



First Congregational Church of Tallmadge
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Liturgy for the Celebration of Worship

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 21, 2025 | 10:00 AM
Liturgist: Chuck Victor

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here."

WELCOME

The chimes call us to a time of worship

Greeting Liturgist

Prelude "Ding, Dong! Merrily on High"/ "He is Born"
- arr. Page
Flute: Cindy Dodge Chancel Men
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(Please stand.)

***Call to Worship** Liturgist

One: My soul magnifies the Lord.
All: **My spirit rejoices in God my savior.**
One: For the Mighty One has done great things,
All: **and holy is God's name. Let us worship God!**

*Opening Hymn

“All Earth Is Hopeful” vs. 1-3

ADVENT

163

All Earth Is Hopeful Toda la Tierra

Unison
D D
F# G G/B A7

1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:

1 To - da la tier - ra es - per - ra al Sal - va - dor
2 Di - ce el pro - fe - ta al pueb - lo de Is - ra - el:

D F#m G Em7 A A7

Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
“A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el”; she con -

y el sur - co a - bier - to, la o - bra del Se - ñor; es el
“De ma - dre vir - gen ya vie - ne Em - man - u - el,” se - rá

Bm F#m G C#dim
E D F#m
F# A

la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
ceived him, “God with us,” our broth - er, whose birth re -

mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
“Di - os con nos - tros,” her - ma - no se - rá, con



God's truth and jus-tice set ev-ery-bod-y free.
stores hope and cour-age to chil-dren of this earth. (4) ev-er sets us free.

cla-ma ju-sti-cia y bus-ca la ver-dad.
él la es-per-an-za al mun-do vol-ve-rá. (4) dar-nos lib-er-tad.

3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;
new highways opened, new protocols declared.
Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!
All clear every gateway, in haste, come out in haste!

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Faithful God, we know that you are always there to guide us, yet we often make plans without listening to you and discover that our human agendas can drown out our ability to hear your will for us. We repent of these faults and turn to you in love. Forgive our offenses and pardon our sins that our lives may magnify your holy name forever. Amen.

***Declaration of Forgiveness**

One: Sisters and brothers, ...
... God brings us home shouting for joy.
All: **Blessed be the God of our salvation,
whose mercy is everlasting.**

***The Advent Kyrie (sung to the first half of Veni Emmanuel)**

*O Lord, have mercy upon us; O Christ, have mercy upon us;
O Lord have mercy upon us;
and grant us peace this Advent through.*

Special Music

“Do You Hear What I Hear?” - Douglas E. Wagner

Chancel Bells, Director: Rev. Daniel Doty

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Lighting the Advent Wreath

The Ickes Family

Introduction

(The first, second, third and fourth candles are lit)

Advent Prayer

Loving God, we open ourselves to you this Christmas season. As these candles are lit, light our lives with your imagination. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that comes from justice. Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared. Magnify your love within us. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

Hymn (sung to the tune of “Still, Still, Still”)

*Love, love, love- The heart of Christ is love.
On all who come He Pours His Presence -
Life and Love in holy essence.
Love, love, love- The heart of Christ is love.*

Commission and Blessing

One: When you depart ...
...We will go forth in hope, peace, joy,
and love.
All: **Amen.**

Anthem

“Pat-a-Pan Noel” - arr. Schram

Chancel Choir, Director: Nancy Lynn Robinson

Flute: Cindy Dodge, Triangle: Erin Hoffman,

Tambourine: Carol Law, Woodblock: Becky Rapini

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A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

Children's Message

Wendy Brown

Anthem

“Wolfgang’s Christmas Canon” - Mozart/Fettke

Chancel Choir, Director: Nancy Lynn Robinson

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Naming our Prayers before God

Moments of Silent Prayer

Intercessory Prayer w/ Lord's Prayer (using debts/debtors)

Prayer Response

*Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

Special Music

“Emmanuel, God with Us” - Nockles/Larson

Chancel Women

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HEARING GOD'S WORD FOR THE DAY

Scripture Lesson

Gospel Lesson: Luke 1:26-38

⁴²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

²⁸And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.' ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you

will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He 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. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ ³⁴Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’ ³⁵The 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. ³⁶And 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. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.’ ³⁸Then 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.

