

THE MEMORIES THAT TOUCH US,  
THE MOMENTS THAT WARM US,  
THE GOD WHO LOVES US...

# Christmas

SHINES ITS  
*miracle*  
IN OUR  
*hearts.*

*When they saw him, they worshipped him.*

MATTHEW 28:17



Falmouth Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
Festival of Lessons, Carols and Candlelight Service

8:00 PM

CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2018

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

**MEDITATION**

In Christ, God comes to dwell among us. Imagine hands that spun stars and fashioned DNA strings now wriggling to wrap around one of Mary's fingers. Welcome to the metaphor and mystery of incarnation.

**PRELUDE**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Come good friends, come to Bethlehem.

**All: Come to Bethlehem and celebrate a newborn child with Mary and Joseph.**

**Women and Girls: Come to Bethlehem and rejoice that God's symbol of love is a tiny, helpless baby.**

**Men and Boys: Come to Bethlehem and sing praises with the shepherds for what God has done.**

One: Come to Bethlehem and fall silent in awe and wonder.

*(Time for silent reflection)*

One: Jesus is born. God's Word lives!

**All: Praise be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen.**

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE**

**A BIDDING PRAYER**

Pastor Michael

**OUR LORD'S PRAYER (DEBTS)**

**UNISON**

**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.**

**\*CAROL**

**"Once in Royal David's City"**

**No. 165**

**Verse. 1 is solo. Everyone join in on verses 2 and 4**

**THE FIRST READING** Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah

**Isaiah 9:2, 6-7**

**CAROL**

**"Angels We Have Heard on High"**

**No. 155, vs. 1,3,4**

**SECOND READING** The prophet Micah foretells the Glory of little Bethlehem

**Micah 5:2-5a**

CAROL **"O Little Town of Bethlehem"** No. 144

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark street shineth the everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

*For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth.  
Your voices raise to God in praise; and peace to all on earth.*

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in; be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, our God, Emmanuel.*

THIRD READING St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus **Luke 2:1-7**

**THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER**

SPECIAL MUSIC **"Christ Child, Christ Child"** Marian Chaplin/  
The Chancel Choir Hawley Ades

FOURTH READING The shepherds go to the manger **Luke 2:8-16**

CAROL **"While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks"** No. 154, vs. 1,2,6

FIFTH READING St. Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus **Matthew 1:18-23**

CAROL **"Hark, the Herald Angels Sing"** No. 150  
SIXTH READING The Wise Men are led by a star to Jesus **Matthew 2:1-11**

CAROL **"We Three Kings"** No. 172, vs. 1,5

**PRESENTATION OF GIFTS AND OFFERINGS**

**INVITATION**

OFFERTORY **"The Snow Lay on the Ground"** Traditional/  
The Chancel Choir Leo Sowerby

\*CHRISTMAS DOXOLOGY (tune: "Old 100<sup>th</sup>")

**All: God's love has come at Christmastime.  
God's love in Jesus brightly shines.  
God's Spirit love is on the move,  
Our gifts are blessed and shared in love**

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

One: Joyfully we sing praises to God's Precious One.

**All: Joyfully we hear the Christmas story, and find Jesus, come to stay.**

One: Joyfully we present our gifts for the work of Jesus today.

**All: We give thanks to God, source of all joy. Amen.**

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

**"Good News of Great Joy to All"**

Pastor Michael

**SEVENTH READING** St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation **John 1:1-14**

## CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

*(As the carol is sung the ushers will come to receive the light of Christ and pass it among the congregation. Please tip the unlit candle to receive the light and then hold your candle straight and your neighbor tips their candle to receive the light from you. Parents please assist your children carefully. Candles are to be extinguished at the end of "Silent Night." Thank you.)*

## \*CAROL

**"Silent Night"**

**No. 145**

***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.***

## A CHRISTMAS BLESSING

*(All candles should be extinguished at this time. Thank you.)*

## \*DEPART IN JOY AND SONG

**"Joy to the World"**

**No. 143**

## POSTLUDE

**"Joy to the World"**

G.H. Handel/Franklin Ritter

*(Let us go forth into the night in joy and celebration, safety and peace!)*

## (\* Please rise in body or spirit

Throughout the order of worship, if the print is in **bold**, words may be spoken (or sung if appropriate) together in unison.




**Worship Participants**

**Greeter: Mark Horton**

**Ushers: Joe Blinick, Jo Blinick Barbara Fleming, Eric Sonnichsen**

**Advent Reader(s):**


**Nursery:** We welcome your little ones to attend the evening service



*We would like to thank our talented Chancel Choir members  
who performed special music selections  
for us this evening:*



*We are especially grateful for Doris Krueger, our Minister of Music, whose talents and  
generosity of time are a blessing to us all.*



**Visitors** are invited to sign the guest book located by the church entrance. Welcome bags are also located at either entrance for you to take. If you would like to receive a Pastoral visit or receive a copy of the church's newsletter, please let us know.

The **church office will be closed For the Christmas Holiday:** for half a day on Monday December 24<sup>th</sup> and on Tuesday, December 25 and Wednesday, December 26, 2018.

The office will be open on Thursday, December 27 and Monday December 31, 2018. {Regular Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9 AM – 3 PM}

The **Church office closed for the New Year Holiday** on January 1, 2019 and resume regular business hours on January 2, 2019.

In case of an emergency, you may contact Pastor Michael by leaving him a confidential voicemail at 781.3413, ext. 101.



**To those of you who donated poinsettias, you may take home your poinsettia plant(s) tonight.  
Thank you for beautifying our sanctuary.**

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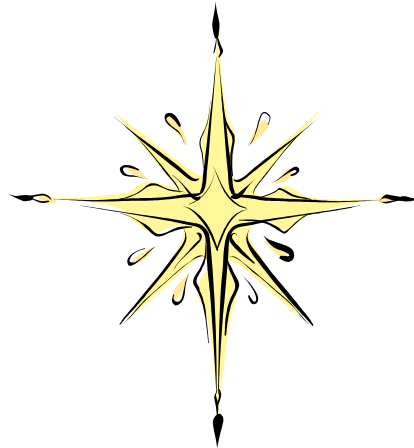
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*The Staff of Falmouth Congregational Church UCC wishes you and yours  
a Blessed Christmas and a Joyous New Year.*