

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BUCKLAND

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church Phone: 625-9440 Pastor's Phone: (413) 634-5451

Rev. Richard T. Fournier, Pastor

Sandy Carter - Organist / Pianist

December 24, 2022, 7:30 P.M.

Christmas Eve: Lessons, Carols, and Candle Lighting

PRELUDE

CHORAL INTROIT "In Excelsis Gloria" - H. J. Gauntlett

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Pastor: Tonight on Christmas Eve, we kneel with families all over the earth in the presence of the Most High.

People: We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Pastor: As we have been invaded by the Light, let us enlighten.

People: As we have been found, let us seek out the lost.

Pastor: As we have been liberated, let us set the captives free.

All: For unto us a Child is born, the One whom God sends to bring peace and light, freedom and love. Thanks be to God. Amen.

***HYMN** "O Come All Ye Faithful" No. 103 vs. 1, 3, 4

THE WORD OF PROPHECY Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7, 52: 7-10

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

O God, Your birth startles us with glory that reaches heaven to earth and enkindles hope that brings earth to heaven. We thank You for choosing our hearts as Your cradle. As we gather in this candled darkness, empower us to continue the sacred work of love and peace in the world that began with Your Son, the one who taught us to pray, "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."

AN ANGEL VISITS MARY Luke 1: 26-33

AN ANGEL VISITS JOSEPH Matthew 1: 20-24

***HYMN** "Angels We Have Heard on High" No. 113 vs. 1 & 2

THE BIRTH OF JESUS Luke 2: 1-7

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

UNISON PRAYER (whole congregation)

Dear God, we are thankful for Christ's coming to live among us as one of us. His Light and his love continue to touch and heal our lives to this day. Help us to remember that Christ's presence is ever in us and in all people, making us sisters and brothers together in one family. Amen

***HYMN** "O Little Town of Bethlehem" No. 121 vs. 1 & 2

THE ANGELS APPEAR Luke 2: 8-14

***HYMN** "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" No. 104 vs. 1 & 2

THE SHEPHERDS RESPOND Luke 2: 15-20

***HYMN** "The First Noel" No. 108 vs. 1 & 2

CHOIR ANTHEM "On Christmas Day" - N. Freaking

THE MAGI COMES Matthew 2: 1-2, 9-11

***HYMN** "We Three Kings"

We three kings of Orient are, Bearing gifts we traverse a far Field and fountain, moor and mountain, Following yonder star. O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright, Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.

Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;
Al-le-lu-ia, Al-le-lu-ia! Sounds thru the earth and skies.
O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.

CHOIR ANTHEM "Carol of the Star" - Arr. by D. Moore

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE - Rev. Rich Fournier

***THE PASSING OF THE CANDLELIGHT** - Form a circle around
the church and pass the light around starting from the Christ candle.

***HYMN** "Silent Night, Holy Night" (The words below are to be
sung while light is being passed around the circle.)
Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child,
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia
Christ the savior is born, Christ the savior is born.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND BENEDICTION**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** "Joy to the World"
Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing.
And heaven and nature sing.
And heaven and nature sing.

POSTLUDE