



Welcome

to First Church in Albany
for Christmas Eve 2020

Thursday, December 24th at 6pm



If it is safe to do so and you are able, have a candle (traditional or electric) to light later in the service.

Prelude

Christmas Carol Medley for Harp



The Light Awaited

Solo Carol

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam

Peter Subers, baritone

*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
Till He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.*

*Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine,
O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night Divine!*

*Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother;
And in His name all oppression shall cease.*

*Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we
Let all within us praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord, then ever, ever praise we!
His power and glory evermore proclaim.
His power and glory evermore proclaim!*



Call To Worship

We wait in the darkness, expectantly, longingly, anxiously, thoughtfully. The darkness is our friend. In the darkness of the womb, the Christ-child was made ready for the journey into light.

You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

In the darkness we see the splendor of the universe.

In the darkness, shepherds and Magi found the star which guided them to where the Christ-child lay.

In the darkness, dreams rise up, and God speaks to us.

In the darkness, our fears and concerns, our hopes and visions rise to the surface. We come face to face with ourselves and the road that lies ahead of us. In that same darkness, we find companionship for the journey.

WE KNOW YOU ARE WITH US, O GOD, YET WE STILL AWAIT YOUR COMING. IN THE DARKNESS THAT CONTAINS BOTH OUR HOPELESSNESS AND OUR EXPECTANCY, WE WATCH FOR A SIGN OF YOUR HOPE.



Lighting the Advent Candles

The Reohr Family

At this time, we complete the lighting of the candles of the Advent Wreath. If you wish, safely light your candles at home.

Carol

Once in David's Royal City (vss. 1 & 2)

IRBY

Amanda Bon-Keen Wadsworth, soprano

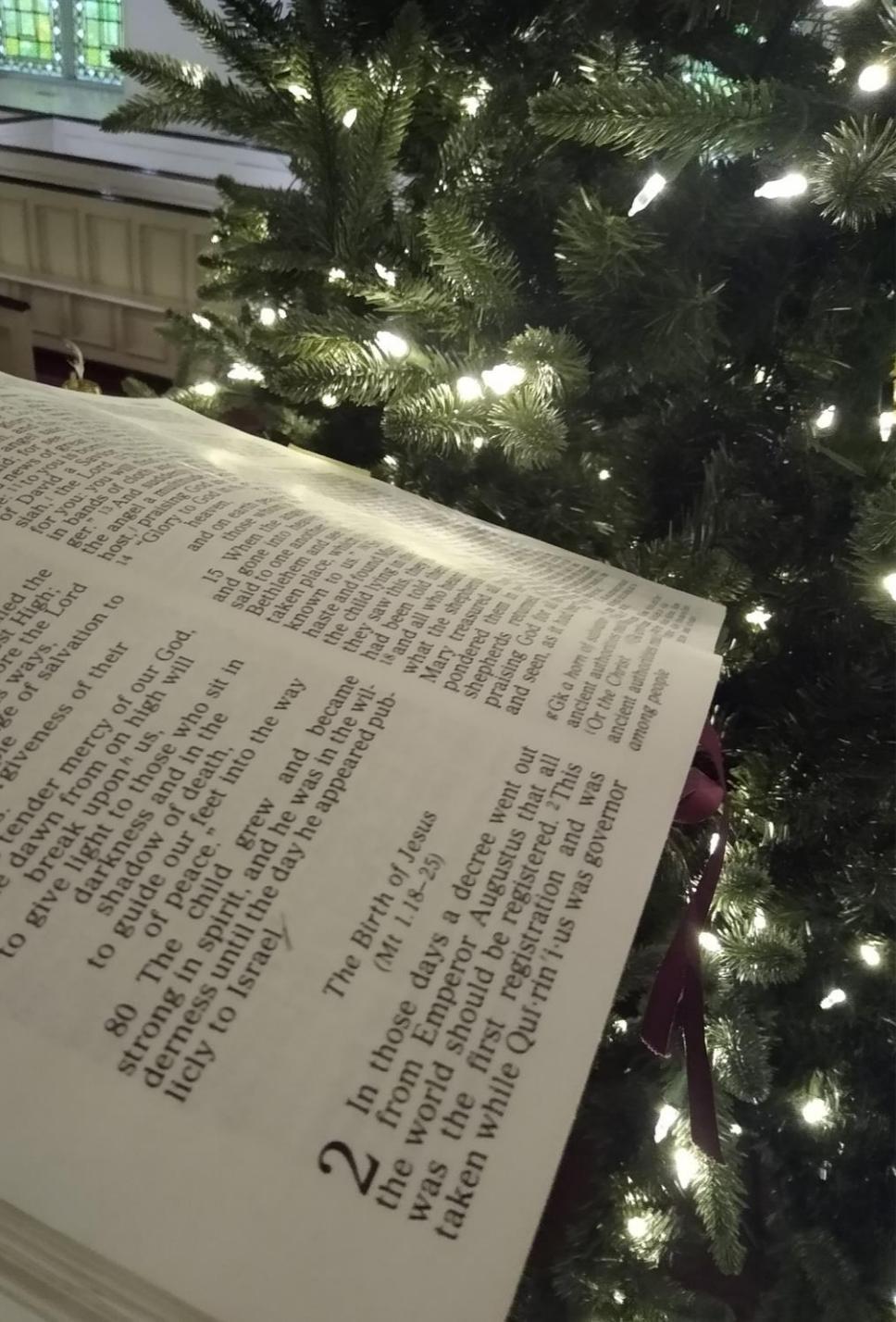
Once in royal David's city, Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

