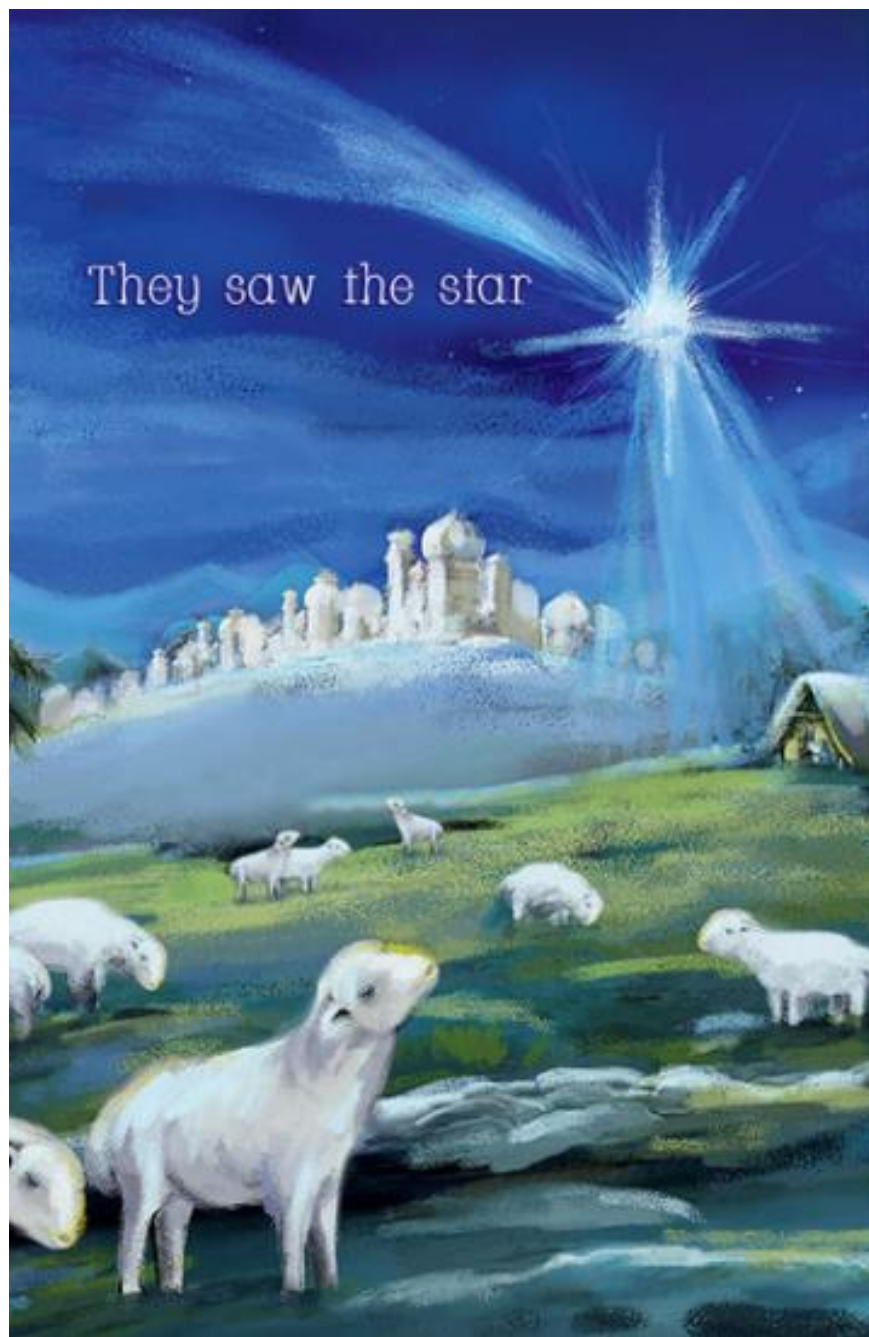


They saw the star



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
First Parish Church of Stow and Acton
Unitarian Universalist
December 24, 2020, 5:00 PM

*Our extended prelude begins at
approximately 4:45.*

Gathering

Prelude *Où s'en vont ces gais bergers?* C. Balbastre

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day J. B. Calkin

1. I heard the bells on Christmas Day
their old familiar carols play,
and wild and sweet the words repeat
of peace on earth, to all goodwill.
2. I thought how, as the day had come,
the belfries of all Christendom
had rolled along th'unbroken song
of peace on earth, to all goodwill.
3. And in despair I bowed my head:
"There is no peace on earth," I said,
"for hate is strong and mocks the song
of peace on earth, to all goodwill.
4. Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth God sleep;
the wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
with peace on earth, to all goodwill."
5. Till, ringing, singing on its way,
the world revolved from day to day,
a voice, a chime, a chant sublime
of peace on earth, to all goodwill.

