

FIRST CHURCH, SARASOTA

Contemporary Service

Sunday, December 6, 2020

Rev. Dr. Sam Wright, Senior Pastor
Baron Garriott, Director of Praise Music

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRAISE SONGS	Praise Band
WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS	Donna Maynard, Director of Ministries
LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES	
CHILDREN'S MOMENT	Susan Quigley, Director of Children and Youth Ministries
PASTORAL PRAYER	
OFFERING OUR GIFTS	
SPECIAL MUSIC	Praise Band
SCRIPTURE READING	Isaiah 40:1-11 ¹
THE MESSAGE	<i>The Gifts of Advent: Peace</i> Rev. Dr. Sam Wright
CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION	
THE LORD'S PRAYER	
RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP	
PRAISE SONG	Praise Band
BLESSING	
PASSING THE PEACE	

¹Isaiah 40:1-11 (CEB)

Comfort, comfort my people! says your God. Speak compassionately to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her compulsory service has ended, that her penalty has been paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins!

A voice is crying out: "Clear the LORD's way in the desert! Make a level highway in the wilderness for our God! Every valley will be raised up, and every mountain and hill will be flattened. Uneven ground will become level, and rough terrain a valley plain. The LORD's glory will appear, and all humanity will see it together; the LORD's mouth has commanded it."

A voice was saying: "Call out!" And another said, "What should I call out?" All flesh is grass; all its loyalty is like the flowers of the field. The grass dries up and the flower withers when the LORD's breath blows on it. Surely the people are grass. The grass dries up; the flower withers, but our God's word will exist forever. Go up on a high mountain, messenger Zion!

Raise your voice and shout, messenger Jerusalem! Raise it; don't be afraid; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" Here is the LORD God, coming with strength, with a triumphant arm, bringing his reward with him and his payment before him.

Like a shepherd, God will tend the flock; he will gather lambs in his arms and lift them onto his lap. He will gently guide the nursing ewes.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES LIMITED SEATING - TICKETS AVAILABLE

We will have two identical in-person traditional Christmas Eve services at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. with professional singers and instrumentalists. Those same musicians will be featured in our online Christmas Eve service. The music will be wonderful. Our in-person Christmas Eve services will be different this year. We will not have congregational singing or lighting candles in order to keep each other safe. We will be observing the guidelines of the CDC, taking temperatures, wearing masks, and physically distancing to show kindness to others in order to protect each other from infection with the virus.

In order to make certain that we have enough seating at each service (120 maximum), we are providing complimentary tickets. You must have a ticket in order to attend the in-person Christmas Eve services. You can obtain tickets by calling the church office (941-955-0935) and speaking with Secretary Debi Adams who will add the names and contact information for each person attending to our list. She will mail you the tickets. When the tickets are gone, people will be encouraged to participate in our online Christmas Eve services from home where everyone can safely sing along.

Artisans' World Marketplace OPEN HOUSE (128 S. Pineapple Ave.)

TODAY ~ 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Monday -Friday, December 7-11 ~ 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Saturday, December 12 ~ 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

As a thank you for all First Church helps us do, bring your in-person or online bulletin to receive 10% off your purchases. Come see the array of unique and beautiful items. Each purchase helps an artisan provide the basics for his or her family.

STAFF APPRECIATION

As many of you know and experience, the First Church Staff serves with caring professionalism in their myriad of weekday and Sunday responsibilities. The Staff-Parish Committee invites you to express your appreciation of them with a Christmas love offering. Please note "staff gift" on your check or envelope. Thank you for this gift and your other expressions of kindness to the staff throughout the year. - Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Angel Tree THANK YOU

Yes, we missed the real Angel Tree in the narthex and shopping for 75 local needy children whose families are vetted to qualify for this Salvation Army annual project. Your donations of approximately \$8000 will provide a very Merry Christmas to these children and families. Jesus loves the little children and so do you!

THANK YOU, TEAM, for Hanging the Greens

The church looks more exquisite than ever. This masked team, divided in groups, worked tirelessly on three days to stay physically distanced and to beautify the church for all who enter this season. We express our gratitude and love to each.

Russ Copeman, Jim Fredrick, Suzanne and JR Cline, Sally Altman, Bev Gorman, Sandy Grimes, Dione Post, Tina McGovern and son Rob, Valorie Pruitt, Bonnie VanOverbeke, Jayne Cory