

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Sunday, December 8, 2019

Prelude *Puer Nobis* A. D. Miller

Welcome

Introit J. Berthier (*Taizé*)
Prepare the Way of the Lord
Men's Ensemble

Call to Worship Nancy Martinez, *Council Moderator*

Leader: So let us light candles.

People: Candles of joy, despite all sadness,

Leader: Candles of hope where despair keeps watch.

People: Candles of courage for fears ever present,

Leader: Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,

People: Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens.

Leader: Candles of love to inspire all our living,

People: Candles that will burn all the year long.

Hymn 114 VENI EMMANUEL
O Come, O Come Emmanuel (*verses 1 and 2*)

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits
by thine advent here; disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight. Rejoice!
Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Gentle God, we come before you in honesty and
with our need for reconciliation with others. We
have done deeds we deeply regret. We have spoken

words that have hurt others. We have trapped our
selves in false expectations, and we have accepted
transient goods to satisfy our deepest longings. We
have failed to reach out hand and heart to others in
need. We have been silent when our words could
have made a difference. We have not believed in our
selves. Have mercy on us, O God, and help us be at
peace with all your children, we pray...

(moments for silent reflections)

Words of Assurance

Anthem B. Allaway
Freedom Come from BANDARI: *Inside These Walls*
Soloist: Kyle Primous - Djembe: Drew Hoschar

Children's Message and Lord's Prayer Dee Buchanan
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.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil,
for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glo-
ry forever. Amen.

Hymn 608 CRADLE SONG
Away in a Manger
Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Je-
sus laid down His sweet head. The stars in the bright
sky looked down where He lay, The little Lord Jesus,
asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, But little Lord
Jesus, no crying He makes. I love Thee, Lord Jesus!
Look down from the sky, And stay by my side until
morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus! I ask Thee to stay Close by me
forever, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children

in Thy tender care, And fit us for heaven, to live with
Thee there.

Pastoral Prayer

Offertory P. Tschesnokoff
Salvation Is Created

Doxology OLD HUNDREDTH
Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

Scripture Lesson Matthew 3:1-3
*In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of
Judea, proclaiming, ²“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has
come near.”³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke
when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”*

Sermon Peter Wiley

Hymn 122 FOREST GREEN
Now Bless the God of Israel

Now bless the God of Israel, who comes in love and
power, who raises from the royal house deliverance
in this hour. Through holy prophets God has sworn
to free us from alarm, to save us from the heavy hand
of all who wish us harm.

Remembering the covenant, God rescues us from
fear, that we might serve in holiness and peace from
year to year; and you, my child, shall go before to

**preach, to prophesy, that all may know the tender
love, the grace of God most high.**

**In tender mercy, God will send the dayspring from
on high, our rising sun, the light of life for those who
sit and sigh. God comes to guide our way to peace,
that death shall reign no more. Sing praises to the Ho-
ly One! O worship and adore!**

Benediction

Passing of the Peace

Postlude R. Vaughan Williams
Hyfrydol

Service Notes:

Call to Worship written by the Rev. Jocelyn Gardner Spencer, adapted from
The Mood of Christmas, the Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman. © 1973 Harper & Row.

Prayer of Confession adapted from *Liturgy Link*,
the Rev. Shannan Vance-Ocampo.

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