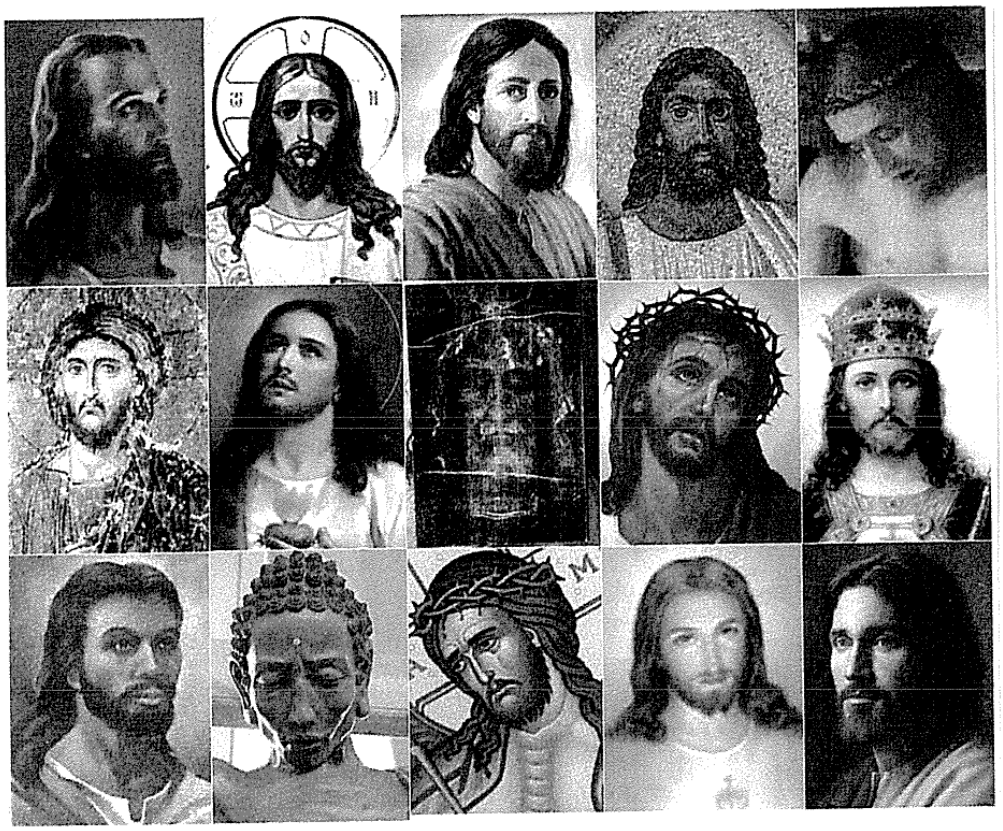

THE FIRST CHURCH

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

Communion Sunday
Second Sunday after Christmas

January 5, 2025 10:00 AM

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*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 Jim Stone

MEDITATION "Ring out the old; ring in the new. Ring, happy bells, across the snow. The year is going; let him go. Ring out the false; ring in the true." -Alfred Tennyson

PRELUDE *Noël Poloñais* A. Guilmant
Variations on a Polish Christmas Carol *(1837 – 1911)*

INTROITUS *The Lord Is In His Holy Temple* F. R. Lund
CHANCEL CHOIR *(*1938)*
Composer-In-Residence

CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on Psalm 147:12-20)

Leader: Come, people of God, and sing your praise to the Lord, who strengthens the gates of our cities and blesses the children within them.

People: We rejoice in the One who grants peace to our borders and fills our lives with the finest of wheat.

Leader: God sends forth His word to the earth, shaping the seasons with snow like wool and frost like ashes.

People: At His command, the winds blow, and the waters flow, declaring His power and care.

Leader: The Lord has made His statutes and decrees known to us—a gift not given to every nation.

