST CHURCH

NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Congregational – United Church Of Christ

†

Gathered December 16, 1685

No matter who you are, whom you love, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Morning Worship

Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023 10:00 AM

*If it is comfortable for you to do so, please stand.

APPROACH TO GOD

Let us keep silence as we prepare for worship.

TOWER CHIME Norma MacKinley -Smith

MEDITATION "God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing."
– C.S. Lewis

PRELUDE *Chorale Prelude on* VENI EMMANUEL G. Near *(*1942)*

CALL TO WORSHIP

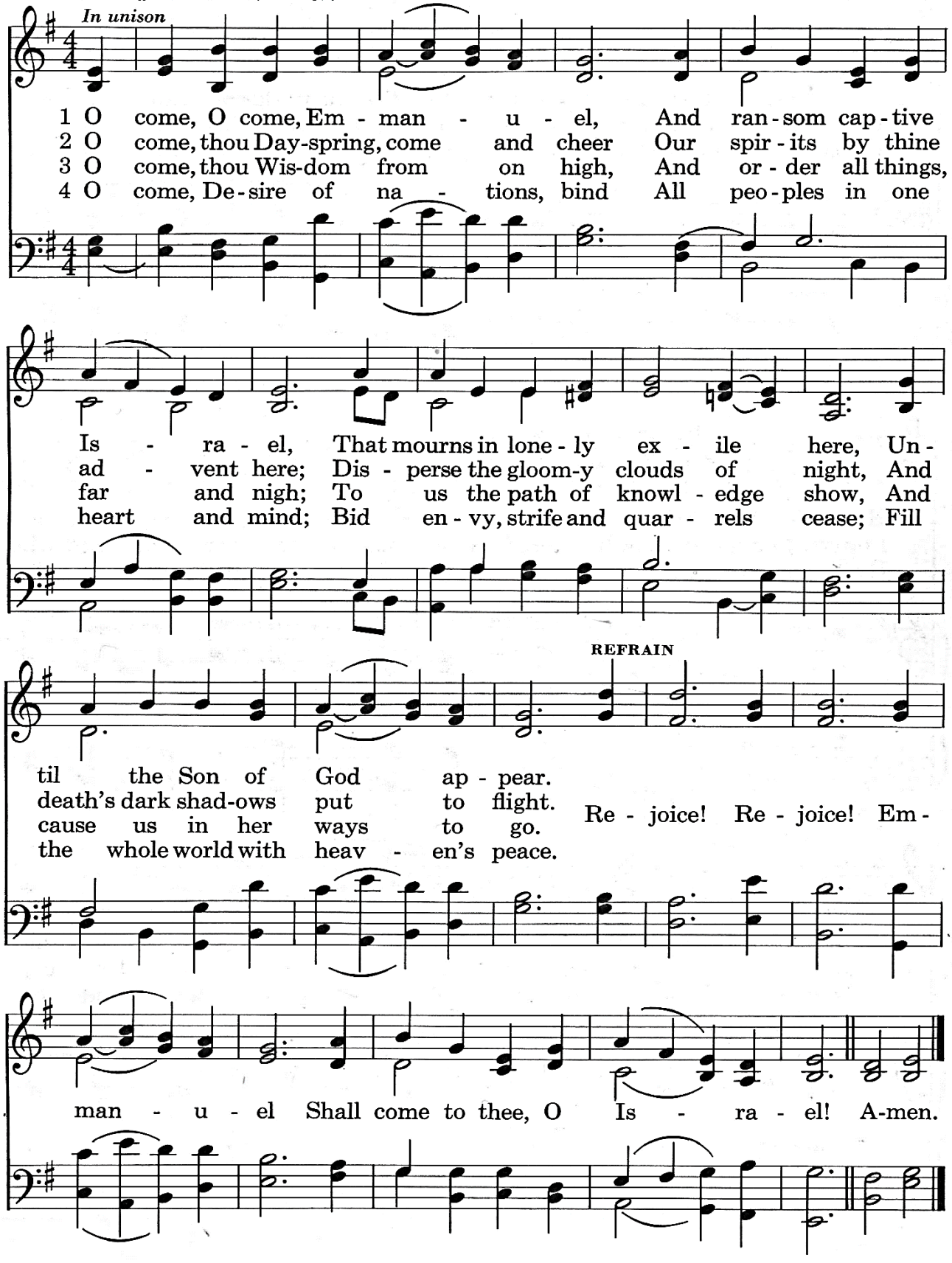
Leader: We wait for Him patiently but with expectation!
People: Prepare the way for the Lord; make straight the pathways.
Leader: Something new is about to happen.
People: God would visit God's people in a new way!
Leader: Lord, open our hearts to receive this good news!
People: Prepare us to be people of great faith and compassion as we look forward to this wondrous event You have proclaimed to us. AMEN.

