

# CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023

4:00 P.M.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

BASED ON ANCIENT SOURCES, the first service of this kind in modern times was held in Victorian England. Father E.W. Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury and father of E.F. Benson who authored the Lucia novels, began the practice of a Festival Service of Lessons and Carols in preparation for the Christmas Feast, first at Truro Cathedral (1880) and later at Canterbury Cathedral. Popularized by recordings from King's College, Cambridge, this service has come to be associated with a traditional celebration of Christmas by millions of people throughout the world. Its spirit and content sum up the true spirit of the season, while taking us in heart and mind to the Christmas celebrations of former times.

As we listen today to the great music of this holiday season, as we sing the familiar carols of Christmas, let us remember the true Spirit of Christmas—that God came among us and dwelt among us. We called His Name Jesus. It is His birth in a stable that we celebrate this afternoon. A blessed Christmas season to you all!

#### MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

The Reverend Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *Officiant*

Joshua Stafford, *Director and Organist*

Jennifer Fry, *Director of First Church Ringers*

Jon Tyillian, *Assisting Organist*

Henry Gillies, *Crucifer*

Gregory Duncan, *Verger*

The First Church Choir

The First Church Ringers

Tony Philipp, William Bailey, Tiffany Damicone, Douglas Neel,

Andrew Stankey, Susan Powell, *Brass & Percussion Ensemble*

#### READERS

The Rev. Dr. Nancy Livingston, *First Church Ringers*

Harper Patterson, *First Church Chorister*

Saturn Cooks, *First Church Youth*

Adam Wade, *First Church Choir*

Dr. Melanie Corn, *President, Columbus College of Art and Design*

Rep. Dontavius R. Jarrells, *Ohio House of Representatives, First District*

Brooke A. Minto, *Executive Director and CEO, Columbus Museum of Art*

Zach Klein, *Columbus City Attorney*

The Rev. Joanna Samuelson, *Designated Minister*

The Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens, *Senior Minister*

*On the cover:*

The Nativity, Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, Italy

Giotto, c. 1304 to c. 1315

# CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

## THE PRELUDE

*Played by Brass & Organ:*

“Oh, holy night”  
Alpha and Omega  
*In dulci jubilo*

Adolphe Adam, arr. Arthur Frackenpohl, 1986  
arr. Albert Adcock, 2018  
arr. Eric Robertson, 2008

*Played by the First Church Ringers:*

“O Come O Come Emmanuel”  
“Angel Tidings”

arr. Cynthia Dobrinski, 1989  
arr. Cynthia Dobrinski, 1985

*Played by Mr. Stafford:*

*Noël X: Grand jeu et duo*

Louis-Claude Daquin, 1757

## THE WELCOME

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens

*The People stand at the sound of the bell.*

*Verse 1 of the carol is sung by a soloist, and verse two by the choir alone.*

*The People join in the singing of verses three through six.*

## PROCESSIONAL CAROL

*Irby, Henry John Gauntlett, 1849*

“Once in royal David’s city”

*Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848*



*Solo* - 1. Once in ro - yal Da - vid's\_ ci - ty Stood a low - ly cat - tle\_ shed,  
*Choir* - 2. He came down to earth from\_ hea - ven Who is God and Lord\_ of\_ all,  
*All* - 3. And through all his won - drous child-hood He would ho - nor and\_ o - bey,  
4. For he is our child- hood's pat - tern, Day by day like us\_ he\_ grew,  
5. And our eyes at last\_ shall\_ see him, Through his own re deem - ing\_ love,  
6. Not in that poor low - ly\_ sta - ble, With the ox - en stand - ing\_ by,



Where a mo - ther laid\_ her\_ ba - by In a man - ger for\_ his\_ bed:  
And his shel - ter was\_ a\_ sta - ble, And his cra - dle was\_ a\_ stall;  
Love and watch the low - ly\_ mai - den, In whose gen - tle arms\_ he\_ lay:  
He was lit - tle, weak, and\_ help - less, Tears and smiles like us\_ he\_ knew:  
For that child so dear\_ and\_ gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n\_ a - bove;  
We shall see him; but\_ in\_ hea - ven, Set at God's right hand\_ on\_ high;



