

The First Baptist Church of Worcester

MORNING WORSHIP

We are a community of believers who seek to grow in our faith and understanding as we live the Way of Jesus Christ.



Christmas Morning Service

December 25, 2011

10:00 AM

PRELUDE *Three Carols*..... Peter Pindar Stearns b. 1931
(*O Come, All Ye Faithful; Of the Father's Love Begotten; Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*)

CHRISTMAS CAROL MEDLEY

- * **HYMN 182** O Come, All Ye Faithful *Adeste Fideles*
- * **HYMN 185** Hark! The Herald Angels Sing *Mendelssohn*
- * **HYMN 198** Good Christian Friends, Rejoice *In dulci jubilo*

*CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Leader: The angel said to them: *Do not be afraid; for you see-I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people.*

People: *For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior who is Christ the Lord!*

ALL: GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST!

*INVOCATION (Unison)

God of new beginnings, may this eternal truth be always on our hearts: that the God who breathed this world into being, placed stars into the heavens, and designed a butterfly's wing, is the God who entrusted divine life to become vulnerable in a baby. Grant us that we may know how strong is the power of love. Fill us with that mystery so deep it is impossible to fully grasp, that mystery so beautiful it is impossible to ignore. We pray in the name of Christ, who taught us to pray: Our Father....

* **GLORIA PATRI 734** Greatorex

Those who are able may stand.

Please turn pagers and cell phones to silent mode. Nursery care is available for children during worship service. Please speak with an usher for assistance.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

* GREETING ONE ANOTHER

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.*

TWENTY-ONE CENTURIES OF CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND PRAYERS (remain seated)

4th century: Carol 181 Of the Father's Love Begotten *Divine Mysterium*
(stanzas 1 and 4)

A Christmas Prayer of Ephraim the Syrian (306-373 AD)

4th century: Carol 232 Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence *Picardy*
(stanzas 1 and 4)

6th century: An anonymous prayer

13th century: St. Francis of Assis

Carol 205 Away in a Manger *Cradle Song*

16th century: Martin Luther

From heaven above to earth I come *Vom Himmel Hock*
To bring good news to every home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Of which I now will say and sing.

To you this night is born a child
Of Mary, chosen mother mild,
This little child of lowly birth
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

.....

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy child,
Make now a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, a quiet place,
A holy chamber for your grace.

All glory be to God in heaven,
Who, unto us, a son has given,
While angels sing with tender mirth,
A glad new year to all the earth.

19th century: an explosion of Christmas Carols! (remain seated)

I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how, as the day had come
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along the unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

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, good will to men.

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
the wrong shall fail, the right prevail
with peace on earth , good will to men.

Till ringing, singing on its way
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

The Space Age: a prayer by Frank Borman, Apollo 8 space mission, 1968:

Give us, O God, the vision which can see Your love in the world in spite of human failure. Give us the faith to trust Your goodness in spite of our ignorance and weakness. Give us the knowledge that we may continue to pray with understanding hearts. And show us what each one of us can do to set forward the coming of the day of universal peace. Amen.

THE OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

Offertory *In the Bleak Midwinter*Harold Darke 1888-1976

Jennifer Nodelman, soprano
Donald Mentzer, tenor

*** Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. AMEN.*

*** Prayer of Dedication**

CHRISTMAS LITANY

Circle us, Lord, circle us with the light of your presence, bright within this dark world. Enable us to overcome fear and temptation. Enable us to become that which you would desire (*Silent prayer*) Lord of creation, Lord of Salvation,

Circle us with the light of your presence.

Circle us, Lord. Circle our families within the shelter of your outstretched arms. Protect them in each moment of their daily lives. Protect them in the decisions that they face. Protect their homes and relationships. (*Silent prayer*) Lord of creation,

Circle our families with the light of your presence.

Circle us, Lord. Circle this nation with Christmas love and hope. Create a desire to listen to the Christmas message. Create a willingness to understand and respond. Create a need to reach out to the Christ Child. (*Silent prayer*) Lord of creation,

Circle our nation with the light of your presence.

Circle us, Lord. Circle this world with the joy of your Salvation. Where there is sickness and disease, bring healing. Where there is hunger and despair, bring hope. Where there is torture and oppression, bring release. (*Silent prayer*) Lord of creation,

Circle this world with the light of your presence. AMEN!

