

the first church in chestnut hill

[UNITARIAN]

26 SUFFOLK ROAD OFF HAMMOND STREET



December 2017

SUNDAY SERVICE at 10:30

Rev. Mark J. T. Caggiano, *Minister*

VERITAS, CARITAS, ET RISUS

Christmas is a special time, filled with traditions and events, parties and celebrations. It can be wonderful and joyous, hectic and taxing. And it can also be a sad time, a “blue” Christmas.

How could that be?

I think about my childhood, growing up with parents and grandparents, traveling back and forth for the holidays, bustling days filled with preparations and anticipation. My grandparents are now gone, my mother deceased, my dad living down in Florida, my children all grown up. No longer packed into the old family house, opening presents, feasting on many courses in the Italian style. Things change through the years. Those we love grow up, move away, or in time die. The shape of Christmas changes.

I realize this may come across as a “downer.” But it is worth remembering as you wish holiday cheer to someone that their Merry Christmas may be differently so this December. Their Happy New Year might be coming after a difficult old year. Struggling with work, managing health issues, caring for those we love who can no longer do so for themselves. Even simple seeming things like children going off to college, moving away to wonderful opportunities, may blend some melancholy in with the season’s joys.

Christmas is a time of waiting for something, someone, who will enter the world like the light of dawn breaking through the dark of night. Some of us find ourselves in harder places this year, remembering what has changed, thinking about what was lost. The holidays are a time for celebration but also for reflection. And as we consider all the blessings that we have and all the hopes we look toward in the coming year, may we also consider those yearning to find that new light, that warm ray of God’s love, dawning upon their night of loss or longing.

God bless,

— *Mark*

OUR SCRIPTURES FOR THIS SEASON

- December 3:* Isaiah 64:1-8, Mark 13:32-37, Psalm 80
December 10: Isaiah 40:1-11, Mark 1:1-8, Psalm 85
December 17: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Luke 1:46b-55, Psalm 126
December 24: Isaiah 9:2-7, Luke 2:1-20, Psalm 96
December 31: Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Luke 2:25-33, Psalm 148

DECEMBER SERVICES

- December 3:* Wake, Awake, the Night is Flying (Beginning of Advent)
December 10: Comfort, Comfort Ye My People (Greg Jones, Preacher)
December 17: Gloria in excelsis Deo - A Christmas Pageant
December 24: Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols at 4:30 p.m.
(No morning service)
December 31: Carol Sing

TAIZE SERVICE

On Wednesday, December 13, at 6:00 p.m., First Church celebrates a service in the tradition of the Taizé community. Led by Rev. Ja-Naé Duane, this worship is mostly musical in form, with simple hymns and chants drawn from the psalms or other scriptures. It will also be a communion service. The gathering of voices is a blessing, one we can offer up in thanks in this season of joy and thanksgiving. Please join us.

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR DECEMBER

- December 3:* The flowers are given in loving memory of Ann and Tom Gannett by Deborah and David Brooks.
December 10: The flowers are given in loving memory of Philip and Alice Morss by the Drayton family.
December 17, 24 & 31: The flowers are given in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Webster by The First Church.

USHERS

- December 3:* Cynthia B. Bates *December 10:* John Welch
December 17: Herbert M. Dane *December 24:* David Brooks
December 31: Mark Chadbourne

COFFEE HOUR AFTER THE SUNDAY SERVICE

All are welcome at the coffee hour following the service each Sunday. On Sunday, December 3, Judith Vanderkay will be in charge of refreshments; on December 10, Kami Hayden and Ryan Greene. December 17 will be Sally and Lisle Baker. On December 24, there will be no refreshments, and on December 31, Susan and John Welch will be our hosts. We thank you all for your participation! Sally Baker (sallybbaker@comcast.net; 617-566-7564) Carol Lohe (ctroyen@mfa.org; 617-739-0892)

A Messiah Advent

We are so fortunate to have such talented singers in our quartet. They fill the church with such beautiful music with their glorious voices every Sunday morning.

This year, during the month of December, each of the singers will grace us with solos and a duet from the Messiah as part of the Prelude. Please plan accordingly to hear such talent. They will sing as part of the Prelude on December 3, December 10, and December 17.

12/3/2017

Preludes	<i>Andante</i>	Bach
	<i>Thus Saith the Lord, But Who May Abide</i> (Soloist: James Lesu'i)	Handel
Anthem	<i>Our God is Our Refuge and Strength</i>	Mozart
Response	<i>Wake, Awake, For Night is Flying</i>	Bach
Anthem	<i>Sleepers, Wake</i>	Mendelssohn
Choral Amen	<i>Threefold Amen</i>	Traditional
Postlude	<i>Prelude and Fugue in C</i>	Bach

12/10/2017

Preludes	<i>Sinfonia</i>	Handel
	<i>He Shall Feed His Flock/Come Unto Him</i> (Duet: Meghan Jolliffe and Christina Grandy)	Handel
Anthem	<i>O Lord, give Thy Holy Spirit</i>	Tallis
Response	<i>Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide</i>	Bach
Anthem	<i>Angels o'er the fields were flying</i>	Traditional French Carol
Choral Amen	<i>Fourfold Amen</i>	Barrow
Postlude	<i>All My Heart This Night Rejoices</i>	Ebeling