Ma - ry was that mo - ther mild,\_ Je - sus Christ her lit - tle\_ child.\_  
With the poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sa - vior\_ ho - ly.  
Chris - tian child - ren all must be\_ Mild, o - be - dient, good\_ as\_ he.\_  
And he feel - eth for our sad - ness, And he shar - eth in\_ our\_ glad - ness.  
And he leads his child - ren on\_ To the place where he\_ is\_ gone.\_  
Where like stars his child - ren crowned All in white shall wait\_ a - round.\_



**B**ELOVED in Christ, as we await the great festival of Christmas, let us prepare ourselves so that we may be shown its true meaning. Let us hear, in readings from Holy Scripture, how the prophets of Israel foretold that God would visit and redeem his waiting people. Let us rejoice, in our carols and hymns, that the good purpose of God is being mightily fulfilled. Let us celebrate the promise that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will bring all people and all things into the glory of God's eternal kingdom.

**B**UT first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for the mission and unity of the Church for which he died, and especially in this country and within this community.

**A**ND because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless; the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

**L**ET us also remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

**T**HESE prayers and praises let us humbly offer to God, in the words which Christ himself taught us:

**O**UR 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 and ever. Amen.**

*The People are seated.*

ANTHEM

"What sweeter musick"

William Bradley Roberts, 1989

Robert Herrick, 1647

**W**HAT sweeter musick can we bring  
than a carol, for to sing  
the birth of this our heavenly King?  
Awake the voice! Awake the string:

*We see him come and know him ours,  
who with his sunshine and his show'rs  
turns all the patient ground to flow'rs.*

**D**ARK and dull night, fly hence away,  
and give the honour to this day,  
that sees December turned to May,  
If we may ask the reason, say:

**T**HE darling of the world is come,  
and fit it is we find a room  
to welcome him. The nobler part  
of all the house here is the heart:

**W**HICH we will give him, and bequeath  
this holly and this ivy wreath,  
to do Him honor who's our King,  
and Lord of all this reveling.

*God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*

**N**OW the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden"?' The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die."' But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' The LORD God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures.'

THANKS be to God.

## ANTHEM

"Adam lay ybounden"

Carson Cooman, 2004

Anon. 15<sup>th</sup> c. English

**A**DAM lay ybounden,  
 bounden in a bond;  
 four thousand winter  
 thought he not too long.  
 And all was for an apple,  
 an apple that he took,  
 as clerkes finden  
 written in their book.

**N**E had the apple taken been,  
 the apple taken been,  
 ne had never Our Lady  
 a been heav'nè queen.  
 Blessed be the time  
 that apple taken was.  
 therefore we moun singen  
*Deo gracias.*

## THE SECOND LESSON

## Genesis 22:15-18

Saturn Cooks

*God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.*

**T**HE ANGEL of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, "By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice."

THANKS be to God.

*The People stand and join in singing the Carol.*

CAROL

“Good Christian friends, rejoice”

*In dulci jubilo*, German folk melody, 14<sup>th</sup> c.

Medieval Latin; trans. John Mason Neale, 1853. alt.

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

*The People are seated.*

*Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.*

THE PEOPLE who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

THANKS be to God.

ANTHEM

*Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, 1599, arr. Dale Adelman, 1997

“Lo, how a rose e'er blooming”

German carol, trans. Theodore Baker, 1894, and Harriet Spaeth, 1985

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming  
From tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming,  
as seers of old have sung.  
It came, a blossom bright,  
amid the cold of winter,  
when half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,  
the Rose I have in mind;  
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.

O FLOWER, whose fragrance tender  
with sweetness fills the air,  
Dispel in glorious splendor  
the darkness everywhere;  
True man, yet very God,  
from sin and death now save us,  
And share our every load.

THE FOURTH LESSON

Micah 5:2-4

Dr. Melanie Corn

*The prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem.*

BUT you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

THANKS be to God.

*The People stand and join in singing the Carol.*

CAROL

*St. Louis, Lewis Henry Redner, 1868*

“O little town of Bethlehem”

*Phillips Brooks, 1868*

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,  
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!  
4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.  
while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.  
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.  
cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;  
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,  
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.  
where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
O come to us; a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are placed between the staves.

*The People are seated.*



*The angel Gabriel salutes the virgin Mary.*

IN the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

THANKS be to God.

