

<b>Order of Worship -Third Sunday of Advent - December 14, 2025</b> <b>A Festival of Lessons and Carols</b>			Lesson	<i>If You Want</i> St. John of the Cross	Luke Vaughn
Prelude	<i>Herr Christ, der einig Gottes Sohn</i>	Heinrich Scheidemann (1595 - 1663)	Carol	<i>What Child Is This?</i> (vv. 1 & 3)	Pilgrim Hymnal, 140
Choral Prelude	<i>Procession</i>	Benjamin Britten	Lesson	Luke 2: 1, 3-7	Margot A.
Welcome		Rev. Will Burhans	Choral Carol	<i>As Dew in Aprille</i> <i>This Little Babe</i>	Britten
Lighting of the Joy Candle		The O'Neil Family			
Opening Hymn	<i>Once in Royal David's City</i>	New Century Hymnal, 145	Lesson	Luke 2: 8-14	Joani Valeriano
	Nathan M., verse 1		Offertory	<i>Interlude</i>	Britten
	Congregation, vv. 2 & 3		Lesson	Luke 2: 15-20	Elise A.
Opening Prayer/Lord's Prayer/Gloria in excelsis		Rev. Maeve Hammond	Choral Carol	<i>In Freezing Winter Night</i> <i>Spring Carol</i>	Britten
<b>The Word in Lessons and Carols</b> <i>Ceremony of Carols</i> , Opus 28, [1942] Benjamin Britten (1913-76) Sorana Scarlat, <i>harpist</i> Susan K. Navien, Sheryl Krevsky Elkin, & Peter Owens, <i>soloists</i>			Lesson	<i>Perfect, Love</i> Daniel S. Schatz	Rev. Maeve Hammond
Choral Carol	<i>Wolcum Yole!</i>	Britten	Sermon	"What We Do With Christmas"	Rev. Will Burhans
Lesson	Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7	Idun O.	Choral Carol	<i>Deo Gracias</i>	Britten
Choral Carol	<i>There is no Rose</i>	Britten	Lesson	John 1: 1-14	Rev. Will Burhans
Lesson	Isaiah 11: 1-2, 6-7, 9	Olivia R.	Moment of Silence		
Carol	<i>Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence</i>	Pilgrim Hymnal, 107	Choral Carol	<i>Recession</i>	Britten
Lesson	Luke 1: 31-35, 38	Janet Vaughn	Closing Prayer		Rev. Maeve Hammond
Choral Carol	<i>That yongë child</i> <i>Balulalow</i>	Britten	Closing Hymn	<i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i>	Pilgrim Hymnal, 116

Announcements/Benediction Rev. Will Burhans

Postlude *Meine Seele erhebt den Herrn* (BWV 733) Bach  
(My soul doth magnify the Lord)

**Accessibility & Navigation**

We have an inductive hearing loop for those whose hearing aids have Telecoil.  
Listening devices are also available in the back.

Deacons serving today are: **Carol Andrus, Richard Carbone, Julia Daggett,** and **Petra Sansom.** Special Thanks to **Brian McArdle,** our Livestream Technician and **Leslie French** for Slide Advancement.

**Visitors, get connected!**

Please tell us about yourself and/or request a prayer by filling out a Welcome/Prayer Request Card found in the pews.

**Flowers**

Today’s chancel flowers are given to the Glory of God, and in honor of our wedding anniversary, by Connie and Peter Rosenberger.

**Sunday, Dec 21:** Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship: Christmas Pageant

**Wednesday, Dec 24: Christmas Eve Worship**

5 PM Family Candlelight Service  
9 PM Traditional Candlelight Service

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**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN WINCHESTER, UCC**

21 Church Street Winchester, MA 01890 781-729-9180

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*  
The Congregation, Ministers to The World  
Rev. William Burhans, Lead Pastor  
Rev. Maeve Hammond, Associate Pastor  
Jane Ring Frank, Minister of Worship & The Arts  
Maggie Keeler, Minister of Children & Families  
Luke Vaughn, Youth Ministry Associate  
Jeffrey Mead, Organist  
Sarah Marino, Office Administrator  
Ed Banzy, Building Manager  
Dave Fay, Building Superintendent

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FCCW [www.fcc-winchester.org](http://www.fcc-winchester.org); SNEUCC Conference [www.sneucc.org](http://www.sneucc.org); Nat'l UCC [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)



