

CHRISMON SERVICE
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT-JOY
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
RIVER EDGE, NEW JERSEY
DECEMBER 10, 2023 – 10:00 AM



The First Congregational Church of River Edge welcomes you to our worship service this morning!

✠ *The congregation may stand, if comfortable doing so. Bold Text is spoken in unison by the congregation.*

THE APPROACH TO GOD

The chiming of the hour calls us to quiet our distractions during the Prelude...and to seek God's coming into our hearts and lives.

PRELUDE

Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland

H. Walcha

INTROIT

Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord
(feel free to sing with the choir)

S. Schwartz, arr. Gilpin

CALL TO WORSHIP

Worship is not a solo act.

We gather together; we find joy, and God, in the act of connection.

Joy is a sacred gift deeper than happiness.

and stems from the truth that we belong to God.

When joy feels impossibly out of reach,

we lean on one another as part of being in shared community.

I will share my joy when yours runs out.

We will share our joy when yours runs out, and in doing so we will all see God.

WELCOME

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Let us pray:

Holy God, we know that you are near. Invite us into your Word, into relationship, and deeper into joy. Give us the wisdom to hear your wisdom and change us. Amen.

CANDLE LIGHTING

Silent Night

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH-JOY

How does a weary world practice joy?
By dancing and throwing birthday parties.
By hanging Christmas lights and holding sleeping babies.
By singing loudly and looking for good news.
By telling the story of Jesus and showing up for our community.
There are a million ways to practice joy.
So today we light the candle of joy as a reminder and as a charge.
With God's help, may we bring joy into a weary world. Amen.

(We re-light the first candle then light the second candle in the wreath)

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (TO THE TUNE OF O, O COME EMMANUEL)

O come to us like joy of heaven's dawn
From Mary's womb a faithful paragon
Brought forth into this world by love's power
Your Spirit through her labors in that hour
Rejoice, Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to us
And all things shall be well.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Holy God,
Somewhere in our childhood we face pressure to outgrow awe.
We turn into adults who obsess over data and facts.
We praise those who have answers,
And assume that wonder is an answerless game.
Forgive us for closing that door to you.
Remind us that the kingdom of God belongs to children.
Teach us the ways of awe and wonder,
So that when we find ourselves speechless,
Our first words will be words of praise.
With hearts open wide, we pray, Amen.**

(A time for silent confession follows)

Lord, have mercy.**Lord, have mercy.****Lord, have mercy upon us.****Christ, have mercy.****Christ, have mercy.****Christ, have mercy upon us.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Family of faith,

Just as we marvel at mountains and newborns,

At sunrises and sunsets,

God marvels at us.

There is nothing you can do or leave undone that could prevent God from loving you.

So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

We are forgiven.**We are loved.****We belong to God, Amen.**

✠ GLORIA

She-pherds, why this ju - bi-lee? Why your joy-ous strains pro-long? What the glad-some
 tid - ings be Which in - spire your heaven ly song? Glor - - -
 - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o; Glo - - -
 - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

✠ PEACE

Peace and joy be within these walls.

Peace and joy be within our hearts.

May the peace and joy that is in Christ be in you.

And also in you.*The people offer a sign of peace to one another.*

SHARING OUR TITHES, OUR GIFTS, AND OUR OFFERINGS

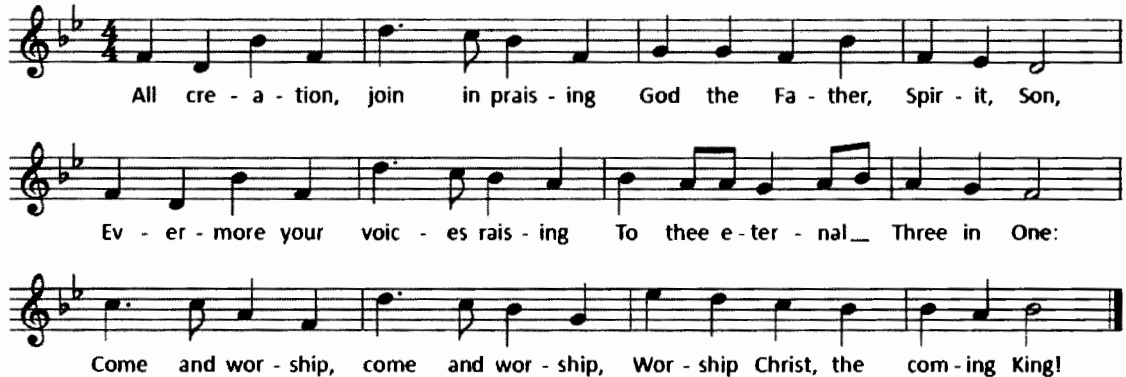
In recognition of the inclusion of our traditional Chrismon service in this morning's worship, FCC members and friends are encouraged to include, along with your regular giving, a second offering to support our Church School children in their sponsorship of Angelie Adame through Global Ministries. A separate "Chrismon Child Sponsorship" envelope is included in your bulletin.