ANTHEM

David Hurd, 1999

"Tell out, my soul"

Luke 1:46-55, para. Timothy Dudley Smith, 1962

TELL out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!  
 Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;  
 tender to me the promise of his word;  
 in God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

TELL out, my soul, the greatness of his Name!  
 Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;  
 his mercy sure, from age to age the same;  
 his holy Name—the Lord, the Mighty One.

TELL out, my soul, the greatness of his might!  
 Powers and dominions lay their glory by.  
 Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight, t  
 he hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

TELL out, my soul, the glories of his word!  
 Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.  
 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord  
 to children's children and for evermore!

*Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.*

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.”

THANKS be to God.

## ANTHEM

“Away in a manger”

arr. Janet Linker & Jane McFadden

*The People remain seated and join in singing the Carol.*

## CAROL

“Away in a manger”

*Cradle Song, William James Kirkpatrick, 1895*

*Little Children’s Book for Schools and Families, c. 1885*



1 A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed,  
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,  
 \*3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay



the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.  
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus no cry - ing he makes.  
 close by me for ev - er, and love me I pray.



The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,  
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,



the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.  
 and fit us for hea - ven to live with thee there.

*The shepherds go to the manger.*

IN that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

THANKS be to God.

## ANTHEM

## The Shepherd's Carol

Bob Chilcott, 2001

Clive Sansom, 1945

WE stood on the hills, Lady,  
our day's work done,  
watching the frosted meadows  
that winter had won.

THE evening was calm, Lady,  
the air so still,  
silence more lovely than music  
folded the hill.

THERE was a star, Lady,  
shone in the night,  
larger than Venus it was  
and bright, so bright.

OH, a voice from the sky, Lady,  
it seemed to us then  
telling of God being born  
in the world of men.

AND so we have come, Lady,  
our day's work done,  
our love, our hopes, ourselves  
we give to your son.

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

**I**N the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

**W**HEN they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

THANKS be to God.

ANTHEM

No Small Wonder

Paul Edwards, 1983

Paul Wigmore, 1983

**S**MALL wonder the star,  
small wonder the light,  
the angels in chorus,  
the shepherds in fright;  
*but stable and manger for God -*  
no small wonder!

SMALL wonder the kings,  
small wonder they bore  
the gold and the incense,  
the myrrh, to adore;  
*but God gives his life on a cross -*  
no small wonder!

SMALL wonder the love,  
small wonder the grace,  
the power, the glory,  
the light of his face;  
*but all to redeem my poor heart -*  
no small wonder!



*The People stand and join in singing the carol.*

CAROL

“We three kings”

**W**E three kings of Orient are;  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
following yonder star.

*Refrain:* O star of wonder, star of light,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light.

2 Born a King on Bethlehem’s plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never,  
over us all to reign. *Refrain*

*Three Kings of Orient*, John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1857  
John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1857

3 Frankincense to offer have I;  
incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, voices raising,  
worshiping God on high. *Refrain*

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. *Refrain*

5 Glorious now behold him arise;  
King and God and sacrifice:  
heaven sings alleluia:  
alleluia the earth replies. *Refrain*

*The People are seated.*

THE NINTH LESSON

John 1:1-14

Dr. Ahrens

*John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.*

**I**N the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

THANKS be to God.

*The People stand and join in singing the carol.*

CAROL

*Adeste fideles*, John Francis Wade, c. 1743

“O come, all ye faithful”

John Francis Wade, c. 1743; trans. Frederick Oakeley, 1841

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O  
2. God of God, Light of Light,  
3. See how the shep - herds, Sum - moned to His cra - dle,  
4. Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion!  
5. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing,

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem!  
Lo! he ab - hors not the Vir - gin's womb;  
Leav - ing their flocks, draw nigh with low - ly fear;  
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!  
Je - sus to thee be glo - ry giv'n;

Come, and be - hold Him, Born the King of an - gels!  
Ve - ry God, Be - got - ten not cre - a - ted:  
We too will thith - er Bend our joy - ful foot - steps:  
Glo - ry to God in the high - est!  
Word of the Fath - er, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

*Refrain*  
O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him, O  
come, let us a - dore Him, Christ, the Lord!

*The People are seated.*

MISSION INVITATION

Allison Lowery Palmer, *Deacon*

THE OFFERING will be shared by First Church Arts and the YWCA Family Center. Support for the First Church Arts depends wholly on the generosity of its patrons. The YWCA Family Center provides emergency shelter and critical services to stabilize homeless families in central Ohio. Donations may also be made by scanning the QR code, or by visiting our website at [www.first-church.org/give](http://www.first-church.org/give). Thank you for your generous spirit!