Liturgist: The Word of God for the people of God

Everyone: **THANKS BE TO GOD**

***Hymn of Preparation**

“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear” vs. 3

**And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
Look now! for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!**

Sermon

“Upon a Midnight Clear: Look Now”
- Rev. Daniel Doty

Anthem

“The Little Drummer Boy”
- Davis, Onoriti, & Simeone/Goss

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Special Music

“Some Children See Him” - Alfred Burt
Solo: Rev. Daniel Doty

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THE OFFERING

Invitation to the Offering

GIVE ONLINE HERE



Offertory

“What Child Is This” - English Melody
Piano Solo: Corey Cammel
Arr. Corey Cammel

(Please stand.)

*Doxology

Bb Major: Bb Eb Bb F7 Bb
A Major (Capo 1): A D A E7 A

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise
God all crea - tures here be - low. Praise
God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

*Prayer of Dedication

Lord, we give you thanks that in the coming of Christ your steadfast love and faithfulness have met and your righteousness and peace have kissed. May the gifts we offer this day lift up those in need and prepare the way of your salvation. Amen.

Special Music

“The Christmas Song” - Mel. Torme & Robert Wells

Solo: Cindy Dodge

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Special Music

“Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas”

- Martin and Blane

Saxophone Solo: Lucas Dodge

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WE ARE SENT BY GOD TO BE THE GOOD NEWS

***Closing Hymn** “Journey to Bethlehem” by Daniel Doty
(words on the following page)

***Benediction** “White Christmas” - Irving Berlin
Solo: Erin Hoffman

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*Congregation Response

“Go now in peace, never be afraid
God will go with you, each hour of every day.
Go now in peace, in faith and in love.”

Go Now in Peace—Besig, © Harold Flammer Music, A division of Shawnee Press, Inc.

Postlude “Joy to the World” - G.F. Handel/Burkhardt

Organ: Nancy Lynn Robinson

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JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

Words: Rev. Daniel J. Doty, O.S.L.

Suggested Tune: Cranham, Irr.
"In the Bleak Mid-winter"

*to Trinity United Church of Christ
Christmas Eve 2006*

A decree was spoken, all those years ago.
Then the two did travel; Bethlehem did go.
They were tired and weary,
long was the way.
At the Inn they stopped; and
rested on the hay.

Mary was with child, labor came that night,
Joseph watched in wonder, he was filled with fright.
Then the two did ponder,
their first child was born,
In a humble manger,
on that blessed morn.

Wrapped in swaddling clothing, Jesus was this child.
Laid upon a manger, he was meek and mild
From that humble birth place,
good news he would bring.
Everlasting life,
to the earth did bring.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HELPED WITH OUR SERVICE TODAY

Tech Team:

Liturgist: Chuck Victor

Lector: Camryn Ickes

Ushers: Jane Charles, Sandy Haydu, Dave Marconi, Gary Myers

Greeters: Jim and Kathy Harris

Lighting the Advent Candle: The Ickes Family

UPCOMING EVENTS

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE | SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 4:00 PM



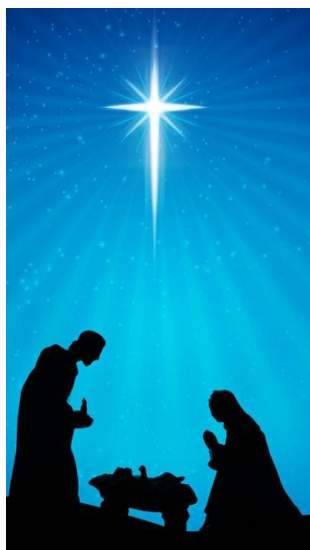
Blue Christmas. During the holidays, so many of us may suffer for all kinds of reasons. The magnitude of our weary world weighs on our hearts and minds. First Congregational Church of Tallmadge, in response to these realities, will offer a "Blue Christmas" service (also sometimes called the Longest Night service). Our Blue Christmas service will be held on Sunday, Dec. 21st (the Longest Night) at 4:00 PM.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES | WED, DECEMBER 24, 4:30 PM & 7:00 PM

We will have 2 services for you to enjoy this Christmas Eve. We will begin our 4:30 PM service in the Fellowship Hall. Come and visit our "Bethlehem market stalls." There you will find a craft stall. There will be music and carol singing. There will be a refreshment stall where you can have cocoa and cookies. We will have tables and chairs for conversation as well.

