

*O come to us,
Abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel*



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December 31, 2023

First Sunday after Christmas

**First Congregational
United Church of Christ**

1200 Clark Street, Rapid City SD 57701

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Scripture: John 1:1-14 Luke 2:15-21

✝ Invites worshipers to rise in spirit or body as they are able.

PH indicates the New Century Hymnal.

You may notice there are several elements included in our time of worship. We want you to know this is intentional, as each of us may come for differing reasons; each of us may connect to Spirit in different ways. At First Congregational UCC, we are exploring how LOVE inspires us to create space for one another.

Join Us Online!

You can view our worship streamed on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/RCFirstUCC>. Copies of the video are

available on our church web site's video tab **www.rcfirstucc.com**.

Gathering Music *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen* setting, Raney
 Good King Wenceslas arr. Raney
 Bonnie Edwards and Alan Glover

Centering as God's People

Greetings

One: *"This place where you are right now, God circled on a map for You."*
 ~Hafiz

Many: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

Prelude *This Endrys Night: A Christmas Paean* G. Oldroyd

Call to Worship

One: The impossible happened last week in a stable.
 The people who walked in darkness saw a great light;

**Many: Those who lived in a land of deep darkness,
 on them the light shone!**

One: Let us celebrate the evening when creation stood still and held
 its breath, for God was doing the most unbelievable thing.

**Many: Let us remember the evening when God embraced humanity
 from the inside, as one of us, from birth to death.**

One: In the beginning was the Word,
 and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**Many: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
 full of hope and joy, peace and love.**

One: Let us worship our Immanuel.

Prayer of Illumination**Many: Holy One,**

Like eager children waiting for dawn on December the 25th,
let our celebrations begin!

May the echo of Christmas morning find us able to say
“Alleluia” even in the midst of pain and anxiety,

because you are our hope, and you desire good for us.

Dear Jesus, come to us and fill our hearts with joy this day.

Let us witness not to successful lives,

not to perfect health, faultless families,

highly achieving work, or new possessions,

but to the quiet inner knowing of you dwelling within us.

And as we gather this joyful morning,

let our Alleluias rise from willing lips,

and from hearts filled with your love... overflowing.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,

and Amen.

Hearing God’s Word**First Lesson: John 1:1-14****Pew Bible, NT page 87****A Message for the Young at Heart**

Mary Haan

Blessing of the Blankets**Anthem***Angels Watching Over Me*

J. Raney

Second Lesson: Luke 2:15-21**Pew Bible, NT, page 55****Sermon***God Dwells With Us*

Pastor Erin Erickson

Affirmation of Faith (in unison)

We believe that faith is active,

found on long walks, and in long talks,

in future days, and down memory lane.

We believe that those who seek will find,

although it may not be what they expected.

We believe that God finds us first.

We believe that God drops breadcrumbs along our way

in the shape of people, invitations, and even starlight.

**We believe that being a seeker—
of God, of justice, of community—
is a holy thing.**

**So we strive to live with an open spirit, with soft hearts,
and with room to grow.**

May it be so.

This we believe. Amen.

Offerings

Invitation

Offertory *Angels, From the Realms of Glory* R. DeBruyn

✠Doxology **NCH 778**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God for all that love has done;

Creator, Christ and Spirit, One.

✠Prayer of Dedication

Community Announcements

Going Into God's World

✠Hymn *Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come* **PH 130**

✠Benediction

Postlude *Sortie on "Conditor Alme Siderum"*
(Creator of the Stars of Night) A. Guilmant

Events

Sunday, December 31

9:30am: Worship Service/
Nursery available
9:45am: Sunday School
10:30am: Fellowship Hour

Monday, January 1

New Year's Day

Tuesday, January 2

1:00pm: Craft Day

Wednesday, January 3

2:00pm: Communion at
Westhills
7:00pm: Choir Practice

Friday, January 5

9:30am: Watercolor Painting
1:00pm: Stained Glass Group

Sunday, January 7

9:30am: Worship Service/
Nursery available
9:45am: Sunday School
10:30am: Fellowship Hour/
Wellness Wheel

Church News

Birthdays

January 1: **Karen Boehrs**
January 2: **Donald Gustin**
January 3: **Cindy Ledford**

Book Study

A new (yet previously existing)
Book Study will kick off on

Wednesday, January 3 at 9:30am.

We intend to meet each

Wednesday **EXCEPT** the 3rd (Good
Morning Circle) Wednesdays.

Questions? Contact Pastor Erin.

New Offerings from the Department of Education

The Department of Education is
excited to offer new opportunities
for fellowship, learning and fun.

The Wellness Wheel:

Starting **January 7**, enjoy a brief
presentation each Sunday during

Coffee Hour from a member of
our congregation about Wellness!

Lunch Recovery Group:

**January 8 and 22 from 11:30am
to 12:30pm** in the Parlor, open to
all those who are in
recovery, curious about recovery,
or affected by the addiction of a
family member.

Young Adult Board Game

Night: (Ages 12-25)

**January 9 and 23 from 7:00 to
9:00pm** in the Fireside Room!

Breakfast Club:

January 27 at 9:00am. Potluck
Breakfast for all ages in the
Fellowship Hall. Bring your
favorite breakfast item or some
fresh fruit to share!