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 and meek and lowly, Lived on earth our Savior holy.



Invocation

God, you call us now in this Christmas season to
become new,
to make room for our own nativity,
even where there is no room at the inn.
Where we are busy, may we find peace.
Where we are lost, salvation.
Where we are sad, joy.
Where we are bitter, love.
Let this be a time of hope for all these gifts.
In Christ's name we pray. Amen.



The Light Revealed

PROPHECY OF BIRTH

Isaiah 7:14-15

Peter Subers



THE ANNUNCIATION

Luke 1:26-33

Imani Brewer

Choir Carol

My Lord Has Come

Will Todd

*Shepherds, called by angels, called by love and angels:
No place for them but a stable, My Lord has come,*

*Sages, searching for stars, searching for love in heaven;
No place for them but a stable. My Lord has come.*

*His love will hold me, his love will cherish me, love will cradle me,
Lead me, lead me to see him, sages and shepherds, and angels;
No place for me but a stable. My Lord has come.*



PROPHECY OF PROMISE

Isaiah 40:1-5

Jean Lamere

Solo Carol

I Wonder as I Wander

Rose Hunsberger, soprano

Appalachian Carol
arr. John Jacob Niles

*I wonder as I wander out under the sky, How Jesus my Savior did come for to die,
For poor on'ry people like you and like I, I wonder as I wander out under the sky.*

*When Mary birthed Jesus 'twas in a cow's stall, With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
But high from God's heaven a star's light did fall,
And the promise of ages it then did recall.*

*If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing, A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing, He surely could have it,
'Cause he was the King.*



PROPHECY OF LOCATION

Micah 5:2-4a

Mary Bon

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.

For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, And peace to all on earth.

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.



The Light Received

THE SAVIOR'S BIRTH

Luke 2:1-7

Becky Hudak

Choir Carol

Christmas Spiritual Medley

arr. by J. Jennings

David Bon-Keen, tenor; Peter Subers, baritone; Rose Hunsberger, soprano

There's a star in the east on Christmas morn.

Rise up shepherd and follow.

It'll lead to the place where the Savior's born.

Rise up shepherd and follow.

Leave your sheep and leave your lambs.

Rise up shepherd and follow, follow.

Leave your ewes and leave your rams.

Rise up shepherd and follow.

There was no room found in the inn.

It is the star of Bethlehem.

For Him who was born free from sin.

It is the star of Bethlehem.

Behold that star up yonder.

It is the star of Bethlehem.

Rise up shepherd and follow.

Children go where I send thee.

*How shall I send thee? One for the little bitty baby,
Born of the Virgin Mary, Wrapped in swaddlin' clothin',
Layin' in a manger.*

Well, He was born in Bethlehem.

Yes, He was born in Bethlehem.

Go, go, go, children, go. Yes, go, go, go, children, go.

Go, tell it on the mountain,

Over the hills, and ev'rywhere,

Go, tell it on the mountain,

That Jesus Christ is born.





PROPHECY OF SALVATION

Isaiah 9:2-3, 6-7

Joyce Recene

Carol 40

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 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.