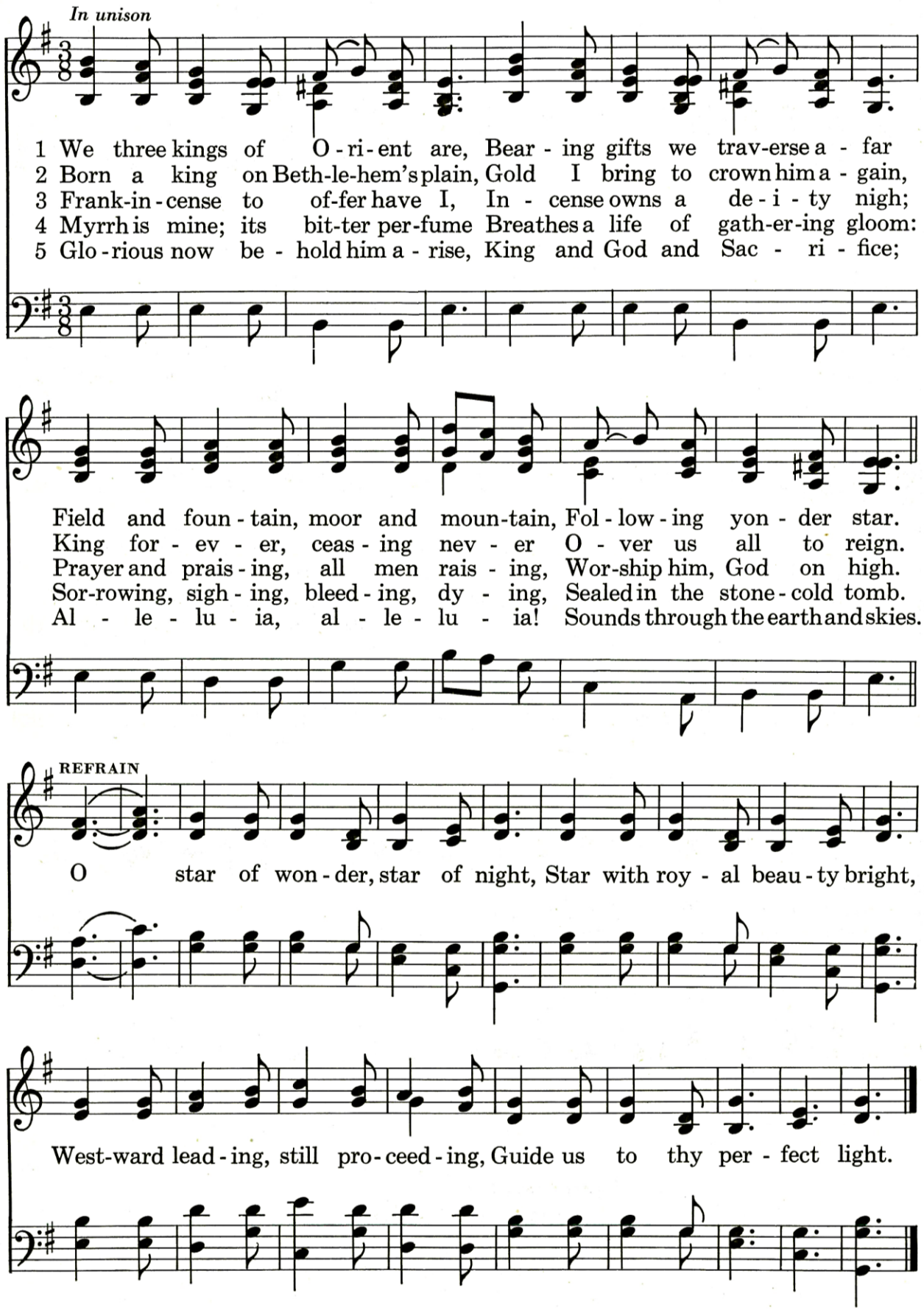
All: Praise the Lord, who speaks life into the world and reveals His love to His people. Let us worship with joy!

***HYMN 143** *We Three Kings of Orient Are*

KINGS OF ORIENT
American, 19th century

John H. Hopkins, Jr., 1820-1891, alt.

KINGS OF ORIENT 8.8.8.6. *with Refrain*
John H. Hopkins, Jr., 1820-1891



***OPENING PRAYER** (Unison)

Emmanuel, Light of The World, awaken us to the glory of Your presence. Shine upon us and help us see our way through darkness within and around us. Enable us to behold the world as You created it to be, as You created us to be. Empower us to move from darkness to light, from sin to new life in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI 513**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end, A-men, A-men.