Church News

Stained Glass Group

Come learn how to create beautiful stained glass works of art. The group will meet on **Fridays from 1:00pm to 4:00pm** in the kitchen. Their next meeting will be on **Friday, January 5 at 1:00pm**. For more information, contact **Dave Ledford**.

Church Chat Updates

The next meetings will be in **January** on the **second** and **fourth Tuesdays, January 9 and 23 at 11:30am**. Watch for information on when the group will meet after January.

Contact **Becky Fisher** or **Kathleen Batchelder** to find out information about the book the group will be reading and discussing.



Birthday Celebration

Ron Comley will turn **90** years young on **January 19!** Come have a piece of cake and join the celebration during coffee hour in the Fellowship Hall following worship on **January 14**.

Fellowship Hour Help

Coffee hosts and dishwashers are needed for the coffee hour

following worship. Easy instructions are posted for each volunteer opportunity. Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall on the sheets located next to the cookies if you can help. If you need assistance, indicate it on the sheet and someone will help you. **Thank you!**

Toys for the Nursery

The church nursery is hoping to upgrade/replace some it's toys. They are asking for gently used or new toy donations appropriate for ages 0-5.

Toy ideas include: Magna-Tiles (the more squares the better!) - Baby rattles/smaller baby toys - Board books - Board games for preschoolers - Wood toys (i.e. Melissa Doug) - Planes/cars (matchbox car size) - Coloring books - Stacking or shape sorting toys.

Note: Please, no large, bulky toys or stuffed animals. Toys that can fit in a shoe box are the ideal size! Please drop your donations off in the nursery. Thank you!

Art House Exhibit

Jordan Barnes has seven pieces of her artwork on display for the winter months at The Art House- 621 Main Street.

Church News

Thank You

So many from our church family gave their time, energy and talents to make our Christmas season so beautiful and meaningful this year. Your efforts are very much appreciated.

Prayer Concerns

Sarvia Dalia Huamani Yucra, the beloved eldest daughter of **Pastor Dorotea** of our sister church in los Guido, Costa Rica, passed away on Friday, December 15. Dorotea was in communication with Chuck and Sybil Rounds that evening, and offered this: "As a mother, I embrace myself in the arms of the Lord Jesus Christ, God Almighty." A service was held at the Catholic Church San Miguel in Desamparados on December 16. Pastor Dorotea sent her thanks to all who lifted her family in prayer.

Please hold the following members and friends in your prayers:

Lee Boyles has ongoing health concerns.

Kay Daugherty's health is improving. Kay's brother-in-law, **Doug Reeves**, has heart issues.

Wes Humke had two successful cataract surgeries in November. Cards are welcome and may be mailed to his address in the church directory.

Andy and **Barb Knight's** son, **John Knight**, faces serious health concerns as the result of a fall, but is doing better.

Ron Laughlin, husband of **Becky Fisher's** cousin, Linda, is receiving treatment for cancer.

Sheila Long's mother-in-law, **Ann Long**, is fighting cancer.

Sid Michaels is cancer free.

Jodie Thuringer's father is facing a recurrence of health issues.

Deb Tompkins fell and has a broken knee which is improving.

Deb Tompkins has a young friend, 12-year-old **Max Green**, who lives in northern Kansas. Max was born with cerebral palsy and many other challenges. He was hospitalized with bacterial pneumonia but now is back home. He enjoyed Christmas!

Nadine Zeller had surgery on November 27 for kidney stones.

We also pray for those members of our church family who are in care centers or isolated in their homes, including:

Evelyn Bradshaw, Vivian Dittmer, Wes Humke, Eunice Johnson, Merrie Miller, Marrelyce Seaman, Dorothy Slingsby, Helen Snyder and Elena Van Pelt

Leaders

Erin Erickson, pastor
Becky Fleming, licensed minister
Mary Haan, Christian education coordinator
Alan Glover, choir director, organist
Michael Bossen, bell choir director
Audrey Fenner, organist
John Fenner, French horn
The Adult Choir
The Bell Choir
Patti Arneson and Laura Switzer, administrative colleagues
Chuck Rounds, moderator
Denise Webster, treasurer
Carol Boyles, Becky Fisher and Jenny Kozel, congregational representatives
Chuck and Sybil Rounds, greeters
Anne Haan and Helena Haan, acolytes
Carol Boyles, reader
Scott and Colleen Schuft, coffee hosts
Steve Bareis, dishwasher
Rev. Kathleen Batchelder, pastor emerita
Lynnell Parrott, organist emerita

Credits:

<i>There Was No Room</i> - S. DeFord	Sally DeFord, 2020
<i>Gathering music???</i>	
<i>This Endrys Night: A Christmas Paean</i> - G. Oldroyd	Oxford University Press, 1950
<i>Angels Watching Over Me</i> - J. Raney	Hope Publishing
<i>Angels, From the Realms of Glory</i> - R. DeBruyn	OCP, 1990
<i>Doxology</i>	Pilgrim Press, 1995
<i>O Come, All Ye Faithful</i>	Pilgrim Press, 1958
<i>The First Nowell</i>	Pilgrim Press, 1958
<i>Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come</i>	Pilgrim Press, 1958
<i>Sortie on "Conditor Alme Siderum" (Creator of the Stars of Night)</i> - A. Guilman	
	Lorenz, 1974

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