

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

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

*November 27, 2011*

*10:00 am*

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*\*Those who are able please stand*

SILENCE     *Come, O God, to bring light. Send a confident hope. Enrich us with spiritual gifts that transcend disappointments and spill out in generous compassion for all your children. Meet us today where we are so we may be ready for joys yet to be revealed. In Jesus' name. 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

*Comfort, Comfort Ye, My People*

Robin Dinda

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Prepare the way of the Lord!

**People: Yes, prepare the way of the Lord.  
Make straight his paths.**

Pastor: And in the days of old, came John, who was called the Baptizer.

**People: Crying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

Pastor: And then came Jesus, to be baptized by John: for it was fitting for them to fulfill all righteousness.

**People: Let us prepare the way of the Lord!**

Pastor: And let us worship the God who has given us John and Jesus and his love!

\*HYMN

*Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates*

#117

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT WREATH CANDLE

Rev. Charles & Gloria Holm

CONGREGATIONAL CHORAL RESPONSE (seated)

Tune: Veni 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 you, O Israel!**

**WE CONFESS OUR SIN**

CALL TO CONFESSION (seated)

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION (seated)

**God of the past, in the wilderness of Jordan you sent a messenger to prepare human hearts for the coming of Christ. We rejoice that through the centuries that message of hope has brought confidence and joy to people. God of the present, even now you are among us. Forgive us that often we have failed to discern your presence. Remind us that you are with us. God of the future, you have promised that Christ's reign is coming. Teach us to live in expectation, that what we do and say today may be anchored in the certainty of your tomorrow. 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...

### WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING

Wayne Placek, *Lay Reader*

*Mark 1:1-8*

NT. pg. 34

*Philippians 2:1-11*

NT. pg. 197

Lay Reader: The Word of the Lord

**People: Thanks be to God.**

\*HYMN

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

(see insert)

SERMON

*The Most Difficult Instrument to Play!*

The Rev. Charles F. Holm

*“(John, the baptizer) declared, ‘Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’”*

(John 1:29,30)

*“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.”*

(Philippians 2:3,4)

ORGAN RESPONSE

**WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

SHARING OUR TITHES, OUR GIFTS, OFFERINGS

Offertory Invitation

Offertory Anthem      *He Comes to Us as One Unknown*      arr. John Ferguson  
The Chancel Choir

\*Doxology

\*Unison Prayer of Dedication (standing)

**Loving Lord, as we begin our Advent journey, we give our offerings because we wish the hungry to be fed, we wish the sorrowing to be comforted, we wish the disturbed to find peace, we wish the wandering to be brought home, and we wish the entire world to know of the grace of Jesus. Accept these our tithes, offerings and pledges, as we again anticipate his coming into our world and into our lives. Amen.**

CALL TO PRAYER

*Wait for the Lord*  
(sing three times)

Jacques Berthierë

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND CONCERN

THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts and debtors)

CHORAL RESPONSE

\*HYMN

*O How Shall I Receive You*

#102

\*BENEDICTION

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

POSTLUDE

*Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending*

Robin Dinda

DEACON /USHERS: ☩ Janet Arena, Bob Wieboldt, Barbara Wieboldt, Adria Brown, Carol  
Hoffer, Doug Berrie, Bill Hamilton

☩ Head Usher

COUNTERS: Art Caughlan, Roger Hall, Chester Price, Michelle Heinzinger

GREETERS: Hilma and Robert Albecht

LAY READER: Wayne Placek

ALTAR GUILD: Carole Meeks and Adria Brown

CHILD CARE: Joan Buono

FELLOWSHIP TIME: Board of Deacons

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING: Rev. Charles & Gloria Holm

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**THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH THIS WEEK**

*Please* turn off or silence all electronics before worship.

\*

**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.

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**LARGE PRINT HYMNS** may be obtained from an usher.

\*

**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.

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**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.

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**THE ALTAR FLOWERS** which enrich our worship today are in honor of the members of Ruth Circle and are given by Minda King.

\*

**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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**CHRISTMAS CANTATA** - The 25-member Cantata Choir, with soloists, instrumentalists, and narrators, will offer "Follow the Star, Follow the King," with music by Lloyd Larson, Mary MacDonald, Douglas E. Wagner and Mark Hayes at the 10:00 am service of worship on Sunday, December 11.

