



December 1, 2024

First Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m.

PRELUDE

Keith Ciccone, organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Karen E. Gale

CONGREGATIONAL INTROIT *like a child*

*like a child love would send to reveal and to mend,
like a child and a friend, Jesus comes
like a child may we find claiming heart soul and mind,
like a child strong and kind, Jesus comes*

*like a child born to pray and to show us the way,
like a child here to stay, Jesus comes
like a child we receive all that love can conceive,
like a child we believe Jesus comes*

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

To stand watch—Over a sick child or a rising loaf of bread

To watch and wait—For the return of a loved one from afar, for the return of health to our aching body

To watch in love—To be ready to help with a steadying hand, or a box of food

To watch and wonder—This is the season of Christ breaking into the world. A season of waiting.

Let us watch carefully for Christ's coming.

Let us watch carefully so we don't miss his arrival, don't miss him in the spaces where ordinary life passes by. Amen.

*HYMN 89

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

* Indicates all who are able may stand

Please silence your cell phones

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

We light this first candle and remember: For all who watch and wait.
....this is the light of our faith.

MUSICAL RESPONSE *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

*O come, O come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel.*

SCRIPTURE READING Jeremiah 33:14-16 Luke 21:25-36

*GLORIA PATRI

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.
World without end. Amen. Amen.*

SERMON **“Waiting for Figs”** Rev. Karen E. Gale

MUSIC RESPONSE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/PASTORAL PRAYER

(In the Advent season, Prayer Doves will be hung on our Christmas tree.)

LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father (Creator), who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done; on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERTORY DEDICATION

*DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures, here, below.
Praise God, above, ye heav’nly hosts.
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE LORD'S SUPPER

(All are welcome to communion here. Communion is served in the pews. Take a piece of bread and hold it and we will all take it together. We do the same with the cup. Our cup contains grape juice.)

INVITATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

God of Advent waiting,

Give me wisdom to see myself honestly, to know my own faults, to see your light in me and all that hides it... And the same in others as well. Keep me from blaming others and all that arises out of fear, but let me speak encouragement and Your truth. May the words I speak and the thoughts I harbor reflect your tender compassion, your forgiveness of me and all people.

May I find myself in You as I wait for your arrival in oh so human form. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

CONSECRATION

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

HYMN 519

Feed Us Now

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

O God of Creator of starlit mystery and Preserver of all watching, waiting people, Amidst all that distracts us:

May we watch for your coming.

May we watch with eyes ready to see the needs you call us to.

May we watch for and welcome new signs of love and fulfilled promises.

May we watch for hope to arrive anew.

As the prophets and hopeful faithful believed all these things were to come, Bless us and send us out as we live out Jesus' ministry here and now. Amen.

*HYMN 85

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE



Welcome! *Thank you for joining us this morning!*

The First Congregational Church of Braintree is an Open & Affirming Congregation working in partnership with all churches of the United Church of Christ. We welcome all God's children into Christian faith regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, political stance or theological perspective, national origin, mental health status, physical and cognitive abilities, and the many diverse forms of family configurations.

We proclaim and affirm that full and equal participation in the life and leadership of our church is open to all. We seek to continue learning and growing together as the inclusive Body of Christ. We are committed to spreading the light and love of Christ into the world through worship and service. Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.



About Today's Service: We are live-streaming today's service.

Subscribe to the First Church YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTaGrBGnYzfM66pS7Bd4PvA>

Non-perishable Food Pantry donations are collected for The Marge Crispin Center on the **first Wednesday of the Month** in front of the church. Contact free! Just drive by and drop. Or place your donations in the basket in LPH or the Narthex. Thank you!

Televised Worship Services are broadcast on BCAM: Verizon Channel 28, Comcast Channel 9, on Saturday at 8:00 AM and Sunday at 10:00 AM.

First Church Office Hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00am—1:00pm.



Rev. Karen E. Gale, Interim Pastor ❖ pastor@firstchurchbraintree.com

Keith Ciccone, Director of Music ❖ keciccon@aol.com

Mattie Gietman, Children & Youth Ministry ❖ mattie@firstchurchbraintree.com

Deb McMartin, Administrator ❖ office@firstchurchbraintree.com

Valerie Fink, Bookkeeper ❖ finance@firstchurchbraintree.com



FIRST CHURCH BRAINTREE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Meetings

Prudential Team—Thursday, December 5 @ 10am in Pastor Karen's office

Worship Team (Deacons)—Sunday, December 8 after worship

Leadership Team—Tuesday, December 17 @ 7pm on zoom

Two Opportunities to help the DCF (Dept of Children & Families)

1. **Our Annual Hats & Mittens Drive!** Please bring in NEW hats and mittens to give to the DCF (Department of Children & Families) for distribution to their clients.

No later than **Thursday, December 5th**)

2. **DCF Holiday Wish Lists** Please get the gifts in to the First Church office no later than **Thursday, December 5th**. And remember: **DO NOT WRAP THE GIFT** - Gift bags only please. **Don't forget to attach the first name & last initial of the child to each gift.**

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS 2024

All orders must be in by Thursday, Dec 12th.

We are taking orders for poinsettias for display in the Sanctuary on **Christmas Eve, Tuesday, 12/24**. These flowers beautify our sanctuary for Christmas worship and are given as a tribute to memorialize or to honor loved ones. We are purchasing our poinsettia plants from **Almquist Flowerland**. Each plant costs **\$14**. Available in Red, White, Pink or Marble* (if available)



Please be sure to answer all questions and **PRINT CLEARLY** so we can properly acknowledge your gift in the bulletin.

Given by: (your name) _____

In Memory of *or* In Honor of

Name (s) of Honoree: _____

Choose color: Red White Pink Marble No Preference

After they are displayed on the altar do you wish your poinsettias to be used as:

A Gift to the Church (for distribution to homebound friends) or

For Personal Use

Amount due: # of poinsettias _____ x \$14 each = \$ _____

Checks should be made payable to First Congregational Church of Braintree



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BRAINTREE
MEMORIAL CHRISTMAS HYMN SING
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2024 AT 9:30 AM



If you would like to sponsor one or more of the following hymns *In Memory of* or *In Honor of* a loved one, please indicate your name, their name, your hymn choice and amount of donation. Suggested donation per hymn is \$10. To ensure your request is included in our special bulletin, please return this request form to the church office or place it on the collection plate *absolutely no later than* **Sunday, December 1st** **LAST CHANCE!**

Choice of Hymns:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>O Come, All Ye Faithful</i> | 6. <i>The First Nowell</i> |
| 2. <i>What Child is This?</i> | 7. <i>Hark, The Herald Angels Sing</i> |
| 3. <i>O Little Town of Bethlehem</i> | 8. <i>I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day</i> |
| 4. <i>Silent Night</i> | 9. <i>God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen</i> |
| 5. <i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i> | 10. <i>Joy to the World</i> |

Please PRINT the names below *exactly* as you wish them to appear in the bulletin.

Given by: _____
 (Write your name as you wish it to appear in the bulletin)

Hymn #	Hymn Name <small>Abbreviate if necessary</small>	<i>In Memory of</i> <i>In Honor of</i>		<i>In Memory of</i> <i>or In Honor of</i> (Please print name clearly exactly as you wish it listed.)	Amount Donated <small>(Suggested amount is \$10 per hymn.)</small>
					\$
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Checks should be made payable to First Congregational Church of Braintree.
 Please write "Hymn Sing" in the memo.

Total _____

Thank you for your support.