

# December 29, 2024



Whether you choose to join us online or in-person, we believe we are called together by Jesus to be a transforming presence for God in the world. **We are a place to belong, a place to heal and a place to love.** At First Congregational we recognize God as a loving, creating, all-encompassing Spirit who is not limited by usual human boundaries. Therefore, we practice the use of inclusive, expansive, and non-gendered language when speaking of and to God.

We welcome all who worship with us today and include **all ages** in our hybrid worship service. We invite guests and members to fill out a Welcome/Prayer card found in the pew holder, and put it in the offering plate. Children are invited to play quietly in the “playground” at the front of the church, or use a “Quiet Bag” found in the Narthex.

**\*Disclaimer:** Today’s worship service is being live-streamed. While the focus will be on the worship leaders, anything you say or do may be on film. If you have any questions or need to ensure you are not on camera please speak with our minister.

**Pastoral Care:** From December 26-January 3, you may reach out to Rev. Worth Hartman for pastoral care. He can be reached at [worthgrover@sbcglobal.net](mailto:worthgrover@sbcglobal.net) or 317-417-0806.

**In-Person Office Hours:** Cassidy (church admin) in office Thursdays. If you need to meet, please contact her at [cassidy@fcindy.org](mailto:cassidy@fcindy.org)

Out of concern for community health, we request that you remain up to date with your vaccinations. Mask as needed. Please stay home if you feel unwell.

**Masks can be found in the narthex.**

**We celebrate our worship leaders today:**

Rev. Worth Hartman (he/him), Worship Leader and preacher

Bonnie Bomer (she/her), Student Pastor

Sean Baker (he/him), Music Director

Scott Semester (he/him), Worship Song Leader

Mayflower Singers

Ben James (he/him), Media Technician

Alice Rutherford, Liturgist

\*\*\*Student Minister Bonnie Bomer has a guide dog named Fiesta. Please do not touch Fiesta while she is working and wearing her harness. When her harness is off, Bonnie invites us to engage with Fiesta and pet her.

**December 29, 2024**

**11:00 AM**

*Please speak the **bold**-printed words in unison.*

Sunday after Christmas:  
Being Present with Assurance  
🎁 We Celebrate Our Presence Together: Gathering 🎁

**Prelude**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Rev. Worth Hartman**

**Opening Prayer**

**Bonnie Bomer**

Let us pray:

**Holy Living Light of God,  
you are our Reassuring Presence.**

**Let this assurance grow in our lives each day,  
so we can be a Present of Assurance to others.**

**Unwrap and open our hearts.**

**May it be so.**

**Amen.**

**Opening Hymn**

**"Blessed Assurance" #473**

*New Century Hymnal*

**The Peace**

**Rev. Worth Hartman**

🎁 **The Word Present Among Us: Proclaiming** 🎁

**Gospel Reading**

**Alice Rutherford**

*Luke 2:22-40*

*Reader:* Luke's gospel account of the life of Jesus also includes the story of the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, a part of every Jewish family's rituals regarding a first-born heir. There were people present who recognized him not just as an heir to the household of his earthly

father's household that came from the lineage of David, but also his extra-ordinary lineage as the Messiah they were waiting to see. Hear this account:

*When the day came for them to be purified, as laid down by the Law of Moses, the couple took Jesus up to Jerusalem and presented him to God. For it's written in the Law of our God, "Every firstborn heir is to be consecrated to God." They likewise came to offer in sacrifice "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accord with the dictate of the Law of our God.*

*Now there lived in Jerusalem a man named Simeon. He was devout and just, anticipating the consolation of Israel, and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. She had revealed to Simeon that he wouldn't see death until he had seen the Messiah of God. Prompted by her, Simeon came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child to perform the customary rituals of the Law, he took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, "Now, O God, you can dismiss your servant in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the peoples to see — a light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel." As the child's mother and father stood there marveling at the things that were being said, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, the mother, "This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that is rejected, so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare. And a sword will pierce your heart as well."*

*There was a woman named Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher, who was also a prophet. She had lived a long life, seven years with her husband, and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple, worshiping day and night, fasting and praying. Coming up at that moment, she gave thanks to God and talked*

*about the child to all who anticipated the deliverance of Jerusalem. When the couple had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the Law of God, they returned to Galilee and their own town of Nazareth. The child grew in size and strength. He was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was with him.*

**Sermon**

**Gift of Blessing**

**Rev. Worth Hartman**

 **Fully Present in the Moment: Praying** 

**Joys and Concerns**

**Rev. Worth Hartman**

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

**Bonnie Bomer**

**PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (from UCC Book of Worship)**

Our God in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen

**Offering**

**Bonnie Bomer**

 **Present to the World: Sending** 

**Closing Song**

*“Go Tell It On the Mountain”* #154

*New Century Hymnal*

**Benediction**

**Rev. Worth Hartman**

**Postlude**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Save the Date for the January 26 Congregational Annual Meeting and Pitch-in!** Annual Report deadlines to Cassidy by January 10.

**FORGOT 2025 PLEDGE?** I forgot to turn in my 2025 pledge, is it too late? The answer is “NO”. You still have time to get it turned in. Just mail it in to the church or drop it in the collection plate on Sunday. No pledge is too small or too large. No matter how large or small, your pledge helps us all.

**Ways to Connect & Serve:** Interested in participating with a small group at First Congregational? Check out the Connect & Serve cards in the pews, and take one with you, if you like! Looking for an activity that isn't there - contact Wendy Baldwin.

**Food Donations to Northside Pantry** – Help those with hunger insecurity by bringing donations of canned or boxed food, and place in the baskets in the Narthex.

**The Flower Calendar** is on the bulletin board by the garden doors. Please sign up for any occasion. The flowers can come from your garden, store or florist. For more information see **Sally Coombs**.

**Cards to Our Church Family** – Please sign the cards on our “card stand”, for those celebrating birthdays, or in need of prayers.

**Sunday Mornings at 10:00 AM** – Several options are available on Sundays before worship. Join our Adult Ed group for thoughtful study and discussion (upstairs at church). Or go to choir practice to rehearse for that morning's singing; all skill levels welcome!



Thank You for Your Financial Gifts! Our current Covenant Outreach focus is related to our Mental Health Covenant that includes support for the following organizations: the UCC Mental Health Network, The Julian Center, and GenderNexus



### **Mental Health Support:**

**The 988 Lifeline:** 988 is now active across the United States. (call or text)  
**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI.ORG):** information: 1-800-950-NAMI (6264)  
**The Trevor Project hotline** offers support for LGBTQIA+ youth and families struggling with mental health challenges at 1-866-4-U-TREVOR (488-7386) and **[www.theTrevorProject.org](http://www.theTrevorProject.org)**