\*

**YOU ARE INVITED TO SUPPORT THE CANTATA** by giving a gift in honor of, or in memory of someone. Checks should be made out to First Congregational Church, and marked CANTATA GIFT on the memo line. Acknowledgement of these gifts will be made in the December 11 Bulletin.

\*

**OUR 2011 CHRISMON** is an *Angel*. These will be sold by the members of the Board of Christian Education at Fellowship Time today. The price for the Chrismon is \$3.00 each.

\*

**ALL WRAPPED UP** – The Board of Christian Service invites one and all to help spread joy and hope to those in need! Again this year, we are participating in the “*All Wrapped Up*” program sponsored by the Volunteer Center of Bergen County. As in the past, our families are from the West Side Infant and Teen Parent Program in Englewood. Please visit the “*All Wrapped Up*” table during today’s after-worship fellowship time (downstairs in Fellowship Hall) to choose a person you would like to buy Christmas gifts for. See or call Gloria Holm at 201-483-8717 with any questions. Thank you.

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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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**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.

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**PECANS** – The Pecans have arrived! These mammoth size pecans are great for holiday baking or eating by the handful. They are sold in one pound bags at \$10.00 each. Their shelf life is three months or longer if placed in the freezer. The 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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## **The Life of Our Church This Week**

### **Sunday, November 27, 2011**

- 9:15 am – Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 9:30 am – Carol/Nowell Choir  
Rehearsal
- 10:00 am – Worship Service/  
Child Care  
(*No Church School*)
- 11:00 am – Fellowship Time
- 12:30 pm – Korean Baptist Church
- 4:00 pm – Dress Rehearsal for  
Chrismon Service, meet in  
Pilgrim Hall

### **Monday, November 28, 2011**

- 12:00 Noon – Al-Anon
- 7:30 pm – Church Council  
(Pilgrim Hall)

### **Tuesday, November 29, 2011**

- 3:15 pm – Girl Scout Troop #110
- 7:00 pm – Board of Christian Service  
(Board Room)

### **Wednesday, November 30, 2011**

- 7:00 pm – AA
- 8:00 pm – Korean Baptist Church

### **Thursday, December 1, 2011**

- 3:15 pm – Girl Scout Troop #185
- 6:00 pm - Decorate the Sanctuary
- 7:00 pm - Bell Choir
- 7:30 pm - Board of Christian  
Education
- 8:10 pm - Cantata Choir

### **Friday, December 2, 2011**

- 7:00 pm – Tri-County Pipe & Drum  
Rehearsal
- 7:00 pm - Boy Scout Troop #184

### **Saturday, December 3, 2011**

- 8:30 am – KWIS
- 7:00 pm – AA

### **Sunday, December 4, 2011**

- 9:15 am – Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 9:30 am – Carol/Nowell Choir  
Rehearsal
- 10:00 am – Worship Service/  
Communion/Church  
School/Child Care
- 10:00 am – Confirmation Class
- 11:00 am – Fellowship Time
- 11:30 am – Confirmation Class meets  
with Pastor (Library)
- 12:30 pm – Korean Baptist Church
- 4:00 pm – Chrismon Service in  
Church Sanctuary

**Annual Chrismon Service**  
**Sunday, December 4, 2011 at 4:00 PM**

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

A **CHRISMON** is one of a number of Christian Symbols intended to represent aspects of the person, life or ministry of Jesus Christ and the life, ministry or history of the Church. Chrismon ornaments are used to decorate trees during Advent and Christmas. Chrismons are made in combinations of white and gold. White, the liturgical color for Christmas, refers to God's purity and perfection; gold to majesty and glory. Often small lights are used on Chrismon Trees to point to Christ as the light of the world.

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**CHRISMON REHEARSAL** – Today, Sunday, November 27, 4:00 pm in Pilgrim Hall for all children, youth and adults participating in the Chrismon Service. There will be only one rehearsal this year. Please mark your calendar.

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**ANNUAL CHILDREN'S TOY AND CLOTHING COLLECTION FOR CHRISTMAS** – The Board of Christian Education asks that as you continue your Christmas shopping, please remember to purchase a winter clothing item or toy for a child/youth, infants through age 14. These **NEW UNWRAPPED** winter clothing items and toys will be placed under the sanctuary tree during the Chrismon Service to be held on Sunday, December 4, 4:00 PM. This year we are working with the Bergen County Community Action Partnership, which will pick up the clothing and toys from the church and distribute them to the children and youth of Bergen County's neediest families. Thank you!