

*Welcome to The Church of the Open Door.
Our door is open to you at whatever point you are in your journey of faith.*

Donating to First Congregational UCC

If you are enrolled in automatic contributions, you may still participate in the weekly offering by submitting a Giving Card, found in the pews. Pledge cards are available in the pews and may be placed in the offering plates at any time. Checks can also be mailed to the church.

You are also invited to donate via virtual offering. Please visit our webpage and click “Give” to make your weekly offering, or text FCUCC GIVE to 73256.

References to God

References to God in traditional prayers, readings, and hymns in our worship may sometimes be gender specific. As we pray and sing together, you are invited to substitute terms that reflect your understanding of the full inclusiveness of the spirit of God.

Land Acknowledgement

Our church is located on the ancestral homelands of the Menominee Nation. We acknowledge this indigenous community who stewarded this land throughout the generations and pay respect to their elders past and present.

Online Streaming and Podcasting

You can watch a live stream of First Congo services on Facebook.com/1stCongo or at: www.firstcongoappleton.org/worship-with-us/livestream.

Video recordings of our live stream services can be found at: www.firstcongoappleton.org/worship-with-us/previous-livestream-services/

Written transcripts of the sermon can be downloaded at: www.firstcongoappleton.org/worship-with-us/sermon-transcripts/

Upcoming Worship Schedule

December 26, 2021	First Sunday after Christmas	Rev. Nick Hatch
Livestreaming at 9:30 AM		
Scriptures: Psalm 148		
Music: Dr. Nathan Birkholz, <i>organ</i> ; Congregational Hymn Sing; Kris Glenn, <i>soprano</i>		
Lay Reader: Kris Henke		

CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY WORSHIP SERVICE

December 24, 2021

4:00 PM

Rev. Dr. Stephen P. Savides, Senior Pastor
Rev. Nicholas J. Hatch, Pastor for Youth and Family Ministries
Rev. Dr. Laurie Lyter Bright, Pastor for Congregational Care and Mission

PRELUDE

O Come, Little Children

arr. Lloyd Larson

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

arr. Ed Hogan

Angels We Have Heard on High

arr. Sue Mitchell-Wallace

Elizabeth Melchert, *organ and piano*; Kristen Henke, *trumpet*

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME AND GREETING

CHORAL INTROIT

From *Light of Hope: A Trilogy for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany*

Mark Patterson

1. Light of Hope, Light of Peace

2. Unto Us (based on Isaiah 9:6)

Children's Choir (*pre-recorded*) Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *piano*
John Albrecht, *director*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: To the shadows of our world there came a great Light!

People: The Light came as a child, the Son of God.

Leader: He is the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

People: May this glorious Light shine through the shadows as we offer worship and praise to our almighty Creator!

*OPENING CAROL (Stanzas 1, 2 and 3)

O Come, Little Children

IHR KINDERLEIN KOMMET

1. O come, little children, O come, one and all,
to Bethlehem run, to the manger so small,
and see this glad gift God has sent you this night
to be your great gladness, your joy and delight.

* Please rise, in body or in spirit

2. **He's born in a stable for you and for me;
draw near by the bright gleaming starlight to see,
in swaddling clothes lying so meek and so mild
and purer than angels, the heavenly child;**
3. **See Mary and Joseph with love beaming eyes
are gazing upon manger bed where he lies;
the shepherds are kneeling with hearts full of love
while angels sing loud alleluias above.**

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

INTRODUCTORY SENTENCES

READING OF SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:6 (OT p. 781), Luke 2:10-12 (NT p. 71)

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

UNISON PRAYER

We thank you, God, for your gift of Jesus Christ to the entire world. We thank you that Christ's coming makes hope, peace, love and joy possible for every person. Encourage us to do our part to bring goodwill and peace to our families, our churches, our neighborhoods, and the world. Now let your spirit put us in touch with you, the living God, through the words and music we hear today. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

CAROL (Stanza 4)

O Come, Little Children

IHR KINDERLEIN KOMMET

4. **Dear Christ Child, what gifts can we children now bring?
No riches or treasures, but carols to sing
and hearts filled with praise we would offer today;
we offer them gladly; accept them, we pray.**

BRIEF MEDITATION

"Our Christmas Story"

Rev. Nicholas Hatch

MUSICAL REFLECTION

What Child Is This?

arr. Stephen Bulla

Kristen Henke, *trumpet*

(During this time, you are invited to a virtual offering. Please visit our webpage and click "Give" to make your weekly offering, or text FCUCC GIVE to 73256).

***DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

AN UNEXPECTED CHRISTMAS

A SURPRISE VISIT

CAROL (Stanzas 1 and 2)

Away in a Manger

AWAY IN A MANGER

- 1. Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**
- 2. 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.**

THE SHEPHERDS KEEP WATCH

CAROL (Stanzas 1 and 2)

Silent Night

STILLE NACHT

- 1. 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.**
- 2. 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!**

ANGEL GREETINGS

CAROL (Stanzas 1 and 2)

The First Nowell

THE FIRST NOWELL

- 1. The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

Chorus: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

2. They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east, beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. *Chorus*

THE SHEPHERDS VISIT JESUS

CAROL (Stanzas 1 and 2)

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

1. 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 street shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary,
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.

THE WISE MEN FOLLOW A NEW STAR

CAROL (Stanzas 1 and 2)

We Three Kings of Orient Are

KINGS OF ORIENT

1. We three kings of Orient are,
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

Chorus: O star of wonder, star of night,
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.

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

CAROL (Stanzas 1, 2, and 4)

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

1. 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;

*Chorus: O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!*
2. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; *Chorus*
4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy
morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;
Chorus

CLOSING WORDS

*CAROL

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

1. Joy to the world! The Lord has 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.
2. 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.
3. 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 BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

O How Joyfully / Joy to the World

arr. Cindy Berry

TODAY'S MUSICIANS

Elizabeth Melchert, *organ and piano*

Kristen Henke, *trumpet*

Luke LaViolette, *boy treble*

Children's Choir, accompanied by Dr. Nathan Birkholz (*pre-recorded*)

John Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*

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Note to our families: Our First Congregational Children's Choir (grades 2-6) rehearses on Wednesdays from 4:30-5:15 PM (masked and distanced), resuming on Wednesday, January 5, 2022. Youth Handbells (gr. 7 -12) also resume rehearsing that evening at 5:45 PM. For new registrations, please contact **John Albrecht** at jalbrecht@firstcongoappleton.org or call the church office at (920) 733-7393. Thank you!

The church office will be closed, Monday December 27 and Monday, January 3.

In order to receive a tax credit on church donations for the 2021 year, all contributions must be received in the church office by 3:00 PM on Thursday, December 30 or postmarked by December 31.

Gifts for the 2021 Advent Display

In celebration of:

First Congo clergy and staff given by Rick and Sue Detienne

In honor of:

Our worship leadership given by Cheryl and Ron Reissmann

All the people who take part in the beautiful music for Christmas
given by Sharon Radke

In loving memory of:

Alicia Rose Arndt Dorn - best friend, young mother and wife, gone too soon from all
who still love her, given by Anne Brahe

Dan Benz, given by Gerry Benz

Adele & John Bowman, Marion & Elmer Gosse, given by Karen and Dick Gosse

Everett Erstad and John Mendonca, given by Dan, Heidi, Natalie, and Ross Erstad

Jack & Dolores Frederick, Norman & Judy Clay, given by Dave and Carolyn Frederick

Vaughn Gehrt, given by Esther Gehrt

Brandon Groh, given by Ed and Cathy Groh

Clarence & Elaine Hartung, Gerald & Evelyn Desmond
given by Tony and Luann Desmond