**Benjamin Britten's glorious *A Ceremony of Carols***

Sorana Scarlat, harpist

Susan K. Navien & Sheryl Krevsky Elkin, soloists



**3rd Sunday of Advent: A Festival of Lessons & Carols**

**December 14, 2025**

**10:00 AM**

FCCW Lessons and Carols, featuring Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*

Despite conducting Britten’s beloved cantata many times (in many voice configurations) over a multi-decade career, I never tire of its exquisite beauty, intelligence and pure sentiment. *A Ceremony of Carols* is filled with humanity: dramatic, lyrical, clever, and economical. Ultimately, full of heart.

The work has a storied history. Benjamin Britten wrote the piece in 1942 while crossing the Atlantic aboard a Swedish cargo ship. He actually intended to use the month-long voyage to complete what would become his well-known Hymn to St. Cecilia, but the early sketches were confiscated by customs authorities who feared that the music was in fact a secret code. Britten left England at the outset of the war in 1939 and headed for the United States, where his fame grew quickly, and where, it must be noted, he was unlikely to be drafted into the British army. After several years abroad, he and his partner, the acclaimed tenor Peter Pears, returned home, embarking on this long sea voyage.

While in port in Nova Scotia, Britten came upon a little book, *The English Galaxy of Shorter Poems*, which became the source of the “carols.” The carols are largely the product of 15th- and 16th-century writers, most of whom are anonymous. Britten maintained their authentically unique flavor by setting the original Middle English texts. He had been studying the harp with a view to writing a concerto for that unique instrument. It was to be another twenty-seven years before he wrote his challenging *Suite* for harp.

*A Ceremony of Carols* consists of eight polyphonic settings; these eight carols are bookended by statements of the Gregorian chant “Hodie Christus Natus Est” (“Christ is born today”), and midway through the set is an astounding interlude for harp solo that features this same plainchant tune. The carols themselves show a remarkable diversity of styles, from the jubilant exultations of “Wolcum Yole” and “Deo Gracias,” to the pastoral and lyrical “There is no rose” and “Balulalow,” to the martial urgency of “This Little Babe” and its ever-expanding canon. The piece is one haunting, vibrant, gorgeous, lovely, and meditative whole, marked by concision of composition and a rich, sophisticated harmonic palate. A truly beautiful and enduring canonical work.

Ceremony of Carols Texts and translations

<b>1. Procession</b> Hodie Christus natus est Hodie salvator apparuit: Hodie in terra canunt angeli, laetantur archangeli: Hodie exsultant justi dicentes: Gloria in excelsis Deo. Alleluia!	Today Christ is born Today the savior has appeared; Today the angels sing, and the archangels rejoice; Today the righteous rejoice, saying, Glory to God in the highest. Alleluia!
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<b>2. Wolcum Yole</b>  Wolcum! Wolcum! Wolcum be thou hevenè king, Wolcum Yole! Wolcum, born in one morning, Wolcum for whom we sall sing!   Wolcum be ye, Stevene and Jon, Wolcum, Innocentes every one, Wolcum, Thomas marter one, Wolcum be ye, good Newe Yere, Wolcum, Twelfthe Day both in fere, Wolcum, seintes lefe and dere, Wolcum Yole, Wolcum Yole, Wolcum!   Candelmesse, Quene of bliss, Wolcum bothe to more and lesse.   Wolcum! Wolcum! Wolcum be ye that are here, Wolcum Yole! Wolcum alle and make good cheer, Wolcum alle another yere, Wolcum Yole! Wolcum!	Welcome! Welcome! Welcome to You, our heavenly King. Welcome Yule! Welcome, you who was born one morning, Welcome, for You we shall sing!   Welcome to you, Steven and John, Welcome all innocent children, Welcome, Thomas, the martyred one, Welcome, good new year, Welcome Twelfth Day, both in fear . . . Welcome Saints left and dear. Welcome Yule, Welcome Yule, Welcome!   Candle Mass, Queen of bliss, Welcome both to more and less.   Welcome! Welcome! Welcome you that are here, Welcome Yule! Welcome all and make good cheer. Welcome all another year. Welcome Yule! Welcome!
<b>3. There is no rose</b>  There is no rose of such vertu as is the rose that bare Jesu. Alleluia, alleluia.  For in this rose containèd was heaven and earth in litel space, Res miranda, res miranda.  By that rose we may well see there be one God in persons three, Pares forma, pares forma.	There is no rose of such virtue as is the rose that bore Jesus. Alleluia.  For inside the Rose were heaven and earth in a single, little space. Miraculous thing.  By that rose, we now may see, there is one God in three persons. Created in the Parent’s image.

