

# FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN LONGMEADOW

*“Striving to be a Church the World needs Today!”*



## “Timing Is Everything”

First Sunday of Advent  
**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

November 30, 2025

✠ *Those who are able, please stand.*

**Prelude** "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"

Mark Hayes

**Welcome**

Rev. Doug Bixby

**Lighting of the First Advent Candle**

The Callahan Family

✠ **Call to Worship**

Leader: In the midst of suffering and despair,

**People: God's prophet cries, "Comfort!"**

Leader: Amid all that causes us pain, that brings us to tears,

**People: God's care falls over us like a gentle rain.**

Leader: In this season of short days and long nights.

**People: We are called to tend to each other.**

Leader: On this first Sunday of Advent, we give thanks for hope and seeing light in the midst of darkness.

**People: Let us worship God!**

**Opening Prayer and Sharing the Peace of Christ**

✠ **Hymn:** #116 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

New Century Hymnal (Black). VENI EMMANUEL v. 1,2,6,7

**Scripture Reading** Matthew 24:36-44

Pat Jorczak

**Children's Moment: A Message for All Ages**

*Children are dismissed to Church School upstairs.*

**Sermon:** "Timing is Everything"

Doug Bixby

**Anthem** "Good King Wenceslas" John Mason Neale

Chancel Choir

**Joys, Concerns, and Pastoral Prayer**

**Lord's Prayer** (debts) Our Father, 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 and ever, Amen.

**Prayer Response "Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning"**  
Traditional African American Spiritual

Keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing; keep you lamps trimmed and burn -

- ing keep your lamps trimmed and burn - ing for the time is draw-ing night

Sis-ters, don't grow wear - y; bro-thers don't grow wear - y; chil-dren don't grow

wear - y, for the time is draw - ing night

Fine

D.C. al Fine

## Announcements

**Call to Offering and Offertory "One Small Child"** David Mecee  
Mark Todd, tenor

*"One small Child in a land of a thousand / One small dream of a Savior tonight / One small hand reaching out to the starlight / One small city of life / One king bringing his gold and riches / One king ruling an army of might / One king kneeling with incense and candlelight / One King bringing us life O / See Him lying a cradle beneath Him / See Him smiling in the stall / See His mother praising His Father / See His tiny eyelids fall / One small light from the flame of a candle / One small light from a city of might / One small light from the stars in the endless night / One small light from a face / See the shepherds kneeling before Him / See the kings on bended knee / See His mother praising His Father / See the blessed Infant sleep / One small Child in a land of a thousand / One small dream in a people of might / One small hand reaching out to the starlight / One small Savior of life."*

**✠ Doxology:** Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below. Praise God for all that love has done: Creator, Christ and Spirit One. Amen.

## Prayer of Dedication

**✠ Hymn:** #117 "Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates"  
New Century Hymnal (Black). TRURO

## ✠ Benediction

**Postlude** "For Unto Us a Child is Born" Arr. Faye López



The beautiful flowers on the Altar are given by Ann and Frank Smith in loving memory of all our church family who have passed away, including Bob Spaulding, who served on the Pastoral Search Committee.

They were arranged by Ann Smith.

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### **First Church of Christ Staff**

Rev. Doug Bixby – Pastor  
Daniel Rose - Director of Music Ministries  
Marilyn Paul-Lewis – Family Ministries Director  
Crystal Dunn - Youth Leader  
Stan Zdonick - Building and Technology Manager  
Noelia Ortiz – Communications Director  
Jill Labonte – Administrator

### **Church School Teachers:**

Elaine Booke – Church School Teacher  
Dr. Frenaud Dorilien – Church School Teacher  
Alexandra (Alex) Zolotor – Pre-K and Nursery Teacher

### **Chancel Choir Section Leaders:**

Carey Larsen, soprano  
Sue McNary, alto  
Mark Todd, tenor  
John Thomas, baritone

**TODAY AT 11:30 IN THE BUXTON ROOM!**

**NEW MEMBER CLASS**

If you are interested in church membership, then you are welcome to join us on Sunday, November 30 at 11: 30 a.m. in the Buxton Room for a membership class with Pastor Doug.

We will talk about the meaning of membership in this class. The class is required for membership, but you are not required to become a member if you take this class. Contact [office@firstchurchlongmeadow.org](mailto:office@firstchurchlongmeadow.org) and let us know if you are interested.



## **Christmas Pageant Rehearsal today!**

The Children's Christmas pageant is on Sunday, Dec. 21.  
Pageant roles are open to all children from Pre-K to Grade 5.

Please contact Marilyn Paul-Lewis with any questions.

[marilyn@firstchurchlongmeadow.org](mailto:marilyn@firstchurchlongmeadow.org)



**Rehearsals are in the Sanctuary from 11:20 am until Noon**  
Sunday, December 7 & Sunday, December 14 (*until 1:00 pm*).

Sunday, December 21, Christmas Pageant! (10 am – 11 am)

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## **TODAY AT 5 PM!**





# Christmas on the Green Fair

All proceeds benefit local community service organizations!

**Saturday, December 6 at 9 am -3 pm**

Visit our new Christmas Café and enjoy our traditional delicious luncheon that is served in the lower level!

Visit with Santa and have your picture taken with him!