***HYMN 110** *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* VENI EMMANUEL

(see next page)

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Latin: c.9th century
Tr. John M. Neale, 1818-1866, Sts. 1,2, alt.
Tr. Henry S. Coffin, 1877-1954, Sts. 3,4

VENI EMMANUEL 8.8.8.8.8.8.
Adapted from Plainsong
Thomas Helmore, 1811-1890

CCLI# 3034682

***OPENING PRAYER**

Loving God, You sent your Prophet John to prepare Your way among us, to call us to repentance and make our pathways straight. Strengthen us to live lives of steadfast love and faithfulness as we await the Messiah's return, that all may see Your reign of peace through Your just and gracious rule. AMEN

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF PEACE

Leader: A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord."

People: Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;

Leader: The uneven ground shall become level,

People: **And the rough places a plain**.

Leader: Arise and Ascend! Let us go to the highest and most visible places, and let us proclaim good tidings of peace:

People: **Christ is coming!**

Leader: Do not be afraid, lift up your voices so that all may hear and find peace!

People: **Christ is coming!**

Leader: Today we light the second candle on our Advent wreath, the candle of Peace. We celebrate and remember that our God offers each and all of us a peace that passes all understanding, a peace that shines most fully in the One who is coming into the world once more.

GREETINGS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING **Mark 1:1–8**

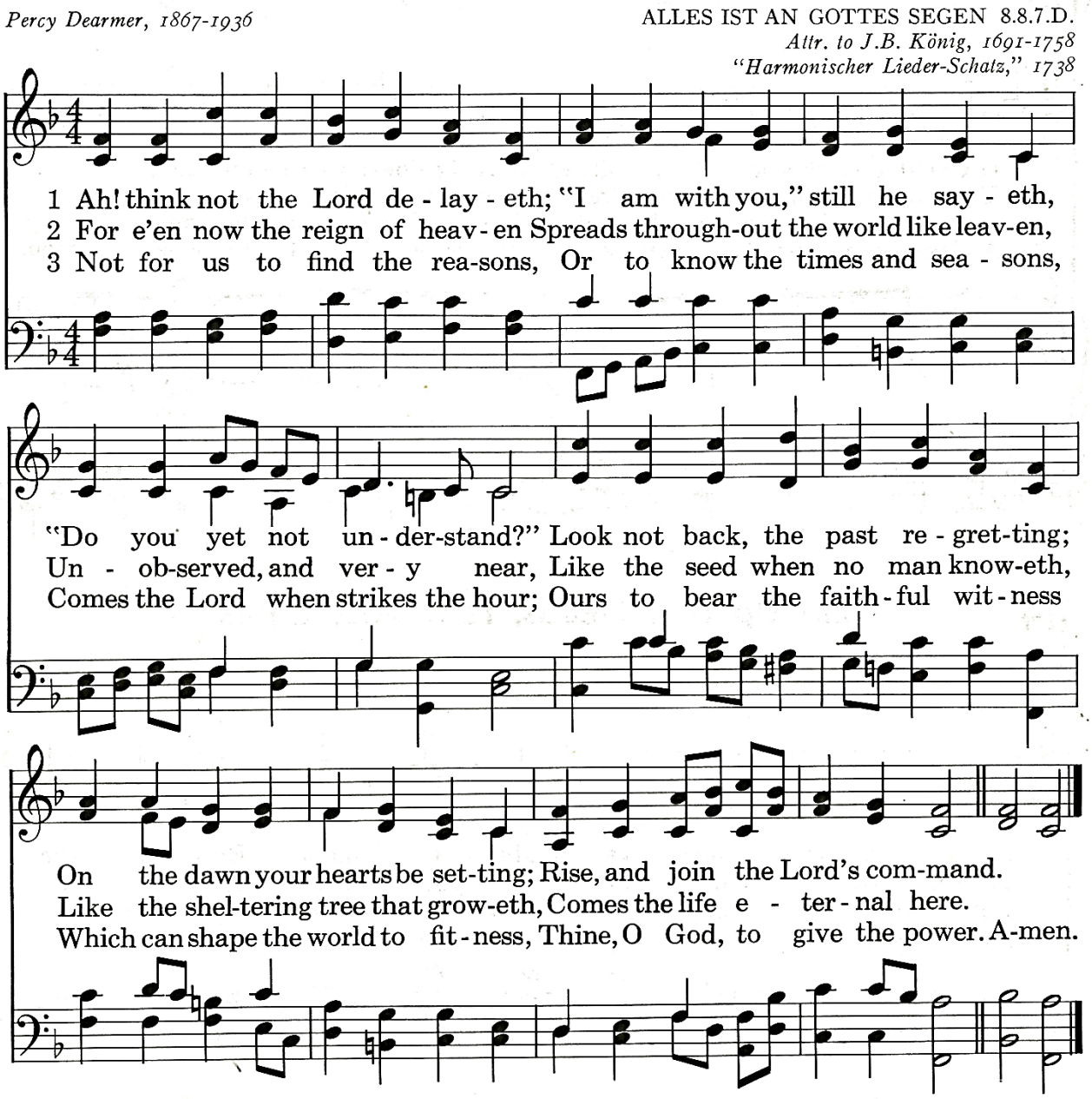
The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"
John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a

leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

***HYMN 112** *Ah! Think Not the Lord Delayeth* ALLES IST AN GOTTES SEGEN



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RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER CONCERNS

SILENT PRAYERS and PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

OFFERTORY *Magnificat V* from *15 Antiphons* M. Dupré
(1886 – 1971)

He remembering His mercy
Hath holpen His servant Israel,
As He promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed forever.

***ADVENT DOXOLOGY** OLD HUNDRETH L.M.

All praise, eternal Christ to Thee,
Whose Advent sets Thy people free;
Once more upon Thy people shine,
And fill the world with love divine. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (Unison)

O God, be in the ministries and mission for which these gifts are given, and bless those who give them, that we may dedicate ourselves as well. Teach us again and again the power of generosity and love. May we be a part of Your creative work of healing in this world. Amen.

PAGEANT REMARKS Rev. Nancy Haynes

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT 2023

PAGEANT CHILDREN'S ENTRANCE

Congregation Hymn 132 ***O Come All Ye Faithful*** ADESTE FIDELIS

O Come, all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant
O come ye, o come ye to Bethlehem
Come and behold him
Born the king of angels

REFRAIN ***O Come let us adore him***
O Come let us adore him
O Come let us adore him… Christ the Lord

Sing, choirs of angels
Sing in exultation
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above
Glory to God, all glory in the high--est
(REFRAIN)

Child, for us sinners
Poor and in a manger
We would embrace -- thee
With awe -- and love
Who would not love thee?
Loving us so dear--ly
(REFRAIN)

THE PLAYERS and THE STAR

Do You Hear What I Hear?

THE ANNUNCIATION and THE DREAM

Silent Night

CAESAR AUGUSTUS and BETHLEHEM

Pageant Children *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

(1st verse)

Congregation: ***For Christ is born of Mary***
And gathered all above…
While mortals sleep the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth;
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to all on earth.

MARY and JOSEPH

First Folk — *Who Would Send a Baby* — M. K. Beale *(*1943)* *arr. Carter*

JESUS and the STAR

Pageant Children — *Go Tell It On the Mountain*
(Refrain - 1st verse – Refrain)

Congregation: ***The shepherds feared and trembled…***
When lo! Above the earth,
Rang out the Angel chorus
That Hailed our Savior's birth…

Congregation/Children: Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!