Mary and Joseph will arrive at some point, and we will join their procession to the sanctuary where we will finish the service. We are hoping that this immersive experience will help us all deepen our praise and devotion to the newborn king.

Then, we will have the traditional Lessons and Carols service at 7:00pm. This service will feature our musicians, including the yearly visit of our cellist and harpist. Make plans to join us now!



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JESUS

who is
this person
we
profess to
follow?

JAN10

2026 FCC ALL CHURCH RETREAT

8am-7pm

Loyola Retreat House | Green, OH
Register by Dec. 15th

FCC | December 28 | 10am

Christmas Brunch and Carol Sing

Fellowship Hall

Casual Christmas Carol Sing & Brunch Join your church family on the First Sunday after Christmas (Dec. 28th this year) for a casual service of carol singing in our Fellowship Hall. Wear a Christmas sweater (ugly or not!) We will gather around tables and eat, color Christmas mandalas, sing, pray and hear scripture readings.

Diapers for Jesus

We are collecting diapers for Baby Jesus as a special offering at our 4:30 PM service on Christmas Eve. Please bring diapers, of any brand or size, and we will donate them to a local women's shelter.

We will not have

Faith In Action,

Children's Message, or WAM

on Dec. 28th or Jan 4th.

"Gifts That Keep on Giving"

Epiphany Sermon Series 2026

Now that the more commercialized season of gift giving has come to a close, we can now look to gifts that keep on giving. During this Epiphany season we will focus on some of God's unexpected gifts that we can enjoy long after the Christmas tree has been hauled away. These are gifts that "reveal" themselves in new ways as time goes on. We will be challenged to recognize the often-surprising gifts that are extended to humanity and are ours to receive if we are bold and loving enough to accept them.

This series will start on Sunday, January 11th following the Epiphany celebration which focuses on the gifts brought to Jesus by the Magi. Gather with your church family each Sunday through February 15 to discover what these priceless gifts are!



THE PRAYER CHAIN CONNECTION

We pray for the names listed below and also for many other church members and their concerns, which remain confidential. You may call or text Diana Caldwell with your prayer concerns @ 330-265-5723.

Blessed be God who did not refuse me the kindness I sought in prayer. Psalm 66:20

Brad Ashley
Noreen Ashley
Tim Ashley
Sharon Bible
Katie Ann Bickett
Margarete Boschert
Jim Brown
Patti Calvarese
Jim Caplinger
Patty Conely
Rylin Davis and family
Sean and Sara Doty
Debbie Fickes
Karen Ford
Marge Gibbs
Eleanor Hall
Angela Hammelman
Alleen Hilbish
John Huffman
Jim Jackson
John James

Nancy Johnson
Zell Lambert
Roberta Lewis
Ellen McKee
Ron Mitchell
Roberta Nehrenz
Bob Poff
David and Jackie Parker
LTJG John Norton
Heather Read
Alice Sheeler
Eddie Showalter
Lt. Maxwell Spear
Jeff Sullivan
Richard & Karen Thomason
Kim and Noel Walters
Ensign 2 Kaitlyn Wetter
Don Woerz
Alzheimer's Care Giver Support Group

END OF YEAR FINANCIAL INFORMATION

If you have reached an age where you are required to take a minimum distribution from your IRA Account, talk to your tax and investment advisors about having the distributions sent directly to First Congregational Church and/or any other qualified charities to which you donate. This could help reduce your taxable income.

In order to be included in your 2025 "gift letter" from the Church, monetary gifts must be received by the Church by December 31, 2025, or if mailed, post marked by that date.

2026 Giving Envelopes are available for pick up in the atrium. We are no longer using giving numbers. Please find your name and take yours today!

Rev. Daniel J. Doty, *Senior Minister*
Nancy Lynn Robinson, *Choir Director/Organist*
Wendy Brown, *Director of Family Ministries*

IN PERSON | PARKING LOT | ONLINE WORSHIP

SUNDAYS AT 10:00 AM

OFFICE HOURS

Monday—Thursday: 9:00 am—3:00 pm
Fridays—9:00 am—12:00 pm

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