*As the following Anthem is sung, the Deacons will collect the offering.*

ANTHEM

“Welcome, all wonders”

Richard Wayne Dirksen, 1975

Richard Crashaw, 1652

WELCOME all wonders in one sight!  
Eternity shut in a span.

Summer in winter, day in night.

Heaven in earth, and God in man.

THAT he, the old Eternal Word,  
should be a child and weep.

EACH of us his lamb will bring,  
each of us his silver doves,  
till burnt at last in fire of thy fair eyes,  
ourselves become our own best sacrifice.

WELCOME all wonders in one sight!

Eternity shut in a span.

Summer in winter, day in night.

Heaven in earth, and God in man.

THE PRAYERS

“The Word made Flesh”

Dr. Ahrens, 2012, rev. 2023

*Dedicated to my children and grandchildren and all the children and grandchildren of First Church  
who have graced our lives and this congregation since 1852.*

WE have entered the days of December in which light lengthens and darkness shortens,  
and the heart awakens and the soul sings.

Let us gather our hearts and minds in a spirit of prayer:

GRACIOUS God, Creator of the Universe and each one of us,

You come to us as “The Word Made Flesh.”

And you “dwell among as full of grace and truth.”

Your Word is in our lives, and we give you thanks and praise.

IN Your deepest nights,

Your Word rises as the Star of Wondrous Light.

Your Word brightens our lives

As the herald of a new day, you are birthing - A day full of love and delight.

We hear Your Word in the stillness of winter nights

In a cardinal chirping on the edge of darkness,

In a baby cooing and a child singing herself to sleep.

In the whisper of an aging voice moving from earth to heaven.

Your realm awakens - in silence, in sound -

We hear your Word becoming flesh among us.

IN December’s darkness, we see your light.

Sometimes your light merely flickers in winter wind.

But we see your light, and your light burns within us.

And so, we light candles to cast your glow on hungry world

WE light candles of joy, despite deep sadness,  
candles of hope where despair was keeping watch,  
candles of courage when fear seeks to grip us,  
candles of peace, for violent and tempestuous days,  
candles of grace to soothe pain and burdens,  
candles of love to inspire all our living:  
Against the winds which seek to blow us away,  
we light candles for your Word, ablaze this night,  
that will not be overcome by darkness.

You gave annunciating angels clear voices and messages for the ages,  
You gave choirs messiah music of the spheres,  
You taught stars to dance joy and heavens to sing glory.  
Your joy and glory go out through your always-expecting universe,  
and the song is sung forever of your holiness that stretches beyond galaxies  
whose tender mercy and grace reach into every trembling heart.

O ANCIENT of Days,  
the psalmist and saints, the prophets and apostles,  
the shepherd and kings bend low this night to lift your Word high  
and in so lifting to raise up the timeless and timely tunes,  
the melodies of musicians, the cries of the poor, the harmonies of hearts –  
all the hurt, all the hunger,  
all the hope of all the ages  
come to Bethlehem this night.  
We come, too.  
We come for the sake of the one who was Your Word made flesh,  
the One who dwells with us,  
even Jesus Christ, our Lord, our Savior, our Dance, our Song. AMEN.

*The People stand for the Benediction.*

BENEDICTION

Dr. Ahrens

**M**AY Christ who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with  
peace and goodwill, and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God  
Almighty, Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. AMEN.



*The People remain standing and join in singing the final Carol.*

CAROL

Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

“Hark! the herald angels sing”

Charles Wesley, 1739



1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing — Glo - ry to the new - born King;  
2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, — Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
3. Hail the heav'n - born Prince of Peace! — Hail the Sun of Right - eous - ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, — God and sin - ners re - con - ciled:  
Late in time be - hold him come, — Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb:  
Light and life to all he brings, — Ris'n with heal - ing in his wings;



Joy - ful all ye na - tions rise, — Join the tri - umph of the skies, —  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see, — Hail th'in - car - nate de - i - ty! —  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, — Born that we no more may die, —



With th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, — Christ is — born in Beth - le - hem.  
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, — Je - sus, — our Em - man - u - el.  
Born to raise the sons of earth, — Born to — give them se - cond birth.



*Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing Glo - ry — to the new - born King.*

*The People remain standing for the retiring procession.*

*Once the procession has passed, you are invited to remain seated quietly for the remainder of the voluntary.*

*It is our custom at First Church not to applaud, but to respond “Amen.” at the conclusion of the voluntary.*

VOLUNTARY

Pierre Cochereau, Christmas 1968

*Sortie sur Adeste Fideles*

transc. François Lombard, 2000

#### THE FIRST CHURCH CHOIR

*Soprano:* Cindy Adcock, Marti Baumer, Candy Cummings, Sharon Ferguson, Rose Kandel,  
Ramona Moenter, Emily Riffin, Megan Smith, Susan Pusecker, Lissa Wade

*Alto:* Cari Brackett, Allison Ellenberger, Marcy Essig, Jennifer Fry, Cheryl Hoskinson,  
Nancy Loy, SallyJane Mathias, Sandra Mathias, Judy Smith, Jan Wade

*Tenor:* Leigh Briggs, Kevin Cubick, Jim Griffin, Greg Halbe, Lee Rose, Adam Wade, Aidan Young

*Bass:* Al Adcock, Stefan Duga, Sebastian Kulwicki, Ronald Jenkins,  
Ryan Jones, Mike Kennedy, Barry Moenter, Robert Moreen

#### THE FIRST CHURCH RINGERS

Janet Axt, Ellen Boriin, Stefan Duga, Ann Eliot, Greg Halbe, Sebastian Kulwicki,  
Jean Lebold, Josh Lebold, Nancy Livingston, Nancy Loy, SallyJane Mathias, Sandra Mathias,  
Donna Vogt, Nathan Vogt, Debb Wilson, Janine White

## ABOUT TODAY'S COMMUNITY READERS

### DR. MELANIE CORN

Dr. Melanie Corn is the fifth president of Columbus College of Art & Design. Since joining the college in 2016, Dr. Corn has made significant progress on the dual goals of building a national reputation for the college and strengthening CCAD's role as a leading cultural institution in the region. She has overseen the implementation of a three-year strategic plan, the construction of the new state-of-the-art Cloyd Family Animation Center, and an increase in new applicants and in overall enrollment at the college.

### REP. DONTAVIUS R. JARRELLS

Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Rep. Dontavius Jarrells earned his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in Economics from Hiram College in 2010. After graduating, Dontavius embarked on a journey in public service as an Ohio Legislative Service Commission Fellow during the 129th General Assembly. In 2020, Dontavius emerged victorious as the State Representative for House District 25, all while continuing his work at the Franklin County Treasurer's Office. His inaugural term showcased remarkable bipartisan accomplishments, such as eliminating discriminatory covenants, erasing derogatory language from the legal code, and directing \$150 million towards lead prevention efforts, drawing from his personal experience as a lead poison survivor. Following redistricting, Rep. Jarrells is in his second term as Representative for House District 1, advocating for bipartisan policies like the Paystub Protection Act and the Foster-to-College Scholarship Act. His unwavering commitment extends to raising the minimum wage to \$15.00 and championing the replacement of lead water lines, underlining his unyielding dedication to Ohio's children and families.

### ZACH KLEIN

Zach Klein was sworn in as Columbus City Attorney on January 1, 2018 after serving the previous seven years as a member of Columbus City Council, including as Council President from 2016-2017. Zach is committed to finding bold and creative ways to use the full breadth of the City Attorney's office to better serve Columbus residents. Zach has focused on how the law can be applied most effectively to promote public safety, encourage economic progress for all, and protect the most vulnerable among us. Zach grew up in Belpre, Ohio along the Ohio River and is a proud graduate of The Ohio State University and Capital University Law School. He began his career in public service clerking for the Ohio Third District Court of Appeals. He also clerked for the United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio for both the Honorable Terence P. Kemp and the Honorable John D. Holschuh. He has served in the White House in the Office of Vice President Joe Biden, and as the Deputy Chief of Legal Services in the Ohio Attorney General's office. Zach also has worked as a Special Assistant United States Attorney and has spent time in private practice.