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen J. Brahms

Welcome

FPC Staff Members

Call to Worship

*Another Star,
Another Night*

by Richard S. Gilbert

Chalice Lighting

Carol

O Come All Ye Faithful

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

Refrain: 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. Glory in the highest!

Refrain

3. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n.
Son of the Father, now in flesh appearing.

Refrain

Lighting of the Christmas Candle

Choral Response “Brich an, o schönes Morgenlicht” J.S. Bach
from *Weinachts-Oratorium*, BWV 248/2

The Meaning of Christmas

The Christmas Story

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Landrum

told by using the texts of

Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20, and Matthew 2:1-11

And including elements from:

James 18:1-3 and Maryam 22-23 (Qur'an)

with images from:

Hallelujah!

Synthia Saint James,

A Christmas Celebration

Illustrator

Carol

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

Anthem

For so the Children Come by Sophia Lyon Fahs
Michelle Coté, reader

Refrain: Each night a child is born is a holy night--
A time for singing,
A time for wondering,
A time for worshipping.
Each night a child is born is a holy night.

Reading

The Holy Family by Jodi Cohen Hayashida
Michelle Coté

Anthem

Do You Hear What I Hear? N. Regney & G. Shayne
arr. H. Simone

As this anthem is sung, our service will be entering a more quiet and solemn time. Young children may wish to depart, or may remain in the service as desired.

The Advent of Peace

Reading

The Christmas Truce by Aaron Shepard
abridged

Carol

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

1. It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth,
to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, to all good will,
from heaven the news we bring.”
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.
2. Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled
And still their heavenly music floats
Over all the weary world
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing
And ever over its babel-sounds
The blessed angels sing
3. Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long
Beneath the heavenly strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong
And man at war with man hears not
The tidings which they bring
O hush the noise, ye men of strife
And hear the angels sing
4. For, lo! The days are hastening on
by prophet bards foretold,
when with the ever-circling years
comes round the age of gold:
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world give back the song
which now the angles sing.

Prayer

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Landrum

Anthem *O Holy Night* A. Adam
Caitlin Felsman, mezzo-soprano

Reflections *Peace & the Work of Christmas*
The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Landrum

Anthem *The Work of Christmas* D. Forrest

Candle Lighting & Returning

Passing of the Christmas Light

I Will Light Candles by Howard Thurman
This Christmas

*As we light candles and sing “Silent Night”
we will spotlight the videos of people in attendance.
If you do not wish to be spotlighted,
please turn your camera off.*

Moment of Silence

Anthem *Night of Silence* D. Kantor

Carol *Silent Night* F.X. Grüber

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!

Benediction *The Work of Christmas* Howard Thurman

Postlude *In Dulci Jubilo* J.S. Bach



Many thanks to...

The FPC Choir

Ann Walker for donating the covers for the
Christmas Eve orders of service, in memory of Susan Russell

The Stadolnik family for decorating
the church for the holiday season

Our staff for all their help with and/or participation in the service:
Michelle Coté, Deedee Perkins, Mike Pfitzer,
Joleen Trotta, Sanghee Kim, and Janet Beatrice.

Our Zoom helpers and those who helped create and display
electronic service elements.

All those who donated this year to the Ministerial Discretionary
Fund. Funds help FPC and community members in need.

Your generosity is much appreciated.

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF STOW & ACTON

Unitarian Universalist

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum, Minister
Michelle Cote, Director of Religious Education

Dr. Mike Pfitzer, Director of Music

Deedee Perkins, Parish Administrator

Joleen Trotta, Welcoming & Membership Coordinator

Sanghee Kim, Organist/Pianist

Janet Beatrice, External Publicity Coordinator

Katy Weeks, President

Sharon Brownfield, Vice President

Bill Froberg, Treasurer

Helen Ham, Clerk

First Parish is a Unitarian Universalist Association Welcoming Congregation.

We warmly welcoming gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

Assistive listening devices and large print orders of service are available
in the vestibule or from an usher.

On the web at fpc-stow-acton.org and on Facebook.



Merry Christmas!