

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**Sunday, December 29, 2019**

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

Leader: Wonder of wonders, God has come to us!

People: Not as a judge, but a Savior;  
not in power, but as a servant.

Leader: Wonder of wonders, God comes to us!

People: Not in silence, but in the Word made flesh;  
not in the shadows, but bringing Light.

Leader: Wonder of wonders!

People: God is with us!

Hymn 137 MENDELSSOHN  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" Joyful all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies; with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the ever lasting Lord! Late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity, pleased on earth with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn king!"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all he brings, risen with the healing in his wings. Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die, born to raise all

souls on earth, born to give us second birth. Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn king!"

Prayer of Confession *(unison)*

God of Bethlehem: you bless us richly; forgive our reluctance to share. You hold us close to your heart; forgive us for keeping others at arm's length. You shine in the shadows of our souls; forgive us for not sharing the Light. You lift us from where we have fallen; forgive us for not offering a helping hand. You grace us with joy; forgive us when we worship fear. Hear our prayers... *(moments for silent reflections)*

Words of Assurance

Anthem God, Make Us Your Family T. Whipple

Children's Message and Lord's Prayer Katie Morgan  
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.

Hymn 149 CAROL  
It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold; "Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven great news we bring." The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled, and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world; above its sad and lowly plains

they bend on hovering wing, and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long, beneath the angel strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong; and we, through bitter wars, hear not the love-song which they bring: O hush the noise and end the strife, to hear the angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load whose forms are bending low, who toil along the climbing way, with painful steps and slow, look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing; O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold, when with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold, when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

Pastoral Prayer

Offertory Christmas Medley traditional

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 2:13-23

Sermon Jonathan Dodson

Hymn 158

IN DULCI JUBILO

Good Christians All, Rejoice

**Good Christians all, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice; give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today; ox and ass before him bow , and he is in the manger now. Christ is born today! Christ is born today!**

**Good Christians all, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice; now ye hear of endless bliss; Jesus Christ was born for this! He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore. Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!**

**Good Christians all, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice; now ye need not fear the grave; Jesus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and calls you all, to gain his everlasting hall. Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!**

**Benediction**

**Passing of the Peace**

**Postlude**

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*Service Notes:*

Call to Worship and Prayer of Confession from *Playing Hopscotch in Heave: Lectionary Liturgies for RCL Year A*, the Rev. Thom M.

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