12/17/2017

Preludes	<i>Chaconne</i>	Handel
	<i>Comfort Ye My People</i> (Soloist: Eduardo Ramos)	Handel
Anthem	<i>I Wonder What Child This is</i>	arr. Rosenbach
Response	<i>Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Prince of Peace</i>	Bach
Anthem	<i>Of the Father's Heart Begotten</i>	arr. Willcocks
Choral Amen	<i>Twofold Amen</i>	Persichetti
Postlude	<i>Deck Thyself, My Soul, with Gladness</i>	Brahms

12/31/2017

Prelude	<i>Prelude and Fugue in E minor</i>	Bach
Anthem	<i>Behold a Star from Jacob Shining</i>	Mendelssohn
Response	<i>Beside Thy Manger Here I Stand</i>	Bach
Anthem	<i>A Sound of Angels</i>	Tye
Choral Amen	<i>Twofold Amen</i>	Traditional
Postlude	<i>For Unto Us a Child is Born</i> (Meghan Jolliffe, Christina Grandy, Eduardo Ramos and James Lesu'i)	Handel



2017-2018 SNOWSTORM POLICY

Services are not formally canceled for snowstorms. As a standing policy, I will open the church on Sunday mornings regardless of weather. However, because neither the church grounds nor the surrounding streets may be plowed in time for church, parking may not be available. Each person should decide what to do with an eye firmly on safety. I would rather have fewer people in the pews than any one of you in an orthopedist's office.

Be safe, be warm.

— Mark

VOLUNTEER LECTORS FOR DECEMBER

December 3: Judith Vanderkay

December 10: Cynthia B. Bates

December 17: Sally Baker

December 24: Greg Jones

December 31: Mark Chadbourne

MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Our Bible Study group meets on **Wednesday afternoons at 3:00 p.m.**

We are currently studying the Book of Proverbs. Please join us.

ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

The minutes of the October 2017 Annual Meeting and the notes of the church committees reporting at that meeting are available by contacting Lisa Piel (26suffolk@gmail.com)

INTERN INSIGHTS

The season of Advent is about the Holy showing up. Or, more precisely, it's about the Holy showing up in all the *wrong* places and in all the *wrong* ways.

Early in the Advent season, the scripture lessons describe the Holy showing up as the apocalyptic destroyer of worlds. No more Good Shepherd. *Wrong* place. *Wrong* way.

In some Advent texts, the Holy shows up in a visit with two poor, plain, unpretentious women, telling them they would give birth to sons on whom the Spirit would be poured. They were the equivalent of maids or washer women. *Wrong* place. *Wrong* way.

In other Advent texts, the Holy shows up with someone who we would easily mistake for a street person. John the Baptist was unkempt, living outside, eating locusts. Still, it was John who was chosen as the one who announces the arrival of the Holy. *Wrong* place. *Wrong* way.

Finally, the Advent texts describe a barn in Bethlehem. In that barn, on top of a pile of hay, Jesus is born. I grew up on a farm. I know what barns usually smell like, and it's not pretty. *Wrong* place. *Wrong* way.

Advent is all about the Holy showing up: unexpectedly, among the poor and the powerless. Today, the Holy might be pushing a grocery cart along Mass. Ave, or begging on Boylston Street, or sleeping in a back alley. The Holy shows up when and where we least expect it. *May our hearts always be open.*

*In peace and service,
Greg*

OUTREACH COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Each fall members of the church, neighbors, and friends come together to support the Thanksgiving Food and Flower Sale. This year was no exception! From the lovely aroma of fudge to the beautiful display of plants, flowers, and table arrangements to the wide array of baked and frozen foods -- the Fair continues to thrive as a community event.

All of the proceeds of the Fair are donated to the Brookline Food Pantry and the Centre Street Food Pantry in Newton. These pantries serve significant numbers of local residents in need of food and household supplies. Both pantries appreciate our support each year, especially as we approach the winter months.

Thanks to the participation of so many people involved in the Fair, we are able to continue to make a generous donation to each food pantry.

Sally Baker, Chair, Outreach Coordinating Committee

BOOK GROUP

Our next meeting will be on Monday, January 8th at Sally Baker's, (137 Suffolk Road, Chestnut Hill) and we'll be discussing *My Family and Other Animals* by Gerald Durrell. Meetings take place at 3:00 p.m. As always, all are welcome!

WELCOME

A very warm welcome to Kamaria Hayden and Mark Chadbourne, our newest Standing Committee members. We look forward to their insights and energy. Our gratitude to Westy Saltonstall for his wit, wisdom and tireless support, and to Carol Stuart for keeping us on an even keel. We also appreciatively welcome our new treasurer, David Brooks. Many thanks to Judie Wyman for her diligent work as our previous treasurer.

A COZY PLACE TO SIT

If you've recently redecorated, or need some motivation to do so, we are looking for some gently worn furniture to create a warm, inviting sitting room area in the Sunday School. We are in need of a loveseat and some comfortable chairs, as well as a coffee table, a lamp or two, and some end tables. If you have any of these and would like to donate them, please be in touch with Lisa Piel (26suffolk@gmail.com; 617-965-1551)

ORGANIST and MUSIC DIRECTOR

Kathryn Rosenbach, 617-821-0385

MINISTERIAL INTERN

Gregory A. Jones, 917-687-6368

SEXTON

Dana Flynn, 617-680-0702

ADMINISTRATOR

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**BUILDING
AND
GROUNDS
COMMITTEE**



Susan Farist Butler, Chair

John Evans

Gigi Goldstyn

G. West Saltonstall

Rev. Mark Caggiano, ex officio



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