

*First Congregational Church of River Edge
River Edge, New Jersey*

*A SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD
Fourth Sunday of Advent*

December 18, 2011

10:00 am

**Those who are able please stand*

SILENCE *We bring our spiritual hunger to this place, O God, hoping to be fed.
You have promised to be with us. Reveal yourself to us here, we pray,
in the name of One who came to share our common lot. Amen.*

WELCOME

WE GATHER TO PRAISE GOD

*During the Prelude, we invite you to take time to quiet your heart
and discover anew God's presence in your life.*

PRELUDE

*Ring We Now of Christmas
Prayer from Hansel and Gretel
The Pilgrim Ringers*

arr. Martha D. Waller
Engelbert Humperdinck
arr. Sondra K. Tucker

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Morning is dawning, the Birth is near.

People: The reign of God is appearing.

Pastor: Salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

**People: We open our eyes to the Light,
and we welcome the One who comes to save!**

*HYMN

My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise

106
(Tune: Ellacombe)

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT WREATH CANDLE

Evelyn and Robert Fialko

CONGREGATIONAL CHORAL RESPONSE (seated)

Tune: Veni Emmanuel

**O come, Desire of Nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
Make envy, strife, and quarrels cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

ORGAN RESPONSE

**(During this Organ Response, Church School children,
youth and staff may leave for their classes.)**

WE CONFESS OUR SIN

CALL TO CONFESSION (seated)

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION (seated)

Great God, giver of our Lord Jesus Christ, this is a season of joy and peace, of colorful lights and nostalgic music. Yet the outward trappings of the season do not always reflect the inward conditions of our souls. Our lives do not always reflect the influence of the Holy One who came to live among us. So we ask that you speak to our inner selves, that you will change us, that you will mold us into the image of the One whose birthday we celebrate and in whose name we pray. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE

Prayer for Mercy (Kyrie)
The Chancel Choir

John Weaver

WE ARE RECONCILED TO GOD AND ONE ANOTHER

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*CONGREGATIONAL CHORAL RESPONSE (standing)

**Glory to the Creator,
the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three – in – One;
as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end, Amen. Amen.**

*PEACE OF CHRIST (standing)

Pastor: As we are forgiven in Jesus Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us extend to one another the peace of Christ...

ANTHEM

*He Shall Feed His Flock
and Come Unto Me (MESSIAH)* G. F. Handel
Susan Lento, contralto, and Signe Myhren, soprano

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING

Alice Rushforth, *Lay Reader*

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

OT. pg. 545

Luke 1:26-38

NT. pg. 56

Lay Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

*HYMN

God, We Await Your Advent Here

(insert)

SERMON

Saint Nicholas Speaks!
(A first-person sermon for Advent)

The Rev. Charles F. Holm

ORGAN RESPONSE

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

SHARING OUR TITHES, OUR GIFTS, OFFERINGS

Offertory Invitation

Offertory Anthem

Soon and Very Soon
The Chancel Choir

Andrae Crouch

*Doxology

*Unison Prayer of Dedication (standing)

Giving God, we give thanks for all you do. Open us to the unbelievable work of your Spirit. Teach us to wait with hope and expectation for your coming again on Christmas Day. Use us and the gifts we offer to create a safe place for your tender presence to be reborn. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel! Amen.

CALL TO PRAYER

Wait for the Lord
(sing three times)

Jacques Berthier

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND CONCERN
THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts and debtors)

CHORAL RESPONSE

*HYMN

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

#131

*BENEDICTION

*This is a time for reflection and prayer, and we invite you to
remain seated in silence until the postlude is ended.*

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo

J.S.Bach



DEACON /USHERS: ☩ Vic Babington, Diane Lento, John Kuharetz, Stuart Heinzinger,
Tim Wallace

☩ Head Usher

COUNTERS: John Kuharetz, Linda Stark, John Chatellier

GREETERS: Chayse Faith, Noreen and Russell Van Wetering

LAY READER: Alice Rushforth

ALTAR GUILD: Michelle Heinzinger and Ruth Smith

CHILD CARE: Joan Kuharetz and Laura Ferrentino

FELLOWSHIP TIME: Rachel Circle

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING: Evelyn and Robert Fialko

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Please turn off or silence all electronics before worship.

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WELCOME, if you are a guest or visitor with us this morning! You are invited to sign our guest book in the Narthex, or fill out one of the visitor cards found in your pew. Cards can be placed in the plate as the offering is received.

*

NURSERY AND CHILD CARE – is provided during Sunday worship for infants and toddlers in the Nursery on the lower level. Ask an usher or greeter for assistance.

*

LARGE PRINT HYMNS may be obtained from an usher.

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ALTAR FLOWERS - If you would like to donate altar flowers for one of our worship services, please contact our Flower Coordinator, Carole Meeks at 201-262-3020. The donation for the flowers is \$25.00. Flowers can be taken home after the service or given to one of our shut-ins. The deadline for ordering altar flowers is the Sunday prior to their being placed on the Altar.

