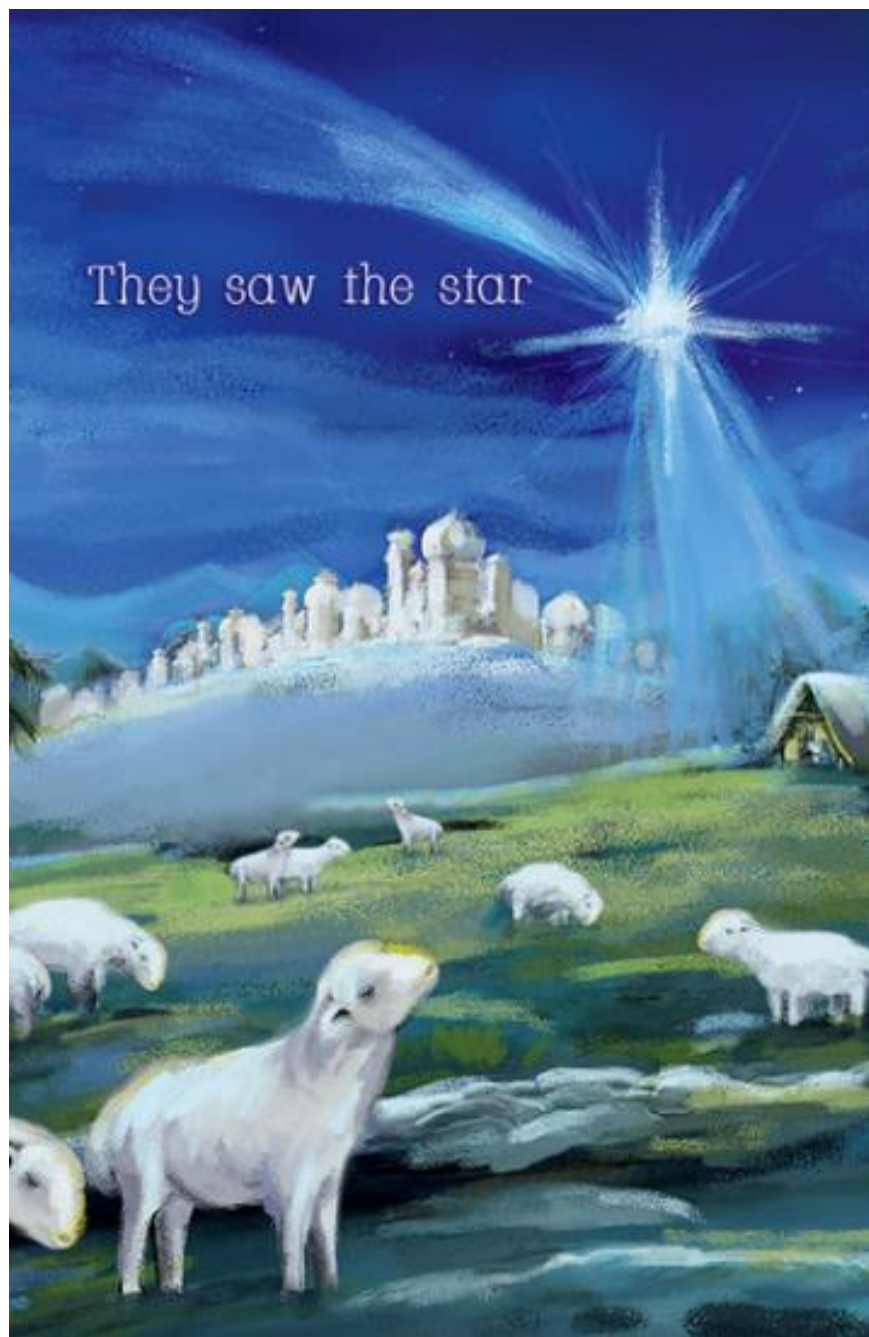


They saw the star



**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*, by Richard S. Gilbert  
*Another Night*

**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 theby* Sophia Lyon Fahs

*Children Come* 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 Holyby* Jodi Cohen Hayashida  
                                         *Family*                      Michelle Coté

**Anthem**                      *Do You Hear* N. Regney & G. Shayne  
                                         *What I Hear?*      arr. H. Simione

*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**

### **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*

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](http://fpc-stow-acton.org) and on Facebook.



Merry Christmas!