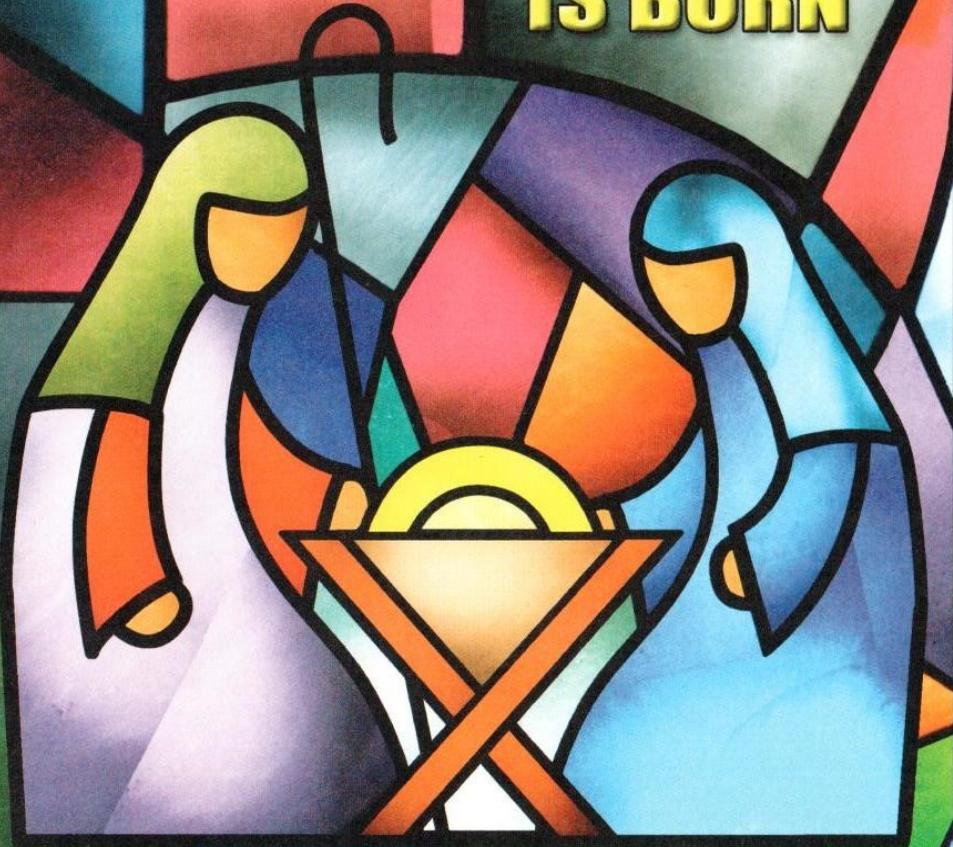


CHRIST

IS BORN



THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY

(Reformed Church in America)

110 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12207 ~ (518) 463-4449 ☎

Email: firstchurch@verizon.net ~ Website: www.firstchurchinalbany.org ~ Sunday Worship: 10:30 am

Founded in 1642; Continuing in Ministry Today

In response to God's unconditional love for all people made known to us in Jesus Christ, we are called to be a welcoming and affirming community. The First Church in Albany includes young and old, families, couples and singles, rich and poor, persons of various races, ethnicities, backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identities, differing physical and mental abilities, believers and seekers. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are loved.

Christmas Eve December 24, 2017

Prelude Music for Harp

Solo: *A Lute Carol*

Mary E. Caldwell

What sweeter music can we bring, than a carol, for to sing the birth of this our heavenly King? Awake the voice, awake the string! Heart, ear, and eye, and everything awake! The Darling of the world is come, and fit it is we find a room to welcome Him, to do Him honor, who's our King and Lord of all this rejoicing!
Robert Herrick

THE LIGHT AWAITED

The Lighting of the Advent Candles

In the Beginning

Based on Genesis 1 and John 1

*Carol 49 *Once in Royal David's City*

IRBY

(verse 1: Solo; verse 2: Choir; verses 3 & 4: Congregation)

Solo: Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed

Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed.

Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

Choir: He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall.
With the poor, oppressed and lowly, lived on earth our Savior hold.

**Jesus is our childhood's pattern, day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness, and He shares, in all our gladness.**

**And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His own redeeming love,
For that Child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
And He leads His children on to the place where He is gone.**

The Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer – *debts and debtors*

**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, for ever. Amen.**

Prophecy of Birth: Isaiah 7:14-15

The Annunciation: Luke 1:26-33

Carol 38 (verses 1 & 2) *It Came Upon A Midnight Clear* CAROL CMD

**It came upon a 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.**

Prophecy of Promise: Isaiah 40:1-5

Prophecy of Location: Micah 5:2-4a

Carol 44 (verses 1 & 3) *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 given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.**

THE LIGHT RECEIVED

The Savior's Birth: Luke 2:1-7

Lighting the Christ Candle

Choir Carol: *Sans Day Carol*

Cornish Carol arranged by John Rutter

Now the holly bears a berry as white as the milk, And Mary bore Jesus, all wrapped up in silk, *Refrain:* And Mary bore Jesus Christ our Saviour for to be, And the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly. Holly! Holly! And the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly! Now the holly bears a berry as green as the grass, And Mary bore Jesus, who died on the cross, *Refrain* Now the holly bears a berry as black as the coal, And Mary bore Jesus, who died for us all. *Refrain* Now the holly bears a berry as blood is it red, And Mary bore Jesus who rose from the dead. *Refrain*

Prophecy of Salvation: Isaiah 9:2-3, 6-7

*Carol 40 (verses 1, 2 & 4) *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 world, the Savior reigns!
Let us our 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.**

Prophecy of Messengers: Isaiah 52:7-9

The Angels Appear: Luke 2:8-14

Carol 23 (verses 1 & 3) *Angels We Have Heard on High*

GLORIA

**Angels we have heard on high, singing sweetly o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.**

*Refrain: Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

**Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing,
Come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.**

Refrain

The Shepherds Visit: Luke 2:15-20

Presentation of Gifts and Offerings

Offertory: *The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy*

West Indian Spiritual arranged by Walter Ehret

The Virgin Mary had a baby boy, and they say that his name was Jesus.