OFFERTORY

SHEPHERD SONG

MOLLY IJAMES

✠ DOXOLOGY



All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,
Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing To thee e - ter - nal_ Three in One:
Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the com - ing King!

✠ PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We dedicate these gifts that have been shared for the support of the beloved community. Let these gifts usher peace into this world and signal to the people that God is with us. Amen.

THE CHRISMON TREE

INVITATION TO BRING CHRISMONS/GIFTS

Placing of the Chrismons is an act of love and pledge of devotion to Jesus Christ. Chrismons and gifts can be brought forward at this time. Starting with the first rows, precede down the center aisle and pass the tree through the first pew. Return to your seat by way of the side aisles.

✠ O CHRISTMAS TREE (see insert)

THE WORD OF GOD

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Jayne Wieboldt-NARRATOR

✠ CONGREGATIONAL CAROL #124

Away in a Manger

RESPONSE TO GOD

PRAYER

RECESSIONAL

O Holy Night
performed by Kim Johnson

Adolphe Adam

CHRIST CANDLE BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Joy to the World

G.F. Handel

In an effort to preserve the sanctity of this service we ask that you please refrain from using flash photography. The cast will reassemble following the service.

Gifts collected today will be presented to the Greater Bergen Community Action's **Operation Holiday** program for distribution to children and youth of Bergen County's neediest families.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

ANNUNCIATION ANGEL

Laura Stark

MARY

Bridget Babington

JOSEPH

Johnny Stark

BABY JESUS

Kingston Medlin

NATIVITY ANGEL

Cassandra Babington

LITTLEST ANGELS

Gabriella Struzzi, Lily Keehn

SHEPHERD ANGEL

Anabelle Babington

SHEPHERDS

Solomon Medlin, Vanessa Carcich

WISE MEN

Alex Myers, Eli Orendain, Nicholas Orendain

CANDLE ANGELS

Hailey Carcich, Kylie DeVincenzo
Morgan DeVincenzo, Abby Myers, Brianna Struzzi

MANGER ANIMALS

Emmy Keehn, Annie Stroh

*Assisting God's people in worship this morning are the Rev. Joe Medlin, worship leader;
Slavina Zhelezova, director of music; Kate Lento, lighting of Advent candles;
Marvin Orendain & Helen Koons, technicians;
Janet Arena, greeter; Jane Silane, Michelle Heinzinger, ushers;
Mission Team, Fellowship Time*

WELCOME! If you are a guest or visitor with us this morning, you are invited to sign our guest book in the Narthex, or fill out one of the visitor cards found in your pew. Cards can be placed in the Narthex basket, as you depart after the postlude.

GREETERS AND FELLOWSHIP TIME HOSTS ARE NEEDED - Any member or friend who would like to be a greeter or host lemonade in the Commons is encouraged to do so either as an individual, as a family or with another person. Sign-up sheets will be available on the table in the

Commons or please contact Russell Van Wetering directly at aprilsky@optonline.net, or 201-261-1795.

Mission

Welcoming all, our mission is to help nurture and grow faith in God through dynamic, creative, relevant worship and to bring God's word and work into our community. Through our action and bold outreach programs, we set an example of love, acceptance, compassion and support that will stand as a testament to our faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:7 "Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."

Vision

We are a beacon of hope, a place to grow in love toward God and one another. With joy and energy, we share the teachings of Christ in our church, our community and our world.

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid."



O CHRISTMAS TREE

O Christmas Tree! O Christmas tree!
A type of life eternal
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas tree!
Your boughs are ever vernal
So fresh and green in summer heat
And bright when snows lie round your feet
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas tree!
A type of life eternal.