<p>The aungels sungen the shepherds to: Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gaudeamus, gaudeamus.</p> <p>Leave we all this werldly mirth, and follow we, this joyful birth. Transeamus, transeamus, transeamus.</p>	<p>The angels sang to the shepherds, Glory to God in the highest! We rejoice.</p> <p>Leave we all this worldly mirth, and follow we this joyful birth. Let us cross over!</p>
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<p><b>5. As dew in Aprille</b></p> <p>I sing of a maiden that is makèles: King of all kings to her son she ches</p> <p>He came also stille there his moder was, As dew in Aprille that falleth on the grass.</p> <p>He came also stille to his moder's bour, As dew in Aprille that falleth on the flour.</p> <p>He came also stille there his moder lay, As dew in Aprille that falleth on the spray. Moder and mayden was never none but she: Well may such a lady Goddes moder be.</p> <p><b>6. This little babe</b></p> <p>This little Babe so few days old, is come to rifle Satan's fold; All hell doth at his presence quake, though he himself for cold do shake; For in this weak unarmed wise the gates of hell he will surprise.</p> <p>With tears he fights and wins the field, His naked breast stands for a shield; His battering shot are babish cries, His arrows looks of weeping eyes,</p>	<p>I sing of a maiden that is matchless, Her son was the King of all Kings.</p> <p>From his mother he came to us quietly As April dew that falls on the grass.</p> <p>His mother's labor was painless and quiet, As April dew that falls on the grass.</p> <p>As His mother lay there, he came quietly, As April dew that falls on the flower branches. Never was there such a mother and maiden; How fitting that this be God's mother.</p> <p>This little Babe so few days old has come to rifle Satan's fold. All hell quakes at his presence, though he himself shivers. For in this weak, unarmed guise he will surprise the very gates of Hell!</p> <p>With tears he fights and wins the field, His naked breast stands for a shield; His shots are his cries, His arrows, the looks of his weeping eyes.</p> <p><i>Continued on back cover of insert</i></p>
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<p>His martial ensigns Cold and Need, and feeble Flesh his warrior's steed.</p> <p>His camp is pitched in a stall, His bulwark but a broken wall; The crib his trench, haystalks his stakes; of shepherds he his muster makes; And thus, as sure his foe to wound, the angels' trumps alarum sound.</p> <p>My soul, with Christ, join thou in fight; stick to the tents that he hath pight. Within his crib is surest ward; this little Babe will be thy guard. If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy, then flit not from this heavenly Boy.</p>	<p>Hi martial ensigns are cold and need, and his feeble flesh, his warrior's steed. His camp is pitched in a stall, His bulwark is a broken wall; The crib is his trench, haystalks are his stakes, of shepherds, he enlists the troops. And sure of wounding the foe, the angels sound the trumpets alarm.</p> <p>My soul joins Christ in the fight, stay by the tents that he has pitched; Within his crib is sure protection the little babe will be your guard; If Christ can foil your foes with joy, stay near the heavenly boy!</p>
<p><b>10. Deo Gracias</b></p> <p>Deo gracias! Adam lay ibounden, bounden in a bond; Four thousand winter thought he not to long.</p> <p>Deo gracias! And all was for an appil, an appil that he tok, As clerkes finden written in their book.</p> <p>Deo gracias! Ne had the appil takè ben, the appil takè ben, Ne haddè never our lady a ben hevenè quene.</p> <p>Blessèd be the time that appil takè was. Therefore we moun singen. Deo gracias!</p>	<p>Thanks be to God! Adam was bound in sin for four thousand years, though he thought this not too long.</p> <p>Thanks be to God! It was all for an apple that he took, As clerics find written in their books.</p> <p>Thanks be to God! Had the apple never been taken, Our Lady would never have been heavenly queen.</p> <p>Blessed be the time the apple was taken. Therefore we must sing Thanks be to God!</p>