

The First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
Christmas Eve 2022
A Service of Sacred Stories & Singing - 5pm

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder; and his name will be called, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end."
Isaiah 9:6-7

Gathering Music

Various Christmas Carols

*There is free HOT COCOA available and being passed around
so please avail yourself of this gift of chocolaty grace!*

Welcome Greeting and Announcements

*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey
you are welcome in this place.*

Call to Worship

Leader: Welcome to a community dedicated to spreading the love that Jesus brought to the world so long ago. Come, let us praise God, honor Christ and dedicate ourselves to spreading divine love to everyone!

People: Hooray for Jesus!

Leader: The vulnerable baby Jesus needed help. The stressed Holy Family needed help. The poor shepherds needed help. The Searching Magi needed help. The threatened power brokers needed help. God still needs our help.

People: Hooray for Jesus!

Leader: Jesus found love. The Holy Family found shelter, then safety. The shepherds were honored. The Magi found answers. Rulers learned about power. God still loves, protects, honors and teaches us all.....

People: Hooray for Jesus!

Leader: Hooray for Jesus whose Spirit still gives birth. Come, let's worship.

Opening Carol

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant.

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.

Come and behold him, born the King of angels.

O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,

O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation.

O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above.

Glory to God, all glory in the highest.

O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,

O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

O Little Town Of Bethlehem

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 years
are met in thee tonight.
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 Lord Emmanuel.

Christmas Prayer and Unison Lord's Prayer

Loving God, 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. **And do not let us fall into temptation**, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen.

The Birth of Jesus Andrew the Innkeeper

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.
The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes;
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

The Visitors and Witnesses Cappella of Andromeda

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 saints arise, join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

**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 healing in his wings.
Mild he lays His glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

Spreading the Light of Christ

*From the Christ Candle, the Prophet Isaiah, Andrew the Innkeeper, and the Cappella of Andromeda will pass Christ's light to each person in the crowd. We ask each person to be careful with your candle and especially ask parents to watch their children. On the way out, please extinguish your candles and place them in the receptacles provided.
Thank you.*

Silent Night, Holy Night

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, shepherd quake at the sight

Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia.

Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!

Pastoral Benediction

There will be an offering basket available to support the Pastor's Fund which goes to help individuals in the wider community who come asking the church for help.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL
AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT!

- ♦ *Special Thanks to Doug Olufsen for setting up the sound system and taping all the hymns.*
- ♦ *We will have only one Christmas Day service at 10am. It will be casual, include some tasty culinary treats, and kids are invited to come in their PJ's.*
- ♦ *We will also have only one worship service on January 1, 2023 at 10am.*

Christmas Poinsettia Dedications

Betty Adams In honor of family
Bill Bickford Sr..... In memory of Arlene Bickford
Mindy & Bill Bickford.....In memory of our dear mother, Arlene Bickford
Dave & Bethany Blake In memory of victims of gun violence
Jenny Bourn.....In memory of Thomas Connelly
Brian & Laurie Chipman.....In honor of all grandparents and great-grandparents
Bill Coddington..... In memory of Lynn
Sue & Dennis ContiIn honor of our family
Sharon Dettenrieder In memory of Doug Dettenrieder and Eric Dettenrieder
Myrna Doney.....In honor of Christmas love
Jen & Rick Dooley..... In memory of Harry Dooley, and Dot & Joe Pine
Howard & Janne Giles.....In memory of Howard & Lois Giles and David & Anne Cozzens
Gary HartmannIn honor of Rev. Josh Simon's new ministry and in memory of my dad, Bill Hartmann
Hoy FamilyIn honor of Thomas & Sarah Hoy, Guy & Sandy Stone, and our children
Joanne Irwin In honor of my family and in memory of Alan
Linda B. Jackson.....In memory of George A. Jackson
Marie & David JohnsonIn memory of loved ones
Jen Kelly..... In honor of Matthew, Scott, and Leona
Derek Lyman..... In memory of Brian Latuch and Phyllis Buchanan
Judy & Kevin McCullenIn memory of Ed & Peg Hurst, and Donna McCullen
McGeary Family In memory of Nancy, Bev, Bob, Colleen, Kathryn, Trevor, and Kevin
Mark MendesIn memory of George, Margaret, and Jessica
Elizabeth Miller..... In honor of Mark Dolye and In memory of Dorothy Hart
Jessica & Jonah Moos.....In memory of Leora Moos and Annette Manly
Mally Powell..... In honor of the Christmas season
Carolyn Rushford In memory of my grandparents
Sanctuary ChoirIn memory of John Mauger and Marsha Duell
Andrea & Steve Sharp.....In honor of the fantastic staff at FCCEJ
Cathy & Thomas ShearerIn memory of Malcolm Forbes and Pat Shearer
Josh Simon.....In honor of Kelly Simon & Bobbie Simon
Lauren & Gorden Starkey..... In memory of our parents: Gorden & Garnet Starkey and Richard Busciglio
Heather Stein..... In celebration of the Christmas season
Ann Marie Sullivan.....In honor of Michael & Ann Marie's 45th anniversary
Beth VolkerIn memory of Joan McGrath Greve
Carl & Alison Wermer..... In memory of our parents: Bob, Dorothy, Kerstin, John