

**December 24, 2025**                      **CHRISTMAS EVE**                      **7:30 PM**

## Gathering Music

Prelude                      “Carol of the Bells”                      arr. Peter J. Wilhousky

# Words of Welcome

Choral Introit                      “Come Now, O Prince of Peace”                      by Geonyong Lee  
Praise & Worship Choir

## Call to Worship

Leader: Darkness and stillness on a clear night; unsuspecting shepherds huddle against the cold.

**People:** A night like so many other nights; a night just like tonight ...

Leader: When stars may stray from their course and carols echo in the heavens;

**People: When our hearts sense something different ... something special ...**

Leader: And our bodies tingle with expectation!

**People: It could happen again;**

Leader: It is happening now!

**ALL: Tonight and every night, when hearts are open and spirits are ready. Jesus Christ is born!**

*Opening Carol	<i>“O Come, All Ye Faithful”</i>	#132
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## Lighting of the Christ Candle

Leader: Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. Christ comes to dispel the darkness, to give us life and to shine as a beacon of salvation to the world. Christ's light is an eternal flame that sets ablaze hope, peace, joy and love in the heart of every believer. Let us celebrate Emmanuel, God with us, the Light of the World!

**People: Jesus says, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”**

Leader: Tonight we light the Christ Candle, proclaiming that Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, cannot be hidden, cannot be extinguished and cannot be overcome. We light this candle, for unto us a Savior has been born.

*Light the Christ Candle.*

## Unison Prayer

**Holy God, we are profoundly grateful for the Light of the World, your Son, Jesus Christ. We acknowledge the darkness in our world and in our own lives, and we ask for mercy and courage to become people of light. Shine into the hidden recesses of our hearts. Restore us to walk faithfully with you. With all the heavenly hosts, we praise you for this most precious gift of light and life. We pray in his holy name. Amen.**

Carol                      “*O Little Town of Bethlehem*”                      #151

Reading of Scripture Isaiah 9:2-7 (OT, p. 598)

Special Music                                  “The Rose”                                  by Ola Gjeilo

Reading of Scripture	Luke 2:1-7 (NT, p. 50)	Vanessa Johnston
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Carol                      “*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*”                      #137

Reading of Scripture Luke 2:8-20 (NT, p. 50)

Carol	<i>“Angels We Have Heard on High”</i>	#135
Christmas Message	<i>“Giving Presence”</i>	Rev. Scott W. Cousineau
Special Music	<i>“O Holy Night”</i> Emily Savage & Ella Walters, Duet	
Christmas Prayer		
Christmas Offering	Offertory <i>“But Who May Abide the Day of His Coming,”</i> from the Messiah, <i>by Handel</i> Hope Poore, Solo	
Christmas Reading	<i>“The World Still Knows”</i>	<i>by Ann Weems</i>
Spreading the Light of Christ		
Special Music <i>Schmidt</i>	<i>“Still, Still, Still”</i>	<i>by John</i>
*Carol	<i>“Silent Night, Holy Night”</i> <i>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.</i>  <i>Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight. Glories stream from heaven afar, heav’nly hosts sing, Alleluia! Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!</i>  <i>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.</i>	#142
*Closing Carol	<i>“Joy to the World!”</i>	#134
*Benediction <i>Thurman</i>	<i>“The Work of Christmas”</i>	<i>by Howard</i>
*Postlude	<i>“Russian Dance”</i>	<i>by Tchaikovsky</i>

\*Indicates that the congregation is invited to stand.

At the conclusion of the service, please extinguish your candles and place them in the baskets as you exit the sanctuary. Thank you.

***The night is still; the stars shine bright. Holiness is all around. Treasure the stillness; drink in the wonder. As you lie down and sleep tonight, may the peace of God enfold you and may you awake with great joy for our Savior has indeed come. All is well.  
Merry Christmas!***

Rev. Scott Cousineau, *Senior Minister*  
Kris Galasyn, *Director of Christian Education*  
Jacqueline Savage, *Director of Music*  
William Sawyer, *Pianist*  
Audrey Cabral, *Trumpet*  
Peter Fournoy, *Trumpet*  
Sarah Heath, *Percussion*  
Linda McVety, *Cello*  
Hana Garriepy, *Piano*

# *First Parish Congregational Church*

*United Church of Christ*

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

*A Place for Everyone!*



*Christ is Born!*