Refrain: He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.

Oh yes believer, He come from glorious Kingdom.

The angels sang when the baby born, And proclaim him the Savior Jesus. *Refrain:*

The wise men saw when the baby born, And they saw that his name was Jesus. *Refrain:*

*Carol 41 *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

ADESTE FIDELES

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:

Refrain: **O come, let us adore him,**

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;

Jesus, to thee be all glory given;

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! *Refrain:*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!

Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest! *Refrain:*

Meditation: "Gifts"

Choir Carol: *In Bethlehem a Wonder*

Early French tune arranged by Hermann Schroeder

In Bethlehem a wonder is born a child for me; And when this gift I ponder, His own I wish to be— Ah yes! His own I wish to be! O little child be to me more precious than before; In happy times and gloomy, I wish to love you more. Ah yes! I wish to love you more! True God, I now discover you in my flesh and blood. Gladly I bind me over to you my highest good. Ah yes, to you my highest good.

THE LIGHT REFLECTED

The Sharing of the Light

*Carol 60 *Silent Night*

STILLE NACHT

(verse 1: choose the language you prefer, verses 2 & 3 in English)

**Alles schlaeft, einsam wacht
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe mit lockigem Haar,
Schlaf im himlicher Ruh,
Schlaf im himlicher Ruh**

**Dauids Zoon, lang verwacht
Die miljiinen eens zaligen zal,
wordt geboren in Bethlehems stal,
Hij, der schepselen Heer,
Hij, der schepselen Heer.**

**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.**

**Noche de paz, Noche de paz
Todo duerme en doerredor.
Entre los astros qu esparcen su luz,
bella, anunciado el ninito Jesus
brilla la estrella de paz,
brilla la estrella de paz.**

**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!**

*Reading from John 1

*Benediction

*Postlude: *In Dulci Jubilo*

Johann Sebastian Bach

AΩ

*Those who are able, please stand

Welcome to the Celebration of Christmas at the First Church in Albany. The whole staff hopes the celebration of the birth of Christ will bring you time for reflection and renewal. May God grant you a joyous Christmas and a blessed New Year!

For those seated in the balcony, extra hymnals are available from the ushers.

Everyone is invited to **Wassail Hour** downstairs in Zimmerman Hall following the service. The coordinators of this year's Wassail Hour are: Rebecca Mondore, James Folts and Tom Allison.

Candle lighters: Caleb Brewer, James Robinson, Imani Brewer, Joshua Bliss, Haleigh Bliss, Kaitlyn Bliss, Mackenzie Brewer and Saniyah Bell.

Readers: Mike Dudek, Ned Monthie, Tom Allison, Cheryl Gowie, Kenny Jackson, Imani Brewer, Mary Weijola, Rob Bauer, Kaitlyn Bliss, and Mela Jensen.

Preacher: The Rev. Lynn Carman Boddien; **Minister of Music:** Mary Bon.

The Choir of First Church: Sopranos: Ella Campbell, Cheryl Gowie, Rose Hunsberger, Erica Martin, Audrey Ming, Amanda Wadsworth, Denise Wright. **Altos:** Norma Jean Ballou, Becky Hudak, Jean Lamere. **Tenors:** David Bon-Keen, David Bradley. **Baritones:** Michael Dudek, Ian Leet, Peter Subers, soloist.

Guest Instrumentalists: Elizabeth Huntley, harp; Melanie Chirignan, flute; Jay Schulman, violincello; Eric Latini, Doug Persons, trumpets; David Bon-Keen, bassoon, timpani.

Christmas Eve Offering: The Board of Deacons has designated the 2017 Christmas offering for two ministries:

- **Habitat for Humanity**
- **The St. Thomas Reformed Church.**

New Year's Eve Worship: Come ring in the New Year by singing carols and ringing bells. Do you have a family heirloom bell? An old cow bell? Bring your bells to worship on Sunday, December 31 at 10:30 a.m. If you have a bell to share, bring it! We'll have some extra bells if you can't bring a bell of your own.

Staff: Rev. Lynn Carman Boddien, Rev. Susan Vincent Cox, Mary Bond, Valerie Williams, Jeanne Bianchine, Larry Underdue, Jeffrey Curry, Lorraine Houk, Kim Roehr, Stephen Roehr, Sally Reckner, Lora-Lynn Greene. **Officers:** Ray Van Epps, Wayne Sivaslian.

Consistory: Peter Pagerey, Norma Jean Ballou, Tom Allison, Monica Marsh, Mary Weijola, Frances Carr Morton, Becky Hudak, Rebecca Mondore, Erica Bliss, Robert Dorn, Wes Coates, Theresa Brewer, William Kendall.