THE SHEPHERDS and THE ANGELS

Pageant Children — *Angels, We Have Heard on High*
(1st verse)

Congregation: ***Come to Bethlehem and see***
Him whose birth the angels sing
Come adore on bended knee

Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Glo ---- ria, in excelsis Deo
Glo ---- ria, in excelsis De --- o.

THE ANIMALS in THE MANGER

Pageant Children *Away in a Manger*

JOURNEY of THE KINGS

Pageant Children *We Three Kings*

JOURNEY to THE CHRIST CHILD

Pageant Children *Joy to the World*

PAGEANT CHILDREN'S RECESSIONAL

Congregation Hymn 114 ***Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*** TRURO

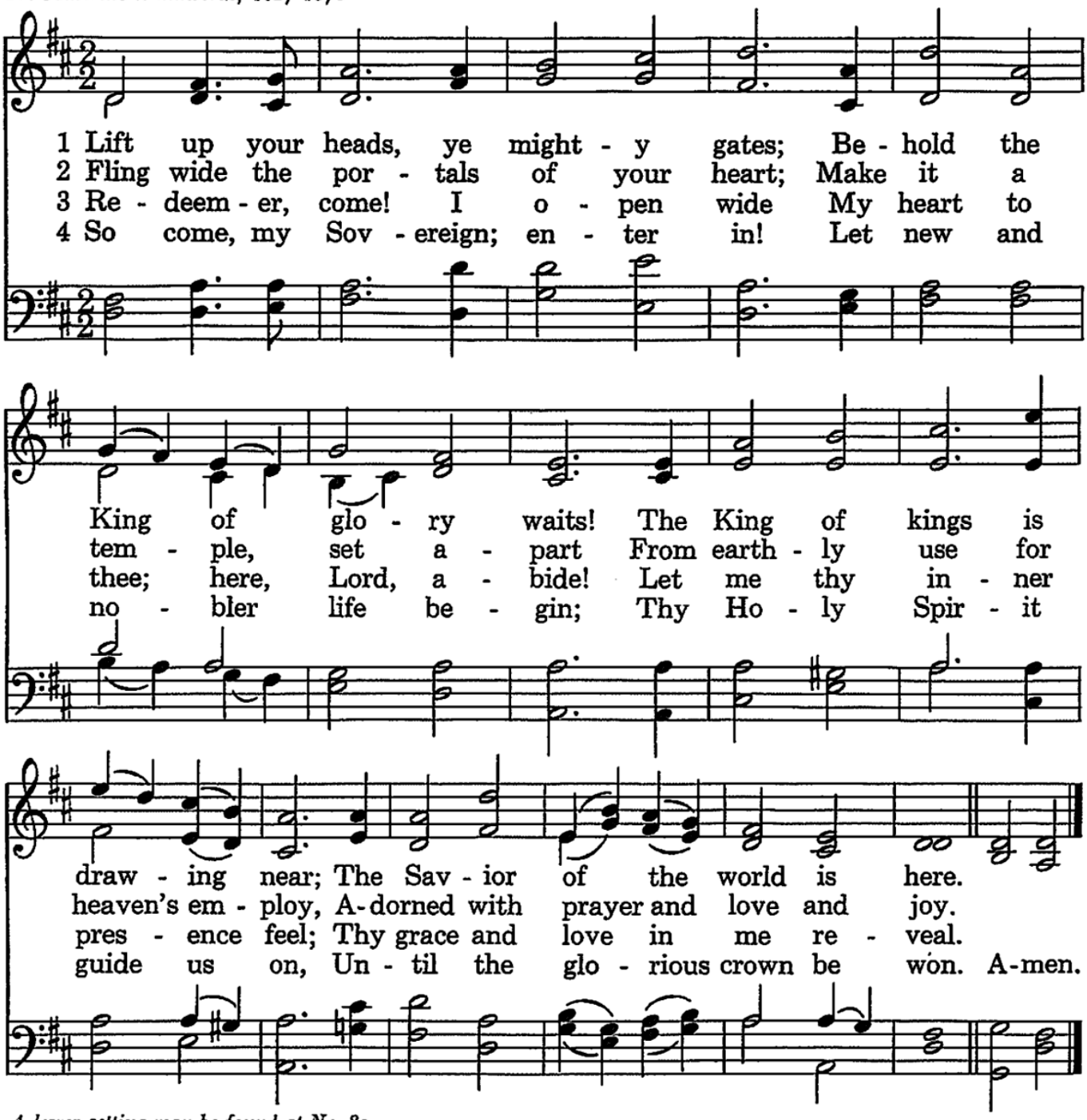
(see next page)

