



Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church PC(USA)
Energizing downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace

First Sunday after Christmas
Order of Worship

December 31, 2023
10:00am

**= please rise, whether in body or in spirit*

Thank you for being vaccinated. Wearing masks is strongly recommended.

PRELUDE

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

G. Holst/arr. L. Larson

WELCOME

Darlene Riddle

Leader: May the Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

***CALL TO WORSHIP♦**

David Jones

Leader: When Jesus is born to Mary and Joseph,

All: God is there.

Leader: When Jesus is presented at the temple,

All: God is there.

Leader: When Simeon holds Jesus in his arms,

All: God is there.

Leader: When Anna recognizes Jesus in the temple,

All: God is there.

Leader: This very morning,

All: God is here.

***HYMN 111 vs 1-5**

“From Heaven Above”

VON HIMMEL HOCH

“From heaven above to earth I come to bring good news to everyone! Glad tidings of great joy I bring to all the world, and gladly sing:

“To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild; this newborn child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

“This is the Christ, God’s Son most high, who hears your sad and bitter cry; he will himself your Savior be and from all sin will set you free.”

My heart for very joy now leaps; my voice no longer silence keeps; I too must sing with joyful tongue the sweetest ancient cradlesong.

“Glory to God in Highest heaven, who unto us the Christ has given.” With angels sing the Saviour’s birth, a glad new year to all the earth.

CALL TO TRANSFORM◆◆

Phil Davidson

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

O God,

The darkness of the world surrounds us and if we are honest, we confess that the darkness of the world resides in us. At times, we prefer the darkness to the light. Have mercy on us according to your steadfast love and infinite mercy, remind us that light shines in the darkness. Guide our feet in paths of righteousness and teach us to walk in the light through our Savior Christ Jesus.

One Minute of silent reflection

WORDS OF GRACE

*THE PEACE

Leader: Peace be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

*GLORIA PATRI

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Darlene Riddle

ANTHEM

“The Holly and the Ivy”

arr. G. Walker

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:22-35

Reader: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“What If God’s Kingdom Had Come?”

David Jones

*HYMN # 82 vs 1 - 4

“Come, thou long-expected Jesus

STUTTGART

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us let us find our rest in thee.

Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king, born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

Be thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Phil Davidson

LORD’S PRAYER

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

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Darlene Riddle

There are many ways to give of yourself to the church: The obvious, money. You can mail in your offering or click the orange DONATE button top right at secondfirst.org. Text to give is live! Text Give \$__ to 815-335-9911 and follow the instructions. Please send your prayer requests to Pastor Becky: becky.erbe@secondfirst.org.

SONG OF OFFERING

“Good King Wenceslas”

arr. D. Coates

*DOXOLOGY #606

*PRAYER FOR DEDICATION

Darlene Riddle

*HYMN # 545 vs 1 - 2

“Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace”

LAND OF REST

Lord, bid you servant, go in peace; your word is now fulfilled. These eyes have seen salvation’s dawn, this child so long foretold.

This is the Savior of the world, the Gentiles’ promised light, God’s glory dwelling in our midst, the joy of Israel.

*BENEDICTION

David Jones

POSTLUDE

“Angels We Have Heard On High”
please remain seated for the postlude

arr. P. Keveren

◆ written by Rev. Robert George, Karen George, Judy Colby-George, in *Past Meets Future: A Blessing for Today*, posted on the United Church of Christ website.

◆◆ *Prayers and Liturgies of Confession and Assurance* by Kenneth H. Carter Jr.

Valerie Blair, organist, pianist

Steve Muntz, Wes Hegge sound, video

Bob Langford, van driver

Prayer Requests

- Continue prayers Lenore Lund, Alice Uphouse, Jayne Pheiffer, Sharon Ockerlander, Bethany Stiltner, Linda Miller, Kathy Moton, Ann Stites, Katy Paterson, Peter Joachim, Sally Baker, Stephanie Cooper, Beckett Krieg, Philip and Shirley Davidson.
- And we pray for all those at home and in long-term care facilities, who may not be in worship regularly, but who remain part of our family of faith: Betty Klingensmith, Shirley Anderson, Jeanne Page, Marsha Martin, Billye Vernam, Nancy Gallegos, Willene Ziebell, Jan Elliott, Wally Gayle, Charles Rosche, Carol Eggleston, and Ruby Beckman.

Office Hours Changing New Office Hours beginning January 2.

Beginning January 2, 2024 our church office hours will be changing. The office will be open Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. The office will be closed on Fridays. Pastor Becky is available by cellphone in case of an emergency.

Overnight Café opens January 3, 2024.

We are ready to open our Overnight Café on Wednesday, January 3 at 8:00 pm. Returning staff along with new staff are in place. Look for ways to volunteer and donate on the sign-up sheets posted on easels in the South Narthex. Please keep your meals simple; single course easy to eat items like soup, pasta, tacos, and bar-b-que go over really well with our guests. Simple means less clean-up for our staff which will give them more time to tend to and monitor our guests and our church. Thank you.

Let's Celebrate! Debbie's Retirement Sunday, January 7 after worship.

Join us January 7, 2024 for a special coffee hour in the dining room after worship as we celebrate Debbie Wise as she begins her retirement. Debbie, our long time Church office manager extraordinaire will be retiring. Come and wish her happiness.

Euchre Night is scheduled for Wednesday, January 10 at 6:30 p.m.

Katy Paterson and Linda Johnson are coordinating another evening of Euchre. Please contact either of these ladies if you have questions about the Euchre night or to let them know you plan to attend.

Calendar at a Glance December 31-, 2023-January 7, 2024

Sunday, December 31 David Jones No Coffee Class 10:00 AM – Worship Service 10:20 AM – Sunday School 11:00 AM – Fair Trade Store Monday, Jan. 1 Happy New Year Office Closed No Serious Soup Tuesday, Jan. 2 7:00 AM – Men's Prayer Breakfast No Thrift Shop No Bible Study	Wednesday, Jan. 3 8:00 AM – Park District 10:00 AM – Staff Meeting 8:00 PM – Overnight Café begins Thursday, Jan. 4 8:00 AM – Park District 9:30 AM – Carillons 7:00 PM – Choir Rehearsal Friday, Jan. 5 8:00: AM – Park District	Saturday, Jan. 6 10:00 AM – Jubilee Soup Kitchen Sunday, Jan. 7 8:30 AM – Coffee Class 10:00 AM – Worship Service 10:20 AM – Sunday School 11:00 AM – Fair Trade Store 11:15 AM – Debbie's Coffee Hour
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Second Congregational (UCC) / First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

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Ministers: All Members

Moderator: Phil Davidson moderator@secondfirst.org

Acting Senior Pastor: Becky Erbe becky.erbe@secondfirst.org

Children and Family Coordinator: Aubrey Barnett aubrey.barnett@secondfirst.org

Youth Director: Rachel Huffman rachel.huffman@secondfirst.org

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Director, Peanut Bells: Sarah Hallberg sarah.hallberg@secondfirst.org

Director, Carillons: Joyce Zartman joyce.zartman@secondfirst.org

Bookkeeper/Business Manager: Nancy Yoeckel nancy.yoeckel@secondfirst.org

Office Manager: Debbie Wise debbie.wise@secondfirst.org

Building Manager: Jeff Byrne jeff.byrne@secondfirst.org

Housekeeper: Maria Mandujano

Gatekeepers: Todd Wilson, Christoffer Banks

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