

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**Sunday, December 22, 2019**

**Prelude** Pastorale on *Gesu Bambino* P. Yon

**Welcome**

**Introit** T. M. Scott  
Prepare the Way of the Lord  
*Chancel Choir*

**Call to Worship** Dave Longfellow, *Church Treasurer*  
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 (*all verses*)

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!

O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things, far and nigh; to us the path of knowledge show, and cause us in her ways to go. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; bid envy, strife and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

**Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

God of unconditional love, when we measure our loves against yours, we see your love is vulnerable, helpless as a new-born babe, while our love is often cautious, well defended. Your love is offered humbly, but our love too often seeks to impress with showy devotion. Your love is free; ours comes with strings attached. Loving God, forgive us, and teach us to love as you have loved us. Hear us pray...

(*moments for silent reflections*)

**Words of Assurance**

**Anthem** A. Burt  
Ah, Bleak and Chill the Wintry Wind

**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 glory forever. Amen.

**Sacrament of Baptism** Penelope Grace Araps  
Aaron James Keller

**Congregational Response:** With joy we welcome you into this church. Your baptism is not the end but the beginning of a journey of discovering just how much God loves you. This is our blessing to you: "Grow in grace and wisdom and do not fear,

for the Lord is with you. Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God."

**Hymn 150** AWAY IN A MANGER  
Away In a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for his 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 baby awakes, 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.

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** M. Lauridsen  
*O Magnum Mysterium*  
*O great mystery and wondrous sacrament*  
*that animals should see the new-born Lord, lying in a manger! Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy to bear the Lord, Jesus Christ.*  
*Alleluia!*

**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 1:18-25**

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."<sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."<sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

**Sermon****Steve Hockstra**

**Hymn 160** GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN  
Go Tell It on the Mountain

**Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

**While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night, behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.**

**Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

**The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth rang out the angel chorus that hailed our**

**Savior's birth.**

**Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

**Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born, and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.**

**Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

**Benediction****Passing of the Peace****Postlude**

A. D. Miller

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

*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.