

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence...



First Congregational Church of Anoka
United Church of Christ
an Open and Affirming Congregation

Advent 2023

December 17, 2023 - Third Sunday of Advent

This bulletin is designed to assist you as you watch our livestreamed worship service, whether you follow along live or view it at a later time. The stream can be found on our YouTube channel at this location:

<https://www.youtube.com/@AnokaUCC>

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Music

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”
Anoka UCC Bell Choir; Don Shier, Director

arr. Geschke

The Church Bell Rings

* Opening Hymn

“Toda la Tierra (All Earth Is Waiting)” #121

**All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,
and open furrows, the sowing of our God.**

**All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.**

**Thus says the prophet to those of Israel,
“A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel”:
One whose name is “God with us,” our Savior shall be,
through whom hope will blossom once more within our hearts.**

**Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain;
open new highways, new highways for our God,
who is now coming closer, so come all and see,
and open the doorways as wide as wide can be.**

**In lowly stable the Promised One appeared,
yet feel that presence throughout the earth today,
for Christ lives in all Christians and is with us now;
again, on arriving Christ brings us liberty.**

Lighting an Advent Candle

One: For God alone, my soul waits in silence; from God comes salvation.

Many: For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from God.

Singing:

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”
Hymn #345 v.3, but with *Pilgrim Hymnal* lyrics.

**Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth, from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away.**

Silence

Sound and Light

Silence

A Time for Children (10:30)

Prayer of Preparation

“O Come, Emmanuel” #116 (vv. 2, 6)

**O come, O Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge show, and help us in that way to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

**O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here;
love stir within the womb of night, and death’s own shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

 **The Light of Light Descendeth** 
Let ring the Angelic Chorus

*The use of passages from Isaiah in this presentation does not affirm
the historic Church stance that the prophet foretold the coming of Jesus.
Rather, the love and character of Jesus remind us of Isaiah’s words of comfort,
and as such, we remember them in Advent.*

Words

Isaiah 40:3-5

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵ Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

Music

"Prepare Thyself Zion"

Bach; arr. Wagner

Anoka UCC Chancel Choir

*Prepare thyself, Zion, with tender affection,
the purest, the fairest, this day to receive.*

Words

Isaiah 6:1-3

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ² Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory."

Music

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

arr. Holst

Anoka UCC Chancel Choir

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.*

*King of kings yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of Lords in human vesture, in the body and the blood
he will give to all the faithful his own self for heavenly food.*

*Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of Light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell man vanish as the darkness clears away.*

*At his feet the six-winged seraph; cherubim with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the Presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Lord most High!"*

Amen.

Words

Isaiah 35:1-2 (*alt.*)

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the rose ² it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

Music

“There Is No Rose”

R. Harrison Smith

Anoka UCC Chancel Choir

*There is no rose of such virtue, as is the rose that bare Jesu. Alleluia, alleluia.
For in this rose contained was Heaven earth in little space. Alleluia, alleluia.
And by that rose we may well see there be one God in Persons Three.
The angels to the shepherds sang: Gloria in excelsis Deo. Alleluia, alleluia.
Now leave we all this worldly mirth, and follow we this joyful birth.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*

“Jesus Is Born”

Eugene Butler

Anoka UCC Chancel Choir

*Jesus is born! Jesus is born! Alleluia! Our Lord is born! Alleluia!
Born in manger lowly, yet in form so holy.
Lo, to us this gift is giv'n, Jesus, Son of heav'n.*

Words

Isaiah 35:5-8

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way;

Music

“What Sweeter Music”

John Rutter

Anoka UCC Chancel Choir

*What sweeter music can we bring than a carol, for to sing
the birth of this our heavenly King? Awake the voice! Awake the string!
Dark and dull night, fly hence away, and give the honour to this day
that sees December turned to May.
Why does the chilling winter's morn smile, like a field beset with corn?
Or smell like a meadow newly shorn thus on the sudden?*

*Come and see the cause, why things thus fragrant be:
'Tis he is born, whose quickening birth gives life and lustre, public mirth,
to heaven and the under-earth.
we see him come, and know him ours, who, with his sunshine and his showers,
turns the patient ground to flowers, turns all the patient ground to flowers.
The 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,
which we will give him; and bequeath this holly, and this ivy wreath,
to do him honour; who's our King, and Lord of all this reveling.
What sweeter music can be bring than a carol, for to sing
the birth of this our heavenly King.*

Words

Isaiah 9:6-7

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. ⁷ 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.

Music

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” (reprise)
Anoka UCC Chancel Choir

arr. Holst

Alleluia, Lord most High! Amen.

Offering

Text-to-Give: **844-334-1477**

*Thank you for your gifts to our ministries!
If you are watching from home (live or later), please consider adding to the Offering
by sending your gifts by mail, text, or online (uccanoka.org/donate).
You can support the church further through the RaiseRight program:
www.raiseright.com. Our unique church ID is 9WKLGX8TRZCN.*

Offertory

“Angels We Have Heard on High”
Anoka UCC Bell Choir, Don Shier, Director

arr. McMichael

* Doxology

All Praise Be Yours, My God, This Night #100 (v.4)

**Praise God who gives all blessings birth;
praise God all creatures on the earth;
praise God, who makes, sustains, sets free:
one holy God in persons three**

* Prayer of Our Savior (unison)

*The Prayer has many versions; pray whichever you desire (debts, sins, trespasses, etc.).
We affirm that God has many names, so use one of the suggested or another of your choosing.*

Our Father/Mother/Creator, 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, forever. Amen.

* Benediction

* Congregational Blessing “O How Shall I Receive You” #102 (v.2 alt.)

**Love caused your incarnation; love brought you unto me;
your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.
O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace
in love, all love excelling, our struggling, human race.**

Postlude

“I Saw Three Ships”

arr. Kinyon

Anoka UCC Bell Choir; Don Shier, Director

Acknowledgements

Reprinted music is covered under OneLicense.net #A-715296.

The Scripture quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright ©1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

◆ **First Congregational Church UCC, Anoka, MN** ◆

1923 Third Avenue, Anoka, MN 55303 ◆ (763) 421-3375

Pastor – Rev. Chris McArdle

Minister of Visitation – Pastor Kelsey Renk

Director of Health Ministries – Jessie Waks, NP

Director of Music Ministries – Don Shier

Keyboardist – Koki Sato

Moderator – Terja Larsen

Website: <http://www.uccanoka.org> ◆ Email: office@uccanoka.org

Text-to-Give: 844-334-1477



First Congregational Church, UCC of Anoka is an Open and Affirming Christian Community for all. We affirm that the image of God is most fully reflected in diversity. We invite all people to share their energy and talents in full participation with our community. We welcome all individuals and families of any sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, relationship status, race, national origin, socioeconomic status, age, mental and physical health or ability, or belief. Together, we celebrate these and all other facets of one's essential being.