Shop for a cause! We have something for everyone!

Handmade creations, homemade candy and bake sale, jewelry, art, books, Christmas décor, attic treasures, toys and games too!

Live Music and Raffle Gift Baskets too!





## Poinsettias for the Christmas Season

Participate in the First Church of Christ tradition of placing poinsettias on the altar during the Christmas season. Fill out the form below and your sentiments will be included in the bulletins on Christmas Eve.

A donation of \$20.00 is requested for each plant, and all forms must be in the church office by **Monday, December 15**. All poinsettias are delivered to the homebound and nursing home residents.

### The First Church of Christ in Longmeadow

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

In loving memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to the First Church of Christ in Longmeadow; and mail or bring to 763 Longmeadow Street, Longmeadow, MA 01106.

Thank you and have a joyful Christmas season!

**Friday, December 12, 6:30 pm at The Kennedy's!**



We will have our traditional carol sing along, and we're pleased to announce that our own Daniel Rose will be at the piano to share some Christmas cheer.

All are welcome at the Kennedy's home, 11 Western Drive, Longmeadow, MA. Fellowship and snacks begin at 6:30 pm and we'll start singing at 7:30 pm. Please bring a snack and a beverage to share.

Youth Movie Night with our Youth Leader, Crystal!

# Christmas Movie Night

We're closing out the year with a Christmas movie night – just the way Buddy would want it. The event will be fun, festive, and filled with a hot cocoa station and holiday treats!



**Sunday, December 14, 3pm – 5pm,  
Buxton Rm**

Please RSVP by December 12. It is VERY important that we have a headcount so there is plenty of everything for everyone! Don't miss it! The best way to spread Christmas cheer is a movie night with friends right here.

[crystal@firstchurchlongmeadow.org](mailto:crystal@firstchurchlongmeadow.org)

The Wilbraham Community Chorus returns to First Church, Longmeadow for a concert on Saturday, December 13 at 2 pm in the Sanctuary.



Members of First Church are performing in this once-a-year event.

*Please join us for this special performance!*  
***Admission is FREE!***

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Please join us for this touching and tender Service in the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 14 at 4 pm.





### **THIS YEAR'S GIVING TREE**

This year, First Church is supporting a Christmas Dinner for the homeless community, and it will be served by Open Pantry on Christmas Day, at the Commerce High School, Springfield, Massachusetts.

Please donate a gift certificate to either Dunkin Donuts or McDonalds. We are asking for a donation of \$25.00 for each card to ensure that all dining guests receive the same amount. If you want to buy 2 or more, please do! There will be red and green envelopes near our Giving Tree in the sanctuary for the gift cards, which can then be hung as ornaments on the tree.

***We hope to distribute around 100 certificates, as that is the estimated number of Christmas dinner guests. All gift certificates need to be brought to the church by Sunday, December 21.***

*Nicole from Open Pantry will attend the December 21 Service. At that time, she will gather the donated gift cards.*

*Nicole also joyfully distributes them on Christmas Day during dinner!*

***She is very grateful for our church's generosity!***

*Both Services offer the same beautiful music and candlelight service. The 4 pm is traditionally our family service, but there is a children's message at both services.*





## Sign Up To Be A Part Of Our Prayer Chain



When you sign up you will be a part of our prayer chain team. You will receive emails after prayer requests are submitted to the church office at [office@firstchurchlongmeadow.org](mailto:office@firstchurchlongmeadow.org) and these concerns will be shared by Rev. Doug, Communications Director Noelia Ortiz or Jill Labonte, our office administrator.

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Our next gathering of the Singles Circle will be Saturday, Dec. 13, at Storowton Tavern & Carriage House, 1305 Memorial Ave Gate 1, West Springfield. We will meet at 6pm for our annual Christmas season outing. All singles are welcome to join us. <https://www.storowton.com/>

Please contact Marilyn at [marilyn@firstchurchlongmeadow.org](mailto:marilyn@firstchurchlongmeadow.org) if you are planning to attend, as we will need to make a reservation.

### **CALENDAR TODAY**

First Day of Advent Service, Sanctuary, 10 am  
Christmas Fair moving boxes after Service  
New Member Class, Buxton Room, 11:30 a.m.  
Christmas Tree Lighting, Town Green, 5 pm

### **CHURCH CALENDAR - THIS WEEK**

Monday – Christmas Fair Set-Up all week.

Tuesday – Social Justice Meeting, Buxton Room, 7 pm

Thursday - Sprit Speaks, Study, 5 pm

Bell Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room, 6:15 pm – 7:15 pm.  
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room, 7:30 pm – 9 pm

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

- Christmas on the Green Fair, Saturday, December 6
- Holiday Sing @ The Kennedy's, Friday, Dec. 12, 6:30 pm
- Wilbraham Community Chorus Concert, Sanctuary, December 13, 2 pm
- Single Circle, Storrowtown Tavern, W. Spfld, 6 pm
- Blue Christmas Service, December 14, Sanctuary, 4pm
- Elf-tastic Youth Movie night, Dec. 14, Buxton Rm, 3pm
- Christmas Eve Services, Sanctuary, 4pm and 8pm
- Budget Forum, Bailey Hall, January 11, Bailey Hall
- Annual Meeting with soup, January 25, Bailey Hall