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE *Toccata in E minor* J. Pachelbel
(1653 – 1706)

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Based on Psalm 24
Georg Weissel, 1590-1635
Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878

TRURO L.M.
Thomas Williams', "Psalmodia Evangelica," 1789

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CCLI # 3034682

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

Children will recess to their classrooms during the singing of *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* . Teachers will offer a small gift to each child to remember our Pageant 2023.

A Shepherd's Story
Created by Pam Andrews
Adapted by Holly Columbus

Angel Gabriel	Alaina Small
Narrator 1	Olivia Myers
Narrator 2	Colin Evans
Mary	Emily Simek
Joseph	Ethan Simek
Inn Keeper	Ethan Moore
Angel 1	Caroline McNamara
Angel 2	Stephanie Dahoney
Cesear Augustus	Josh Myers
Cows	3 Year Olds
Sheep	Kindergarten
Donkeys	Grade 1 and 2
Shepherds	Grade 3 and 4
Kings	Alex Hayden, Josh Myers, Garrett Small

Special Appreciation to:
Director: Holly Columbus
Music Director: Rebecca Crivello
Assistant: Steve Blunt
Accompanist: Liz Dion
Costumes: Karen Hayden

We are deeply grateful to all of the Sunday school teachers and assistants who contributed their time, creativity and energy to this pageant.

AV TEAM CAMERA CREW: Lee Hauenstein and Joe Glajch
LICENSING: CCLI (print) 3034682; CCLI (streaming) 20119862;
CCS 12820; OneLicense A-736284
STAFF SINGERS: Janet Poisson, soprano – Brianne Biastoff, alto
Zoe Harper, tenor - Joshua L. Gore, bass

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HEARING AIDS AND LARGE PRINT OF HYMNS AND PRAYERS
ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

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PLEASE USE THE VARIOUS CARDS IN THE PEW RACKS TO HELP KEEP THE STAFF INFORMED OF YOUR PASTORAL NEEDS. YOU MAY ALSO SUBMIT PRAYER CONCERNS ONLINE. FIND THE 'PRAYER REQUEST' BUTTON ON THE WORSHIP PAGE FOR ANY PRAYER CONCERNS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH REV. NANCY.

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Have you remembered First Church in you will?

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Church Cancellation Policy - In the event of inclement weather, a power outage, or severe weather advisory, First Church may cancel the First Service, Sunday School, or All Services. Please visit the church webpage (www.tfcucc.org), or Facebook Page (First Church Nashua UCC) for any cancellation notices. You can also check media outlets WMUR Channel 9, or WZID 95.7 under the heading First Church Nashua. The notifications will read as follows: First Service Cancelled or Sunday School Cancelled or All Services Cancelled and will be announced by 6am on the Sunday in question.

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Winter parking reminder - Use caution when parking along the north side of the church building. Heed the posted signs. Falling snow and ice can cause damage to your cars!

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Women's Association- Come join the Women's Association for their annual Christmas potluck and traditional Yankee Swap on Monday, Dec. 11, in the dining room. This is always a fun gathering and a lot of laughs. Each Yankee Swap item is to be no more than $10. There is a sign up sheet at the welcome center and you may sign up to bring either a main dish, salad or dessert. Looking forward to seeing new women there. Come meet and make new friends!! Let's all dress "Christmasy"

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Christmas Cookies and Carols for a Cause- (Friday December 15th from 6-7:15 PM) Back by popular demand!!! Join Rev. Andy for an evening of fun, fellowship and good food. First, we'll enjoy chili/soup. Rev. Andy will make his famous recipe and you too can sign up to bring your chili/soup. Then, we'll eat Christmas cookies and have a sing along to our favorite Christmas Carols. Afterwards, we'll gather the cookies into gift baskets to share with local organizations in need of holiday cheer. Among them will be Stepping Stones Inc. (offers services to Nashua's nearly 400 homeless and unaccompanied youths), Family Promise and The Front Door Agency. Please sign up at the Welcome Center and please indicate if you will bring chili and/or cookies.