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS **Ephesians 1:3-14**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.

In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

John 1:10-18

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

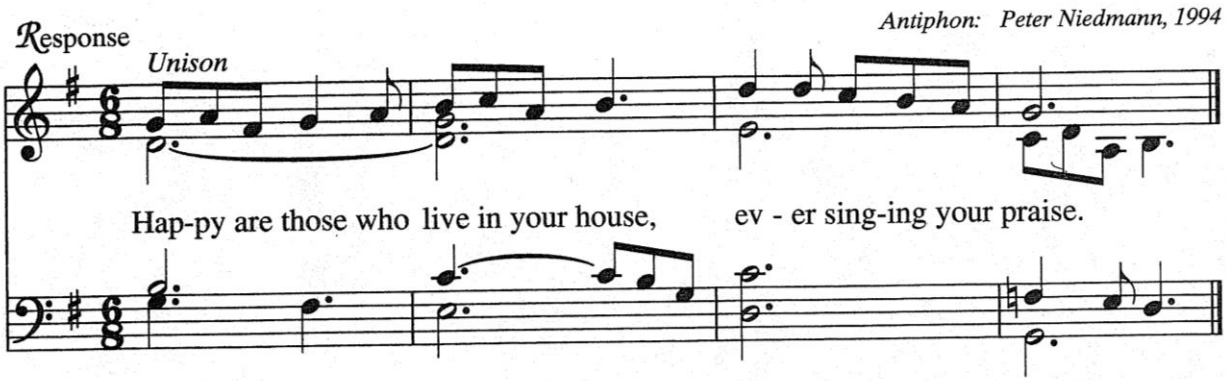
GRATIA TIBI *Thanks Be to Thee* T. Tallis
(1505 – 1585)

SERMON "No one has seen God, however..."
Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong

RESPONSIVE PSALM 84

BRIANNE BIASTOFF, psalmist

The Psalm will be intoned once: The Congregation sings the same Response, and then again at the "℟" indication.



℟

[1]How lovely is your dwelling place,
O God of hosts!

[2]My soul longs, indeed it faints
for the courts of God;
my heart and my flesh sing
for joy to the living God.

[3]Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,

where she may lay her young,
at your altars,
O God of hosts, my Ruler
and my God. ℟

[4]Happy are those who live
in your house,
ever singing your praise.

[5]Happy are those whose strength
is in you,
in whose heart are the
highways to Zion.

[6]As they go through the valley of Baca
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it
with pools.

[7]They go from strength to strength;
the God of gods will be seen
in Zion. ℟

[8]O Sovereign God of hosts, hear
my prayer;
give ear, O God of Jacob!

[9]Behold our shield, O God;
look on the face of your anointed.

[10]For a day in your courts is better than
a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper
in the house of my God than live
in the tents of wickedness.

[11]For the Sovereign God is a sun
and shield;
God bestows favor and honor.

No good thing does God withhold
from those who walk uprightly.

[12]O God of hosts,
happy is everyone who trusts
in you. ℟

Proper 25 [30] C vs. 1–7.

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RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison) A New Creed

We are not alone,we live in God's world.
We believe in God:who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit.
We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others,to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

PRAYER CONCERNS

SILENT PRAYERS and PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

How many times, Lord Jesus, have You come to us unwelcomed? How often have You visited yet we have been too busy to notice? We are truly sorry for neglecting Your life in us and our neighbors. Help us change our ways and become more sensitive to Your presence in our lives; then, we shall be well prepared to welcome Your Final Coming for Your love's sake. Amen!

A time of silence for personal confession

KYRIE 545 *Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us* J. Merbecke
CONGREGATION JOINS IN SINGING *(1510 – 1585)*

Lord, have mercy upon us;
Christ have mercy upon us;
Lord, have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: How much does God love us? Enough to give us Jesus and The Holy Spirit, not to condemn us, but to save us.

People: Not by our speaking or doing, but by God's good and precious grace are we saved.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

OFFERTORY *Nativity Carol* J. Rutter *(*1945)*

***DOXOLOGY 515** OLD HUNDRETH LM

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (Unison)

Holy and gracious God, we bring these gifts to You as an offering of thanksgiving, not just for what we see but for what we trust. For in the light and in the shadows, in the triumphs and in the trials, You are present, sustaining us with Your unshakable love. Bless these offerings, Lord, and use them to share the assurance of Your presence with a world longing for hope through Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE COMMUNION

It is a tradition at The First Church that we eat the bread and drink the cup together as the people of God renewing our covenant. We serve grape juice and gluten free bread.

