WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP

Prelude  
\textit{In the Bleak Midwinter/Love Came Down at Christmas}  
arr. by Mark Hayes

Opening Sentences
One: This is the day that our God has made!  
Many: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Centering Words

Call to Worship
One: This past year, we found ourselves on a different road,  
Many: yet we still look for that baby born long ago in Bethlehem.  

One: And again, this year, we are worshiping in different ways,  
Many: yet we still look for that child of Christmas  
who gifts the needy with hope, who sets free the oppressed.  

One: And again, this year, we gather in different places,  
Many: yet we still long to find the One who has come for us,  
who illumines our lives with the light of hope.  

ALL: May we move into a fresh year with courage and grace,  
committed to love and magnifying the light. AMEN.

Opening Hymn  
\textit{God of Grace and God of Glory} (verses 1 & 2 –see page 5)  
Words by Harry Emerson Fosdick, music by John Hughes

Passing of the Peace

Prayers of the People

Lord’s Prayer
ALL: Our Father, who art in heaven;  
hallowed be your name;  
Your kin-dom come;  
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who  
trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil;
For yours is the kin-dom and the power and the glory
forever, AMEN.

Sung Prayer Response

Announcements

Scripture Reading      John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was
God. 1He was in the beginning with God. 2All things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 3in him
was life, and the life was the light of all people.

4The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. 5There was a
man sent from God, whose name was John. 6He came as a witness to testify to the
light, so that all might believe through him. 7He himself was not the light, but he came
to testify to the light. 8The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the
world. 9He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the
world did not know him. 10He came to what was his own, and his own people did not
accept him. 11But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to
become children of God, 12who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or
of the will of man, but of God. 13And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and
we have seen his glory, the glory as of a parent’s only child, full of grace and truth.

14(John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes
after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’”) 15From his fullness we have
all received, grace upon grace. 16The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and
truth came through Jesus Christ. 17No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son,
who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

Sermon      “Waiting Through the Apocalypse”      Rev. Dr. Althea Spencer-Miller

Music      God Has Work for Us to Do      FCC Choir
Words by Carl P. Daw, Jr., Music by Mark A. Miller
WE CELEBRATE HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

The Great Thanksgiving
One: God is with us.
Many: We are not alone.
One: Christ is present here.
Many: The Spirit moves within us.
One: Let us give thanks to God.
Many: In memory and in hope.

Let us pray…

…and with our family in faith let us raise our voices with all the creatures of earth and heaven and say the words from our great hymn of praise:

\[
\text{Holy, Holy, Holy} \\
\text{God of power and light.} \\
\text{The whole universe shines with your light.} \\
\text{Blessed is the one who comes in your name.} \\
\text{Hosanna in the highest!}
\]

Words of Institution

Consecration

Sharing the Gifts

Thanksgiving After the Meal
One: Let us pray.
ALL: Holy God, in gratitude for this moment, this meal, these people, we give ourselves to you. Take us out to live as changed people because we have shared the living bread and cannot remain the same. Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us, encourage many through us. Let us become heralds of your new kin-dom. AMEN.

Closing Hymn God of Grace and God of Glory (verse 5)

The Closing Commission
One: The spirit of God is upon us.
Many: God has anointed us to bear good news to the afflicted,
to bind up the broken hearted,
to proclaim freedom to the captives,
to open the prisons of those who are bound.
Let us go forth in the name of Christ to bring peace into broken relationships, healing to alienated persons, and justice into oppressive structures.

Benediction

Postlude  
*Joy to the World*
arr. by Dave Brubek

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**SERVICE NOTES**

*Thank you* to our volunteer worship leaders this morning.  
*Please contact the church office if you’d like to find out about ways to serve.*

**Worship Leader:**  Rev. Dr. Althea Spencer-Miller, Rev. Heather Cherrey  
**Reader:**  Alexis Lourenco  
**Music leaders:**  Julie Morgan, David Salyers  
**Facebook Live Tech:**  Matthew MacDonald

*A donation has been made to our local food banks by Lenton Clemons.*

*In gratitude for the Iona Community for much of our worship language*

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**You can make a donation or sustaining gift online at any time!**

There are many ways to give to FCC each Sunday. You can easily set up your sustaining gift, or your Sunday Offering, or a one-time contribution, online by going to [www.fccmontclair.org/giving](http://www.fccmontclair.org/giving).

You can also text a donation to 877-346-1045 followed by a space, and then the amount of your donation (follow the one time set up instructions.)  **If you give by check they must be made out to “First Congregational Church,” (not “FCC”) and can be mailed to 40 So. Fullerton Avenue, Montclair, NJ, 07042. Thank you.**
God of Grace and God of Glory

Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1930; alt.

1. God of grace and God of glory, on your people
   pour your power; crown your ancient church’s story;
   bring its bud to glorious flower.
   for the facing of this hour, for the facing of this hour.

2. From the evils that surround us and assail the
   Savior’s ways, from the fears that long have bound us—
   free our hearts for faith and praise.
   for the living of these days, for the living of these days.

3. Cure your children’s war-ring madness; bend our pride to
   your control. Shame our reckless, selfish gladness,
   rich in things and poor in soul.
   in the quest for liberty, in the quest for liberty.

4. Set our feet on lofty places; gird our lives that
   they may be armored with all Christ-like graces,
   in the fight to set us free.
   serving you whom we adore, serving you whom we adore.

5. Save us from weak resignation to the evils
   we deplore; let the search for your salvation
   be our glory evermore.
   Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,

6. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
   Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
   Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
The Mission & Vision of First Congregational Church

Mission Statement:
We are a progressive, open and affirming Christian church. We welcome people of all ages and identities to grow spiritually in a safe and engaging community. Inspired by God's love, we bring peace, healing and justice to the world by serving our neighbors and each other.

Vision Statement:
We imagine a world in alignment with Jesus' vision for peace, love and justice, where there is nourishment for those in need, radical hospitality, and sanctuary for all seekers.

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