*

PRAYER CHAIN – You are welcome to put the name of a loved one, friend or neighbor on the Prayer List weekly. Call the church office at 201-261-1712, if you would like to add someone to the list. The Prayer List can be found in the bulletin. A Prayer List request form can be found in the Narthex each Sunday morning. Prayers DO make a difference.

*

DEVOTIONAL PAMPHLETS, “Care Notes,” and devotional guides, “The Upper Room,” are available in the church narthex. The rack is refreshed regularly. Please take these for your own use or for friends.

*

THE ALTAR FLOWERS which enrich our worship today are provided by the church’s Flower Fund.

*

SECOND SUNDAY DONATIONS NEEDED – Donations for the Second Sunday’s program are needed. If you would like to help, please see Anna Lou Kuenzler during Fellowship Time. Second Sunday is our congregation’s ministry to our developmentally challenged friends of our church and community.

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PLEDGE CARDS – A solid financial commitment from our members and friends helps First Congregational Church of River Edge grow and thrive. Please remember to return your 2012 pledge card to the church as soon as possible. Pledge cards are on the table in the Narthex.

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PLEDGE ENVELOPES will be available in the Parlor starting today.

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CHAIR LIFT TO FELLOWSHIP HALL – The Chair Lift is located in the hallway at the exit by the pulpit. Please let one of the ushers know you will need assistance.

*

PECANS will be sold at Fellowship Time by members of Women's Fellowship or you may contact Michelle Heinzinger at 201-265-9057 to place an order.

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SOON AND VERY SOON

Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King!
Hallelujah! We're going to see the King!
No more crying there, no more dying there--
Hallelujah! We're going to see the King!

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Church Council has called a Special Meeting of the Congregation for Sunday, January 8, 2012, immediately following the morning service, to hear the report of the Vision Team as they present a proposed new Church Constitution and By-Laws.

Alice Rushforth
Church Clerk

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COPIES OF PROPOSED NEW CHURCH CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AVAILABLE

Copies of the proposed new Church Constitution and Bylaws are now available on the narthex table or from the Church Office. The congregation will be asked to vote on the document at the Annual Meeting scheduled for Sunday, February 5, 2012.

The Life of Our Church This Week

Sunday, December 18, 2011

9:15 am – Chancel Choir Rehearsal

9:30 am – Carol/Nowell Choir

Rehearsal

10:00 am – Worship.

(Church School children, youth and staff will leave worship as a group following the Advent Wreath Lighting for a Church School Bagel Breakfast Party, including a special Christmas Movie!)

10:00 am – Confirmation Class

11:00 am – Fellowship Time

12:30 pm – Korean Baptist Church

Monday, December 19, 2011

12:00 Noon – Al-Anon

7:00 pm – Vision Team

Wednesday, December 21, 2011

7:00 pm – AA

Thursday, December 22, 2011

7:00 pm - Bell Choir

8:10 pm - Chancel Choir

Friday, December 23, 2011

7:00 pm – Tri-County Pipe & Drum Rehearsal

Saturday, December 24, 2011

6:20 pm – Bell Choir (Sanctuary)

6:30 pm - Chancel Choir (Sanctuary)

7:00 pm – AA

7:30 PM – Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship /Child Care

Sunday, December 25, 2011

9:15 am – Chancel Choir Rehearsal

10:00 am – Worship Service

12:30 pm – Korean Baptist Church

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF RIVER EDGE

Our Mission

Our mission is to worship God, care for one another, and witness to Jesus Christ in our community and the world.

Our Vision

We seek to be a dynamic community of faith committed to spiritual growth, following Christ's example and God's Word. Respecting our past and recognizing today's challenges, we move forward with diverse worship, education, mission and compassionate care for all.

*First Congregational Church
109 Continental Avenue
River Edge, New Jersey 07661*

CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION

Phone (201) 261-1712

Website – www.fccriveredge.org

Church Office e-mail – office@fccriveredge.org

*Church Office Hours: Monday to Friday
9:00 am to Noon and 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm*

Church Staff

The Rev. Charles F. Holm Pastor	cfhcfhrev@aol.com 201-483-8717 (home)
Gloria Norton, S.M.M. Director of Music	glorinor@aol.com
Theresa Wallace Administrative Assistant	office@fccriveredge.org

GOD, WE AWAIT YOUR ADVENT HERE

Tune: Maryton

Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

God, we await your advent here:
When will these desert lands rejoice?
When will new blossoms bright appear
And all earth praise you with one voice?

We live in deserts we have made;
Gifts of your love we pass right by.
We seek possessions, more each day,
And then in thirst for joy, we cry.

God, we prepare for Jesus' birth—
Searching for gifts from store to store!
Yet when you sent your Christ to earth,
You gave us joy worth so much more.

When in the love of Christ we grow,
Streams in this desert shall abound.
Then by your Spirit we will know:
True wealth in Jesus Christ is found.