INVITATION, SURSUM CORDA AND COMMUNION PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to God.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Leader: Let us pray.

SANCTUS 550 S. Wesley
(1766 – 1837)

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory:
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. A-men.

INSTITUTION AND SHARING OF THE BREAD

In the Bleak Widwinter H. Darke
(1888 – 1976)

DEBORAH GRAHAM NORDYKE, soprano
KATIE WEISS, soprano
CINDY WHITNEY, soprano
ANDREW HOTHAM, tenor
HARRY NORDYKE, tenor
CRAIG PLUMMER, tenor

INSTITUTION AND SHARING OF THE CUP

Cradle Song G. Near
*(*1942)*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING and 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.

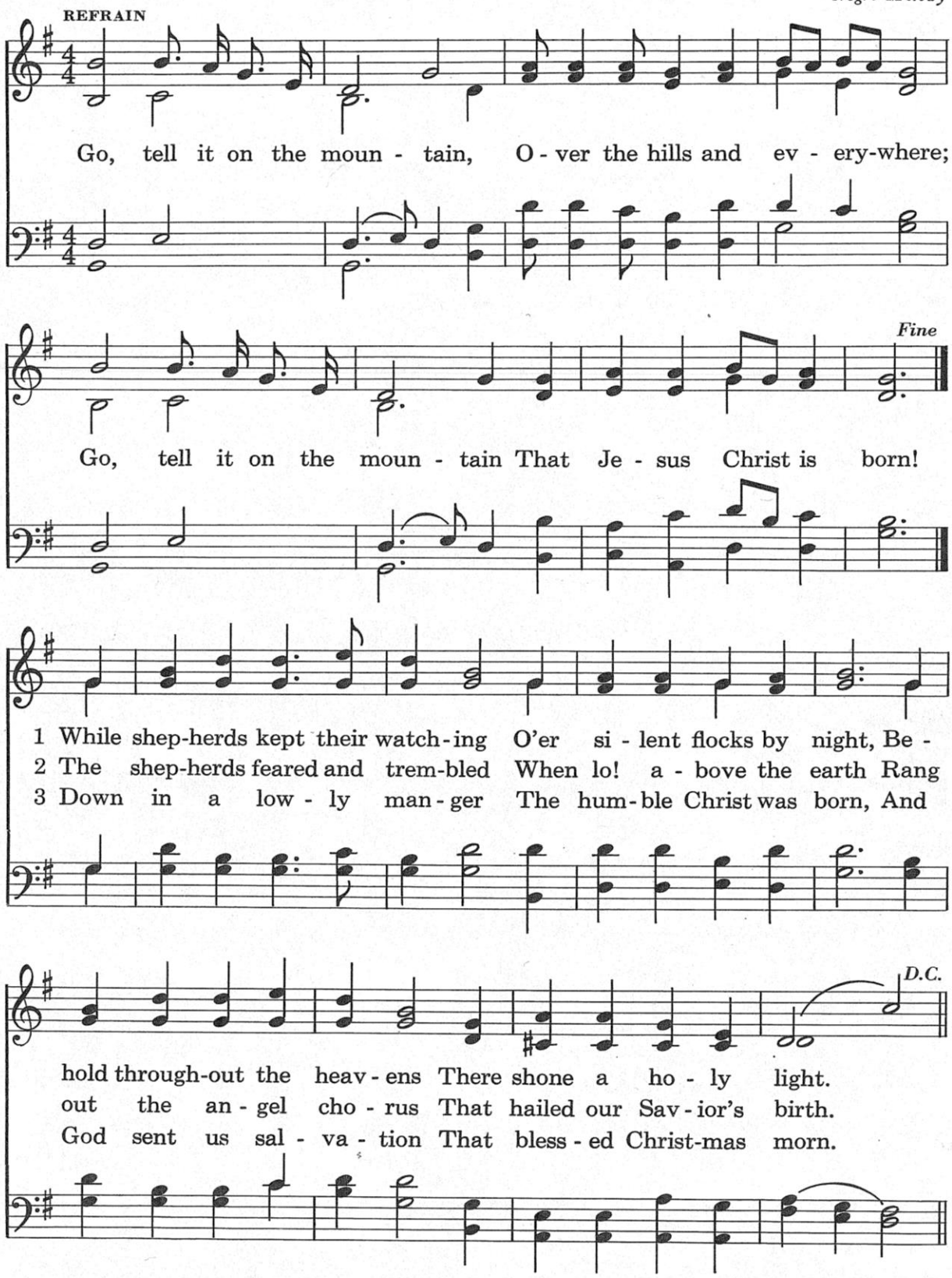
***HYMN 488** *Go Tell It On the Mountain* GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN
(see next page) *Spiritual, 19th century*