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ANNUAL MITTEN TREE DRIVE At the start of the new year we will be collecting mittens to benefit the children at three of our neighborhood schools: Mt. Pleasant Elementary, Broad St. Elementary and Adult Learning Center Day Care. Knitters and crocheters are hopefully hard at work with plans to fill this tree. For those not prone to needle crafts, we also gratefully receive purchased mittens. All children sizes are needed. As you come across those Christmas bargains while shopping to warm the hearts of loved ones in your life this season, don't forget to pick up a few pairs of mittens to warm the hands of our young neighbors in need this winter. For questions or further information contact Susan Testa.

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Want to be a NHCUCC delegate? Our preacher last Sunday was Rev. Gordon Rankin, conference minister for the NHCUCC. The **N**ew **H**ampshire **C**onference – **U**nited **C**hurch of **C**hrist is a gathering of the 130+ UCC congregations in New Hampshire. In our denomination, conferences don't direct, but instead support local congregations with clergy and congregation care, and coordination of statewide and global ministries/mission. To be a delegate, the only commitment is to attend a one day conference meeting in Concord each Fall. Of course, the NHCUCC provides other opportunities for volunteer service, but none are required. If you want to know more about the NHCUCC, log into https://NHCUCC.org. If you're interested in serving, get in touch with a member of the nominating committee (Jocelyn Henning, Charlie Morris, Todd Whitney) or contact the church office.

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Get ready for the **FIRST BRUNCH** of **2024**! Come gather for fellowship and French Toast Casserole (GF available) on ***Sunday, January 14th at 11:30***. Please sign-up at the Welcome Center following worship or by calling the church office at 603-882-4861. Last day to sign up is Sunday Jan. 7th. This brunch is being sponsored by your Stewardship Committee. We hope to see you there as we gather with gratitude!

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Mission to La Romana, February 2024 - First Church will be supporting the mission team to partner with The Good Shepherd Hospital network to provide public health and spiritual support to Haitians living in the sugar cane fields throughout the DR. You can learn more at Central MA Medical Mission to La Romana – An Annual Mission Trip (fcsterling.org) In addition to your prayers, First Church will be gathering a variety of supplies to support the cause. We will start collecting items and donations November 26th through the end of January. The donation list can be found

at the La Romana table in Fellowship Hall, or use the following Amazon link: https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/1IJMXDSY5QV6Y

MUSIC IN WORSHIP NEXT WEEK

Sunday, December 17, 2023

Third Sunday of Advent, Christmas at First

9:00 Chancel Choir, Muddy Brook Brass, Janet Poisson; soprano, Liam Lacey; solo horn, Nicholas White; organ

11:00 Chancel Choir, Muddy Brook Brass, Janet Poisson; soprano, Liam Lacey; solo horn, Nicholas White; organ

This Week at First Church

SUN DEC 10	8:15am	Worship (Chapel)
	10:00am	Worship, Livestream, Radio Broadcast Pageant Sunday
	11:20am	Joyful Noise
MON DEC 11		Newsletter Deadline
	6:00pm	Women's Association Pot Luck (dining room)
	7:00pm	Orchestra Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
TUE DEC 12	2:00pm	Visitation (room 15)
	4:00pm	Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter
	7:00pm	Thank You Project (room 10)
WED DEC 13	6:45pm	Chancel Choir
THU DEC 14	10:00am	Thrift Shop
	6:30pm	Quilt Guild (dining room)
FRI DEC 15	6:00pm	Cookies & Carols
SAT DEC 16	10:00am	DAR (room 10)
	11:00am	Chancel Choir and Orchestra Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
	11:00am	Open dress rehearshal, (Sanctuary
	11:00am	Sisters in Sobriety (Nauss Hall)

December Worship Schedule

Sunday, December 3 – First Sunday of Advent
8:15 AM Worship (Shaw Chapel)
10:00 AM: Worship in the Sanctuary & Livestream
Sunday School & Nursery Care
Radio Broadcast on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3