O Christmas Tree! O Christmas tree!
You tell the timeless story!
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas tree!
You speak of Jesus's glory.
With gifts of love and songs of mirth,
With tidings of our Savior's birth.
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas tree!
You tell the timeless story!

O Christmas Tree! O Christmas tree!
Alight with love and splendor
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas tree!
True praise to Christ you render;
In steadfast faith you flash with light,
As stars of God glow through the night.
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas tree!
Alight with love and splendor.

The Life of Our Church This Week

Sunday, December 10, 2023

10:00 am	Worship Service/ Pastor Joe Medlin/ Chrismon Rehearsal
11:00 am	Fellowship Time
11:00 am	Carol & Nowell Choir
12:00 pm	Giving Church

Monday, December 11, 2023

Church office closed.

12:00 pm	Al Anon
4:00 pm	ATWAS
7:00 pm	Step by Step – NA
7:00 pm	Mission Team

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

9:30 am	Funds Advisory
12:00 pm	Brown Bag & Bible
7:00 pm	AA

Thursday, December 14, 2023

10:30 am	Staff Meeting
1:30 pm	Shawl Ministry
7:30 pm	RE Swim Club

Saturday, December 16, 2023

8:00 am	KWIS
9:00 am	Seventh Day Adventist
7:00 pm	AA

Sunday, December 17, 2023

10:00 am	Choral Cantata Worship Service/Church School Pastor Joe Medlin
11:00 am	Fellowship Time
11:00 am	Carol & Nowell Choir
12:00 pm	Giving Church

Prayer List

Sunday, December 10, 2023

Prayers for Those with Health Needs

Richard Metz, Tom Rushforth, Jennifer & Marty Leibowitz, Dona Berg, Tom Canzani, Jean Babington, Judi Schmitt, Bob Drummond, Willie Jones, Diana Loeffel, Patricia Murphy, Carol & David Kuehne, Joe Corona, Richard Smith, Judy Macht, Barbara Carr, Hank Schroeder, Anthony Mirabile, Carol and Sue, Janet & Nicholas Post, Phil Ceppaglia, Mary Foley, Jennifer Hall, Marcia Schroeder, Bob Shrekast.

Those in Recovery, Homebound, Assisted Living Residences or Nursing homes.

Jean Babington, Doris & Chet Price, Evelyn Waytowich, Phyllis Malley, Bob Owens, William Spencer, Bill Finch, Bill Lent.

Serving in the Military

Michael Shuler, Bob Bailey, Andrew Pohl, Noah Dahl

CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION

109 Continental Avenue, River Edge, NJ 07661 / (201) 261-1712

email -office@fccriveredge.org Website - www.fccriveredge.org

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, closed. Tuesday – Friday, 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Rev. Joe Medlin Pastor	revjmedlin@aol.com 808-785-4822
Slavina Zhelezova Director of Music	szhelezova@fccriveredge.org
Nicole Babington Minister for Faith Formation	nbabington@fccriveredge.org 201-956-3435
Anne Cooper Administrative Assistant	office@fccriveredge.org 201-261-1712
Linda Stark Financial Secretary	financeoffice@fccriveredge.org



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS 2023



To enhance the beauty of our Sanctuary on Christmas Eve, the Worship Team of First Congregational Church of River Edge is offering members and friends the opportunity to order poinsettias to help complete the décor.

Each contributor is given a choice to purchase a poinsettia plant to be picked up after the Christmas Eve 4:00 pm service or to be donated for distribution to the sick and shut-ins. With either choice, the names of donors, and those in whose memory or honor the flowers are given, will be listed in the Church bulletin.

Checks should be payable to First Congregational Church of River Edge and designated for "Christmas Flowers," in the memo section of the check.

Checks must be received by the Church Office no later than **Monday, December 11, 2023**. Please complete the order form below, and return it with your check to the Church Office.



I am ordering _____ Poinsettias, at \$20.00 each, and I am enclosing the amount of \$ _____.

DONOR'S NAME _____ PHONE # _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

IN HONOR OF _____

INDICATE CHOICE: _____ Take home after the Christmas Eve Service
_____ I will give for distribution to hospitalized and shut-ins
_____ I will help distribute to hospitalized and shut-in members

December 11, 2023 is the last day to order!

**First Congregational Church
109 Continental Avenue
River Edge, NJ 07661**