***BENEDICTION**

Go Tell It On the Mountain

Negro Spiritual

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN *Irregular*
Negro Melody



YOUTH

CCLI # 3034682

BENEDICTUS *Star of Wonder!* KINGS OF ORIENT

POSTLUDE *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* J. Pachelbel
How beautiful lights the morning star *(1653 – 1706)*

OUR WORSHIP HAS ENDED; OUR SERVICE BEGINS

AV TEAM: Joe Glajch and Lee Hauenstein
COVER ART: Dall-e generated
LICENSING: CCLI (print) 3034682; CCLI (streaming) 20119862; CCS 12820; OneLicense A-736284
SCRIPTURE: NRSV reprinted by permission of the National Council of the Churches of Christ
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.

Pulpit flowers are given by Michael Chrissis, in loving memory of Kay Chrissis.

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.

Worship Schedule

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5th
8:15 am Worship in Shaw Chapel
10:00 am Worship in the Sanctuary & Livestream
Radio Broadcast on WSMN FM 95.3 & AM 1590
Sunday School &Nursery Care available

Christian Formation Corner

January 5, 2025 - Today is the Second Sunday after Christmas/Communion Sunday, and the liturgical color is white.

Nursery News – The nursery school is open and staffed. Parents can check in at the welcome center and then proceed to the nursery. The Welcome Center staff can also assist in providing directions.

Busy Bags - are available at the welcome center for when children choose to remain in worship.

Church Happenings and Outreach - New/Current

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.

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!

THE FIRST CHURCH THRIFT SHOP is open on **Thursdays, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM (Will not be open on Saturdays in Jan/Feb).** Donations of women's and children's clothing is being accepted. Leave items in the bin at the courtyard entrance. All proceeds go to community outreach. Thank you for all of your support!!

THE GREAT BOOKS STUDY COMING IN JANUARY!–Nauss Hall will be alive with thoughtful conversation and spiritual exploration this January as Revs. Andy and Nancy launch **The Great Books**, a new educational series about the enduing classics that shaped Christian thought and practice. Each Sunday at 9 AM, between services, we'll examine a work of enduring significance, discovering how it speaks to our lives today. **The Great Books Study** will take place between services in Nauss Hall on January 12th, 19th, and 26th.

ANNUAL MITTEN TREE DRIVE – Whether made by experienced knitters/crocheters or purchased items on sale for the season: we provide warm hands to the children who attend neighborhood elementary schools (Amherst St. and Mount Pleasant) or The Adult Learning Center. We've distributed hundreds of mittens and hats and they are always gratefully received. The tree (Welcome Center) will be up for a collection until January 12th. If you have any questions, please contact Susan Testa.

JANUARY OUTREACH – FAMILY PROMISE WELLNESS DONATIONS:
Can you help? Cold-flu season is here! Family Promise needs over-the-counter medications and health care products. Adult, child and infant cough medicine, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, multi-symptom cold medication, antihistamines, rubbing alcohol, peroxide, Tums, Rolaids and ice packs. A collection bin will be in Fellowship Hall through February 2nd. Family Promise thanks you!

WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION- New for the Women's Association….a January event! We figured we all would need an afternoon out in the middle of winter just to relax and have girl time! So…on Saturday, January 25th, we will be having a "Chick Flick" matinee afternoon at 2:30 PM in the dining room featuring a good-feel old-time popular movie which could be a comedy, love story or a good sob story (we will supply the tissues!!). Be ready for popcorn (regular and flavored), soft drinks, movie candy….blast from the past. You all know what a fun group we are by now! Sign up at the Welcome Center starting January 4th. We encourage all women to join us….we are adding new members all the time and are so excited about this. Our annual tea is fast coming up as well!

A MESSAGE FROM NOMINATING - Thanks again to all who already volunteered to be on a Board or Committee next year! We still have a few openings, particularly on **Deacons** and **Christian Formation**. We're always looking for new folks. If you're interested in giving this a try, pick up a committee description brief at the Welcome Center or contact a Nominating Committee member (*Jocelyn Henning, Charlie Morris, or Todd Whitney*) for more information.

COLLEGE PLANNING SEMINAR-Sunday, January 26th at 11:30 am with Craig Plummer. Craig has High School guidance counseling experience and is a professional consultant. He provides this seminar at NO COST to parents and students. The Christian Formation board will provide lunch. Sign-up is a must. Contact the church office if you plan to attend.

Choirs in Worship Next Week

Sunday, January 12th – First Sunday after Epiphany

8:15 Organ

10:00 First Folk

THIS WEEK AT FIRST CHURCH

SUN JAN 5	8:15 am	Worship (Chapel)
	10:00 am	Worship, Livestream
		Radio Broadcast, Sunday School
	11:25 am	First Folk
	11:30 am	Teacher Meeting (room 15)
MON JAN 6	7:00 pm	All Boards Meet
TUE JAN 7	4:00 pm	Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter
WED JAN 8	11:45 am	BNI (dining room)
	6:45 pm	Staff Singers
THU JAN 9	1:00 pm	Stewardship (room 15)
	6:30 pm	Quilt Guild (dining room)
	6:45 pm	Decibells
FRI JAN 10	3:00 pm	Hunt Community Service
SAT JAN 11	11:00 am	Sisters in Sobriety (dining room)

SPRING RETREAT 2025:

Last year's Winter Retreat at Craigville Retreat Center was a huge success. This year we are offering a Spring Retreat at the Craigville Conference Center, overlooking the ocean on Cape Cod. This lovely facility overlooking the ocean and area marsh has a long history of hosting retreats in the Massachusetts Conference UCC.

Visit their website at https://www.uccr.org/craigville to explore the Craigville Retreat Center. Our First Church Retreat is scheduled for April 25-27, 2025. The cost for the weekend is $261.76 and includes all meals. You may bring your own linens, or a pack will be provided at the Retreat Center for $15.00/pp.

Please sign up online, or at the Welcome Center and secure your spot with a half deposit of $130.88 by Sunday, February 2nd, 2025.. Scholarships are available.

Contact the Church office is you have any questions.

Online Registration link 2025

https://forms.gle/xWT2GjyugQd2TWii8

Craigville
Retreat Center
ON CAPE COD

THE FIRST CHURCH
NASHUA, NEW HAMPSHIRE

STAFF

Senior Minister, *Rev. Dr. Andrew W. Armstrong*, aarmstrong@tfcucc.org
Associate Minister, *Rev. Nancy Haynes*, nhaynes@tfcucc.org
Minister of Music, *Joseph R. Olefirowicz-MA,CAGO,* jolefirowicz@tfcucc.org
Church Business and Marketing Manager, *Dianne Smigliani*, dsmigliani@tfcucc.org
Office Manager, *Tasha Drew,* tdrew@tfcucc.org
Christian Formation Coordinator, *Amanda Steere*, asteere@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 with us for the first time. Please 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 Fellowship Hall, following worship. If you have any questions about the life and ministry of The First Church please seek out the individuals wearing colored nametags; they are members of the various boards and committees.

INFORMATION

The 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 The 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. The Sacrament of Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month and the Sacrament of Baptism on the last. The 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 a 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 Tuesday. All information for the monthly newsletter must be in the office by 4:00 PM on the second Monday of the month (August through May).

All use of the building must be scheduled by the Office Manager.

THE FIRST CHURCH

One Concord Street * Nashua, New Hampshire 03064 * 603-882-4861

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9:00am-noon and 1:00-4:00pm,Friday 9:00am-noon

www.tfcucc.org