



THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

(Reformed Church in America)

110 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12207
(518) 463-4449
www.firstchurchinalbany.org

**First Sunday after Christmas Day
December 27, 2020
10:00 am Sunday Worship Service
via ZOOM**

Photo credit: Doug Persons

RING THOSE BELLS!

As we sing those familiar carols, **Ring your Bells** to rejoice in Christ's Birth.

You can ring on the hymns, just on the refrains, or whenever the Spirit moves you.



2020 CHRISTMAS OFFERING

The Board of Deacons has designated the 2020 Christmas offering for our local clinic run by Dr. Bob of over 4 decades! Dr. Bob's clinic is committed to serving all in need with or without insurance.

The Approach to God

Prelude

Carol

In the Bleak Mid-Winter

CRANHAM

In the bleak mid-winter Frosty wind made moan, Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone; Snow had fallen, snow on snow, Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him Nor earth sustain; Heaven and earth shall flee away When He comes
to reign: In the bleak mid-winter A stable-place sufficed The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels May have gathered there, Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air, But only His mother In her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the Beloved With a kiss.

What can I give Him, Poor as I am? If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb, If I were a wise man I would do my part,
Yet what I can I give Him, Give my heart.





Carol

It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

CAROL

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven’s all-gracious King”:
the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world:
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.



Carol

Lo, How a Rose

ES IST EIN ROS

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming As men of old have sung. It came, a flower bright,
Amid the cold of winter, When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The Rose I have in mind, With Mary we behold it,
The Virgin Mother kind. To show God's love aright, She bore to us a Savior
When half spent was the night.



Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Carol

Go Tell It on the Mountain

GO TELL IT

Refrain:

Go, tell it on the mountain Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain, That Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens There shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled, When lo! above the earth, Rang out the angels chorus That hailed
our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lowly manger The humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*



Prayer of Confession

Carol *O Little Town of Bethlehem* ST. LOUIS

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 streets shineth The everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming; But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still, The dear Christ
enters in.



Assurance of Pardon

Carol

Hark the Herald Angels (verses 1 and 3)

MENDELSSOHN

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King.
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

*Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”*

Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris’n 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. *Refrain*



Carol

Good Christian friends, rejoice

IN DULCI JUBILO

Good Christian friends, rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before Him bow, And He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice, With heart, and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath opened heaven's door, And we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice, With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all, To gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!



The Prayer of Illumination

**Eternal God, in the reading of the Scripture, may your word be heard;
In the meditation of our hearts, may your word be known;
And in the faithfulness of our lives, may your word be shown.
Amen.**

The Gospel Lesson

Luke 2:22-40

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Luke 2:22-40 *(continued)*

³³And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed--and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon
The Prayer for the Blessing on the Word

The Response to God

Anthem

Messiah: For unto us a Child is born

Handel

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder;
and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the
Prince of Peace
(Isaiah 9:5)

The 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.



Carol

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

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 heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns; Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders of His love

Charge and Blessing



WORSHIP LEADERS:

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Mashona
Walston, Senior Minister;
Minister of Music: Mary Bon.

**We welcome all who gather
to worship God this
morning, especially visitors
and friends from near and
far.**

Photo credit: Doug Persons