Rev. Harvey Kandler, given by his family

Larry & Dolores Loomis, given by Mike and Linda Loomis

My brother John Varner, given by Faye Binsfeld

Dick & Joyce Sullivan, Bob & Andy Lacey, given by the Halletts

Evelyn & James P. Vercouteren, given by Beth Vercouteren

Gary Wisneski, given by Sue Wisneski

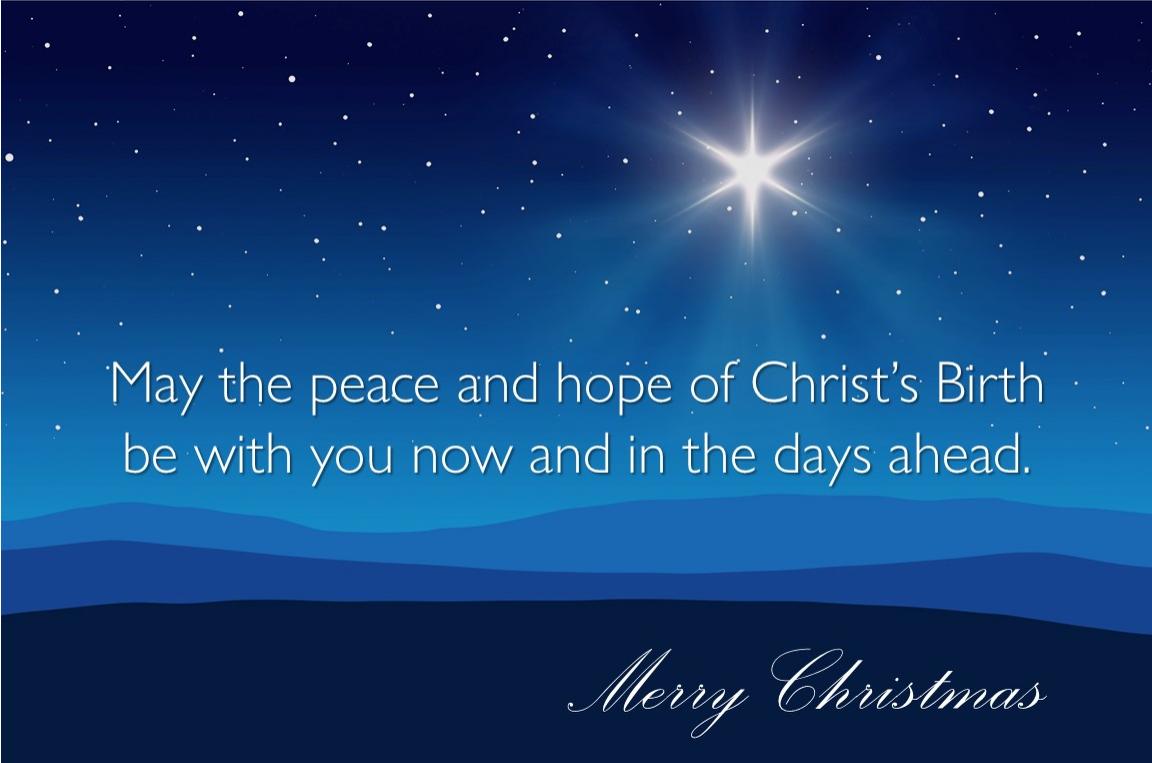
The Ministry

Reverend Dr. Stephen P. Savides, Senior Pastor
Reverend Nicholas J. Hatch, Pastor for Youth and Family Ministries
Reverend Dr. Laurie Lyter Bright, Pastor for Congregational Care and Mission
Reverend John T. McFadden, Pastor Emeritus
John M. Albrecht, Director for Music Ministries
Dr. Nathan Birkholz, Organist
Dianne Droster, Director for Children and Middle School Ministry
Carolyn Frederick, Office Manager and Administrative Assistant
Holly Volkman, Administrative Assistant for Communications
Beck Fritsche, Administrative Assistant
Siri Witt, Bookkeeper
Matt Feuerhelm, AV Coordinator
Bart Forseth, Custodial Supervisor
Tom Ott, Custodial Assistant
Pat Metoxen, Custodial Assistant
Lauren Micke, Weekend Custodial Assistant

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Appleton, Wisconsin 54915

Phone: (920) 733-7393

Website: www.firstcongoappleton.org

A night sky with a bright star and rolling hills. The sky is dark blue with many small white stars. A large, bright, multi-pointed star is in the upper right. Below the sky are three layers of rolling hills in shades of blue, from light to dark. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

May the peace and hope of Christ's Birth
be with you now and in the days ahead.

Merry Christmas