CLOSING CAROL 179 *Joy to the World*Antioch

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Joy to the World*..... David Cherwien, b. 1957

Rev. Dr. Thomas R. McKibbens, First Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. Gary Shahinian, Park Congregational Church
William Ness, Minister of Music & Arts, First Baptist Church
David Rose , Organist & Choir Director, Park Congregational Church
Kimberly Toney, Park Congregational Church

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH VALUE STATEMENTS

INCLUSION *We welcome all in Christ's love.*

FREEDOM OF FAITH *Individual interpretation of God's Word and freedom of expression are cornerstones of our faith.*

SERVICE *We seek to be a Christ-like presence in the world.*

SPIRITUAL GROWTH *We encourage all to seek Christian growth.*

WE WELCOME YOU... to the Morning Worship at First Baptist Church. If you are a visitor, we express a special word of welcome and invite you to fill out a Welcome Card and place in the offering plate or give to an usher. We believe that God's unbounded love and grace are offered to all persons, of any age, race, sexual orientation, denomination, cultural background, and economic means as integral members of God's family.

THE HANDBELL EXTRAVAGANZA was held on Friday, December 16th at 7:30 PM. It was a wonderful experience to hear our own handbell choir perform along with three other handbell choirs. Thank You to First Handbells and William Ness for this wonderful gift of glorious music.

OPEN MIC NIGHT IS NEXT FRIDAY @ 7:00 PM in Gordon Hall...Coordinators Joe Nolet and Tom Ward have been working hard to bring this first time event to our church. There is considerable talent lined up, and you will not want to miss it. First Baptist Church members and the community are invited to this free, concert-style event coordinated by an experienced program/event planner. A variety of performers of all kinds signed-on: folk, poets, blue grass, jazz, classical, pop, and ending with a concert by folk singer Jack Rollins.

HOPE FOR HOUSING GROCERY CARDS MAKE GREAT GIFTS... for example, for those who deliver the mail or newspaper to us every day. The cards can be purchased in \$25 dollar amounts, after Sunday worship service in Gordon Hall.

PRAYER... "Pray to God, all glory in the highest."

Gloria Gaither

PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR PRAYERS...

- * All those who are homebound and unable to be with us
- * Our church at worship this Christmas Day
- * Families and friends gathered to celebrate Jesus' birth
- * The Diaconate
- * Thanksgiving for our ministers, staff and lay leaders
- * Thanksgiving for the music program of this church
- * For peace on earth and good will to humankind

MEN'S SATURDAY BREAKFAST...Men of all ages, mark your calendars for 8:00 AM:

Jan. 7, Feb. 4, Mar. 3, Apr. 14, May 5, June 2

122 Diner (across from Wachusett High School)

1392 Main Street

Any Questions: Contact Tom Ward @ tward@oxps.org

Calling all Alumni/Alumnae of FBC

2012 is our Bicentennial Year

How far back can you go? Where are our “lost sheep” and all those who once were here but have moved away?

Our Bicentennial Events for the weekend of **October 12-14 2012** are being planned now and we are looking to distribute information widely and early.

The weekend will be full of music of all sorts, strolls down memory lane, forays into the archives and plans for the future! You’ll definitely want to be there.

Please tell us if you know the names and whereabouts of past members, clergy, staff, volunteers and friends who would be interested in knowing about our week-end of celebration, looking back and looking forward. Please send any names and addresses or phone numbers you have to Lynne Carroll, via the FBC Office or email her at: lynnecarroll@aol.com

You should have received a letter in the mail describing the events planned during the October 2012 week-end. In addition, a reservation card was enclosed with the letter, with a request for you to complete and return to First Baptist Church for planning purposes. *Please reply!*



The First Baptist Church **Annual Meeting** is scheduled for Sunday, February 19, 2012. Committee chairs and designated Church Staff are asked to prepare their submissions for the **2011 Annual Report**.

You may submit your report via e-mail (preferred), fax, or hard copy to Pat Czerny: patc@fbc-worc.org.

Reports are due by Sunday, January 22, 2012 to provide plenty of time for compilation prior to the Annual Meeting. We appreciate your cooperation!

This Week at First Baptist Church

111 Park Avenue
Worcester Massachusetts 01609
508-755-6143 www.fbc-worc.org

- TODAY, Dec. 25** **CHRISTMAS DAY**
10:00 AM Worship Service, together with Park CC
11:15 AM Coffee
- Mon., Dec. 26** **CHURCH IS CLOSED**
- Tues., Dec. 27** 1:00 PM Staff Meeting
7:00 PM Board of Deacons
- Wed., Dec. 28** 7:00 PM Food Addicts Recovery
- Thurs., Dec. 29** 8:00 PM AA Meeting
- Fri., Dec. 30** **CHURCH CLOSSES AT 12:30 PM**
- Sat., Dec. 31** 12:00 Habitat
- Sun., Jan. 1** **NEW YEARS DAY**
9:30 AM Childcare Opens
10:00 AM Morning Worship
11:00 AM Coffee



The First Baptist Church Annual Meeting
Sunday, February 19, 2012—Following Morning Worship.

SAVE THE DATE and PLAN TO ATTEND.

Board and Committee Reports due by Sunday, January 22, 2012