*No more let sins and sorrows grow, Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.*

*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.*



THE ANGELS APPEAR

Luke 2:8-14

Norma McClement



Choir Carol

Gesù bambino

Pietro Yon

*When blossoms flowered 'mid the snows upon a
winter night,
Was born the Child the Christmas Rose, The King
of Love and Light.
The angels sang, the shepherds sang, The grateful
earth rejoiced;
And at His blessed birth the stars Their exultation
voiced.*

*Venite adoremus, Venite adoremus, Venite
adoremus, Dominum.
(O Come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.)*

*Again the heart with rapture glows to greet the
holy night*

*that gave the world its Christmas Rose, its king of
Love and Light
Let ev'ry voice acclaim His name, The grateful
chorus swell
From paradise to earth He came that we with Him
might dwell*

*Venite adoremus, Venite adormus,
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

*Ah! Venite adoremus, Venite adoremus, Venite
adoremus, Dominum.
(O Come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.)*





PROPHECY OF MESSENGERS

Isaiah 52:7-9

Ross Westhuis

Carol 23

Angels We Have Heard on High (vss. 1,3)

GLORIA

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er
the plains,

And the mountains in reply, echo back their joyous
strains.

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.

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!



THE SHEPHERDS VISIT

Luke 2:15-20

Ray Van Epps

Carol 25

Away in a Manger

MUELLER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright 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.



Video if able to edit

Carol 53

What Child is this?

GREENSLEEVES

*What Child is this who, laid to rest On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?*

*Refrain: This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing. Haste, haste, to bring
Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary!*

*Why lies He in such mean estate, Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.*

*Refrain: This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing. Haste, haste, to bring
Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary!*

*So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh, Come one and all, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him. Refrain*

*Refrain: This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing. Haste, haste, to bring
Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary!*



The Lord's Prayer

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 glory giv'n: Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing!

Refrain: 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!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

Refrain: O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!



The Light Reflected

The Candlelighting

If it is safe for you to do so and you are able, move your lit candle toward your device's zoom camera, so that we may all be joined in a virtual circle of light. Then join in singing Silent Night in your own native tongue.

Carol 60

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

Nuit de Paix, Sainte Nuit.
Dans l'étable aucun bruit.
Dans le ciel tout repose en paix.
Mais soudain dans l'air pur et frais.
Le brillant coeur des anges
Aux bergers apparaît.

Silent Night

Stille nacht, heilige nacht!
Davids Zoon, lang verwacht
Die miljiienen eens zaligen zal,
wordt geboren in Bethlehems stal,
Hij, der schepselen Heer,
Hij, der schepselen Heer.

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.

STILLE NACHT



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! 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!

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

John 1:1-4, 14, 16

Cheryl Gowie

DISMISSAL

Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston

The congregation and staff of The First Church in Albany hopes you enjoyed tonight's service. We pray for a joyous Christmas season for you and all your loved ones in this unique time. God's blessings on you all!

Worship Participants

- Readers: Peter Subers, Imani Brewer, Jean Lamere, Mary Bon Becky Hudak, Joyce Recene, Norma McClement, Ross Westhuis, Ray Van Epps, Cheryl Gowie
- Children in Worship Leaders: Kathie Monthie and
- Senior Minister: The Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston
- Minister of Music: Mary Bon
- Guest Instrumentalists: Elizabeth Huntley, harp; David Bon-Keen, timpani; Eric Latini, Doug Persons, trumpets; Elizabeth Silver, violin
- Soloists: Peter Subers, baritone; Rose Hunsberger, soprano

The Choir of First Church

- Sopranos: Cheryl Gowie, Rose Hunsberger, Audrey Ming, Denise Wright
- Altos: Norma Jean Ballou, Becky Hudak, Jean Lamere, Teressa Mannix
- Tenors: David Bon-Keen, David Bradley
- Baritones: Ian Leet, Peter Subers