### BROOKE A. MINTO

Brooke A. Minto has served as Executive Director and CEO of the Columbus Museum of Art since May 15, 2023. Minto's unique combination of leadership skills, experience and demonstrated success perfectly align with the Museum's critical priorities. These include articulating an inspiring institutional and curatorial vision for a sustainable future, forging and maintaining valuable partnerships at the local, regional, national, and international levels, exhibiting strategic and compassionate leadership both inside and outside the Museum and driving the realization of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) across the Museum's people, policies and programs. Minto joins CMA from the Black Trustee Alliance for Art Museums (BTA) where she most recently served as the inaugural executive director. Minto studied art history at Dartmouth College and received a master's degree in modern art and critical studies from Columbia University.

# FIRST CHURCH ARTS

## 2023-2024 Donors

### GABRIEL (\$1500+)

Ruth K. Decker  
 Stefan Duga & Joshua Stafford  
 Thomas Gerke  
 Marti & Rob Rideout  
 Drew & Lissa Wade

### ARCHANGEL (\$1,000-\$1,499)

Barb Clapham  
 William R. Mitchell, MD  
 Janet Wade  
 Lynn Wallich

### SERAPH (\$500-\$999)

Leigh Briggs  
 Greg Duncan & Gary Glover  
 Mary Day Fewlass  
 Mrs. Earl Fritz  
 Friends of Mrs. Earl Fritz,  
 in honor of her birthday  
 Carol & Jim Gallagher  
 Sarah Giffen  
 Cheryl Hoskinson  
 William Davis & Ronald Jenkins

### CHERUB (\$250-\$499)

Albert & Cynthia Adcock  
 Marti Baumer  
 Bev & Bert Cook  
 Susan & Frank Cook  
 Marci Essig  
 David and Rose Kandel  
 Nancy Livingston  
 Joel & Sandra Mathias  
 Barry & Ramona Moenter  
 Sheldon & Rebecca Taft  
 Dan & Joyce Ward

### ANGEL (\$100-\$249)

Rev. Dr. Timothy Ahrens  
 Gretchen Atkinson  
 Jill Bisping  
 Jim Evans  
 Melva Fisher  
 Dianne Frazer  
 Jennifer Fry  
 Greg Halbe  
 Dan Harkins  
 Leslie Huntington  
 Sam & Jean Lebold  
 Rev. Ken Lein  
 Nancy Loy & Tom Worley  
 SallyJane Mathias  
 Janet Miller  
 Bob Moreen & Sheri VanCleaf  
 Todd & Nyla Phillips  
 Rita & Michael Preston  
 Jon Sauer  
 Judy Smith  
 Elaine Warren

### FRIEND (UP TO \$99)

Jerry Meyer  
 Nancy Renneckar  
 Ruth Zimmerman

## FIRST CHURCH ARTS 2023-2024 Season

### JANUARY

20 | 10 a.m. Family Organ Day  
 21 | 4 p.m. Choral Evensong

### FEBRUARY

07 | 12:15 p.m. QinYing Tan, *harpsichord*  
 18 | 4 p.m. Choral Evensong

### MARCH

03 | 4 p.m. Ahreum Han, *organ*  
 06 | 12:15 p.m. Daniel Colaner, *organ*

### APRIL

14 | 4 p.m. Richard Elliott, *organ*  
 21 | 4 p.m. Choral Evensong

### MAY

01 | 12:15 p.m. Student Recital  
 05 | 4 p.m. The Hunchback of Notre Dame  
 19 | 4 p.m. Choral Evensong

*Details of all events can be found at*  
[www.firstchurcharts.org](http://www.firstchurcharts.org)

## JOIN US FOR WORSHIP!

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, DECEMBER 24  
One Worship Service at 11 A.M.

CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24  
Family Worship at 3 P.M.  
The Drama of the Nativity at 7 P.M.  
Festive Prelude at 10:30 P.M.  
Candlelight Communion with Choir at 11 P.M.

CHRISTMAS DAY, DECEMBER 25  
BETHLEHEM ON BROAD STREET  
Doors Open at 8:30 A.M.  
Worship Service at 10 A.M.  
Festive Prelude at 10:30 P.M.  
Traditional Sit-Down Meal from 11 A.M. - 2:30 P.M.

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS, DECEMBER 31  
One Worship Service at 11 A.M.

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST, JANUARY 7  
Communion Services at 9 A.M. & 11 A.M.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

444 E Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio

614-228-1741

[www.first-church.org](http://www.first-church.org) | [www.firstchurcharts.org](http://www.firstchurcharts.org)