Sunday, December 10 – Second Sunday of Advent
8:15 AM Worship (Shaw Chapel)
10:00 AM: Worship & Christmas Pageant in the Sanctuary & Livestream
Sunday School & Nursery Care
Radio Broadcast on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3

Sunday, December 17 – Third Sunday of Advent
Christmas at First
9:00 AM Worship
11:00 AM Worship, Livestream
Radio Broadcast on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3
Childcare (Infant – age 5) provided at both services

Sunday, December 24 – Christmas Eve; Fourth Sunday of Advent
10:00 AM Worship & Livestream
Radio Broadcast on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3

5:00 PM: Family Service
7:00 PM :Candlelight Service and Lessons & Carols
11:00 PM: Candelight Service of Lessons & Carols (Livestream)

Sunday, December 31 – First Sunday after Christmas
10:00 AM Worship & Livestream
Radio Broadcast on WSMN AM 1590 & FM 95.3

FIRST MUSIC
FM
CONCERT SERIES 2023 – 24 SEASON

SEASON XVI
SWEET SIXTEEN!

BRINGING the JOY of MUSIC to the GATE CITY

3RD ADVENT WORSHIP SERVICES

CHRISTMAS at FIRST

CHANCEL CHOIR OF THE FIRST CHURCH
MUDDY BROOK BRASS

POISSON • OLEFIROWICZ • NICHOLAS WHITE MAGNIFICAT

SUNDAY
DEC 17

OPEN TO THE **PUBLIC**
ALL ARE WELCOME
9 & 11 AM

THE FIRST CHURCH

1 CONCORD STREET • NASHUA, NH
FIRST-MUSIC.ORG • 603.882.4861

THE FIRST CHURCH

STAFF

Senior Minister, *Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong*, aarmstrong@tfcucc.org
Interim Associate Minister, *Rev. Nancy Haynes*, nhaynes@tfcucc.org
Minister of Music, *Joseph R. Olefirowicz, CAGO,* jolefirowicz@tfcucc.org
Church Business and Marketing Manager, *Dianne Smigliani*, dsmigliani@tfcucc.org
Office Manager, *Tasha Drew*, tdrew@tfcucc.org
Sexton, *Steve Buck*, sbuck@tfcucc.org

Pastors Emeriti, *Rev. James S. Chaloner and Rev. Dr. Jeffrey C. Evans*

WELCOME

A warm welcome is extended to all who are attending this worship service. A special greeting to those who are visiting or worshiping for the first time. Please sign the guest book in the back of the sanctuary or fill out the **visitor card** found in the pew racks. Fill out the back of the card, and put it in the offering plate or hand it to a minister, Usher or Deacon so we may acknowledge your visit. Join in the time of fellowship, in Chapel Hall, following worship. If you have any questions about the life and ministry of First Church please seek out the individuals wearing colored name tags; they are members of the various boards and committees.

INFORMATION

First Church was gathered on December 16, 1685 as The Church of Christ in Dunstable. On the same day Thomas Weld was ordained and settled as minister of the church. The current building, built in 1894, is the tenth building to house the First Church community. In 1961, the church entered fellowship with the United Church of Christ. We welcome into our membership any who will own the covenant of First Church and seek to continue the ministry of Jesus Christ in the community and world. Those interested in joining the church should contact the church office for information. New members are received during worship in November, February and May. The Sacrament of Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month and the Sacrament of Baptism on the last. First Church is supported almost entirely by pledges. Every member is expected to make a financial pledge according to their ability.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral Care is available to all in need. Please keep the ministers informed of occasions of sickness, sorrow, and joy. Let the church office know if you or family member or friend is hospitalized.

COMMUNICATIONS

If you have a change of address, phone number, or email address, please let the church office know so that we may keep our records current.

All information for the weekly bulletin must be in the office by noon on Wednesday. All information for the monthly newsletter must be in the office by 4:30 PM on the second Monday of the month.

<u>All use of the building must be scheduled by the Office Manager.</u>

THE FIRST CHURCH
NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

One Concord Street * Nashua, New Hampshire 03064 * 603-882-4861
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00am-noon & 1:00-4:00pm
Visit our web site at tfcucc.org - Find us on Facebook

Give online. Scan the QR code to view one of the giving options available.