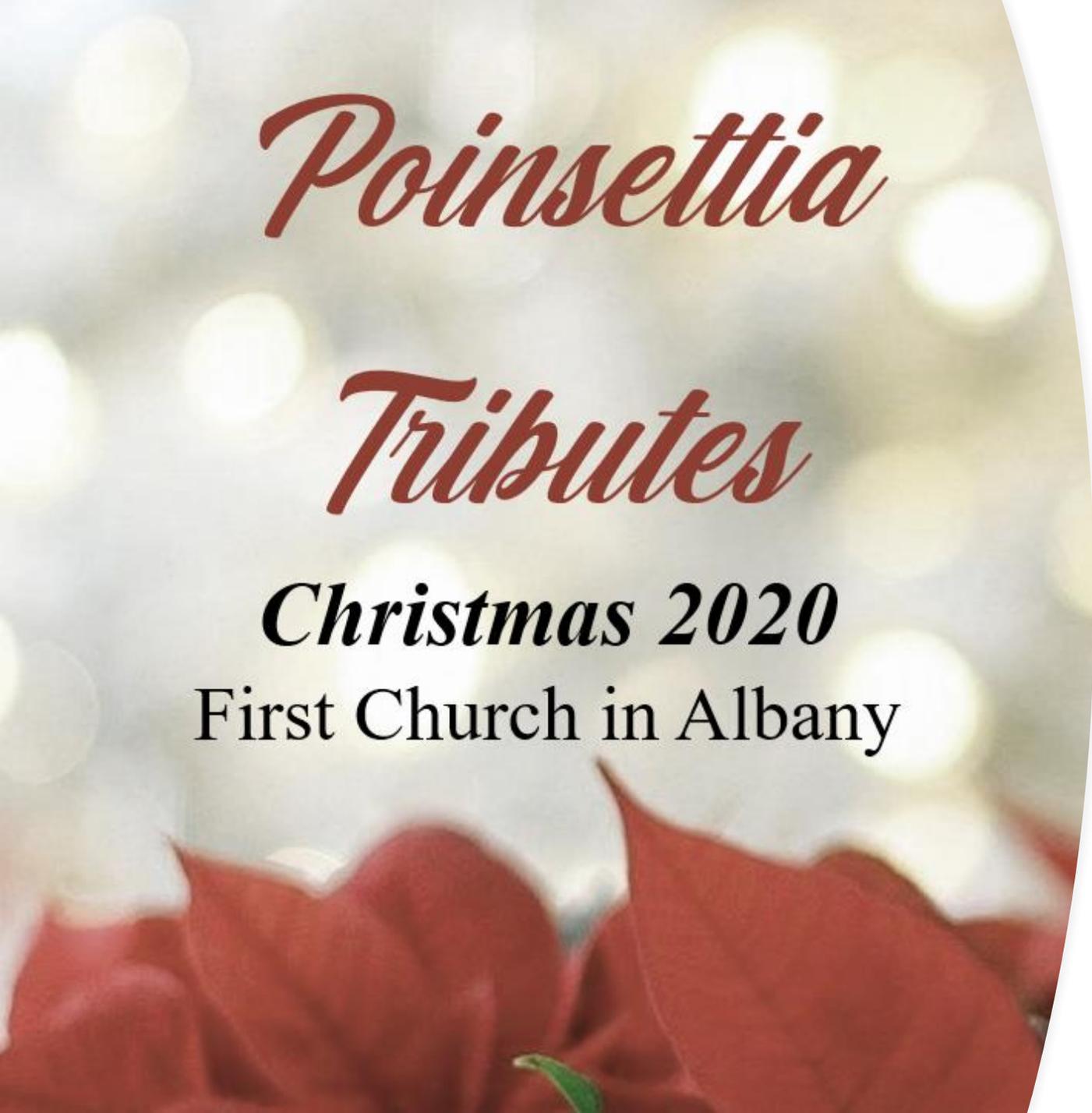


Hunt down your bells for post-Christmas Ringing

Have your bells ready for the
ZOOM Worship Service on
December 27th at 10am!

As we sing familiar carols, we'll
rejoice in Christ's birth and ring
our bells to celebrate.

Merry Christmas



Poinsettia

Tributes

Christmas 2020

First Church in Albany

- From the Bill Staats Family. In loving memory of Bill, Sandra, and Greg Staats.
- From Doug Persons. For our combined families.
- From Heidi McCormick. For Rev. Bart E. McCormick (dad), in gratitude and love from his children.
- From Edward and Katherine Monthie, in memory of his parents, Frances and Edward M. Monthie Jr. and her parents, Ruth and Herman Reiners.
- From the Monthie family, in memory of their grandparents.