



Welcome to a church where everyone matters  
and everyone belongs.

## Prelude

### Welcome

*"Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere  
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born."*

**Advent Candle** (Megan Hasty, Hannah Ramsdell, Sophie Becker, Haley Hasty)

Megan: Love. Everything begins with Love.

**Many: From the beginning of creation to the end of time,  
God's love colors everything.**

Megan: Open your hearts to love and you will recognize hope  
shining in the most ancient of promises.  
*(The candle of Hope is lit)*

Hannah: Love. Everything continues with Love.

**Many: From strangers across oceans to neighbors next door,  
God's love dwells in everything.**

Hannah: Live love as a way of being and you will see peace shining  
in each and every face that images: beloved.  
*(The candle of Peace is lit)*

Sophie: Love. Everything ends with Love.

**Many: From the most challenging struggle to the most  
wondrous delight, God's love flows through  
everything.**

Sophie: Give love with open hands and you will find joy shining in

the surprises that undo us and transform us.  
*(The candle of Joy is lit)*

Haley: Love. Everything leans toward Love.

**Many: From the greatest ruler to the tiniest baby, God's love  
changes everything.**

Haley: Prepare the way for love and you will find love shining in  
each and every breath that whispers: Emmanuel.  
*(The candle of Love is lit)*

As we prepare the way for love, let us welcome the Light  
of Christ.

## Light of Christ

**\*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world  
without end. Amen.**

### Call to Worship/Prayer

Ryan Moreau

Leader: Love's memory is long. Love's promise is often kept in  
unexpected ways.

**All: God's love endures forever.**

Leader: Today we prepare for the greatest expression of that love,  
as we listen once more for the Word in the words.

**All: God's love endures forever. Through acts as simple  
and common as the birth of a baby, God transforms  
the world, and God's promises are kept. It is that  
expression of faithful love we anticipate and celebrate  
this day.**

Leader: Let us pray ...

**Holy God, we come to worship you, longing to abide in love.  
We yearn to feel your presence flowing among us. Emmanuel,  
the promised one, we know you are as near to us as our  
breathing. As we sing and pray, speak and listen, let the light  
of love shine in our midst, for it is through this world-  
changing love that we witness you moving in and among us.  
God-with-us, Emmanuel. Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn** #171 "God's Love Made Visible!"

## The Sacrament of Baptism

Lawrence David Carr

**Welcome**

**Questions of the Parents and Sponsors  
Congregational Affirmation of Faith**

Leader: Do you believe in God?

**People: I believe in God.**

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**People: I believe in Jesus Christ.**

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**People: I believe in the Holy Spirit.**

**Blessing the Water**

**Act of Baptism - Presentation of the Newly Baptized**

**Prayer for the Baptized**

Leader: ... hear the baptismal prayers of the congregation:

**People: Be with Lawrence through the years, blessing his life,  
that he may grow in love for you. Gracious God,  
giver of life, you have called us by name, and pledge  
to each of us your faithful love. Remind us of the  
promises of our own baptism, and renew our trust in  
you. Make us strong to obey your will and to serve  
you with joy, through the power of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

**Presentation of Gifts**

*We rejoice in the baptism of Lawrence, son of Angel and Steven  
Carr. Welcome to his sponsors, Cherish Hockenberry and Raymond  
Berwick.*

**\*Hymn #61 "All Things Bright and Beautiful"**

**Children's Message**

**The Lord's Prayer** *(unison)*

***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. Amen.***

*(All children are invited downstairs for Sunday School.)*

**Anthem** "Go Tell It on the Mountain" Kinyon

Joyful Noise Bell Choir

**Scripture**

Luke 1:26-49

**Sermon**

Rev. Robin Bird

**Sharing of Joys and Concerns/Morning Prayer**

**Call to Offering**

**Offertory**

"Ring Out the Bells"

M. McDonald

**\*Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all  
creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host;**

**Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**\*Closing Hymn #167 "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"**

**\*Benediction**

**Postlude** "And the Glory of the Lord" Handel/Chesterton

**\*All who are able are invited to stand.**

**The flower on the Marbletop Table** is given in loving memory of  
John McHugh, Heidi Morse's brother.

**Please join us downstairs after the service  
for coffee and refreshments in Fellowship Hall.**

**Today's Preludes**

*James Burr, Organist*

"Of the Father's Love Begotten" Held

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" Paxton

"The Lullabies of Christmas" Smith

"Angel Carols" Smith

*Joyful Noise Bell Choir*

"O Come All Ye Faithful" Sherman

"There's a Song in the Air" Kinyon

**Bell Choir Members:** Dave Bower, Michelle Bower, Jane Burr, Dan Cima,  
Margaret Klukas, Althea Madigan, Joanne Myer, Sally Sullivan

-----  
*Debi Hockenberry, Director of Christian Education*

**Reminder...**Sunday School ends at 11:15 AM.

**In Our Ongoing Prayers**

The birth of **Natalie Karen Heebner**, daughter of Jon Heebner and granddaughter of Larry Heebner; Shirley Bryant; Elizabeth Fry; Janina Majkowski; James Purnell; Linda Dayton; Sara Levy; Julie, friend of the Turner family; Geraldine Strong; Tim Madigan; Lorraine Grork, Pam Lyons' friend; Pat Lazeren; Shirley McElroy; Helen Dyar; Dean Hockenberry; Helen Dahling; Dave Hollister; Ryan Meneses; Joyce Smith; John Arthur; Brian, 11 years old, fighting cancer; Daniel Burnett-Pollack; Debbie Chase; Dick Myer; Margaret Klukas; Paul Westerberg; people struggling with mental illness, and their families; the people of Syria; Heidi Howie; Mason Bower; Michael Turner; Martha Fowler; Michael Bebrin; Cooper Doyle

*New additions in **bold print***

### **Today's Activities**

**Christmas Giving Tree:** Please place your new, unwrapped gift (or gift card) under the tree by today. Any questions, please contact Sue Moreau at [susan.j.moreau@gmail.com](mailto:susan.j.moreau@gmail.com) or 860-268-8801.

**Junior Choir:** 11:30 AM, Kellogg Hall

**Board of Music:** 11:30 AM, Library

### **This Week's Activities**

**Men's Breakfast Group:** Tuesday, December 20, 6:30 AM, Vernon Diner

**BCE:** Tuesday, December 20, 7 PM, Kellogg Hall

**Finance:** Wednesday, December 21, 7:15 PM, Kellogg Hall

**Sanc. Choir Rehearsal:** Thursday, December 22, 7:30 PM, Kellogg Hall

**Grief Support Group:** Friday, December 23, 10:30 AM, Kellogg Hall

### **CHRISTMAS EVE**

**5:30 PM - "The ABCs of Christmas"**

**11 PM - Candlelight Service**

**Christmas Day:** Worship Service at 10 AM

**Scrip-Your-All Update:** This is our last week for 2016! With an AMAZING week of orders and scrip sales last week, we are at \$4,690 towards our \$5,000 goal for the year. This does not include orders placed last Sunday. With only \$310 to go, every sale helps us towards our goal. You can still shop for your Christmas gift cards (for retail stores, restaurants and

grocery) at our Scrip-Your-All table today during Coffee Hour. New card retailers are now available and gift card holders are available as well. Please consider picking up a gift card for the food bank. Price Chopper cards are available for as little as \$5.

**2017 Giving Commitment Update:** Thank you to all who have returned your Giving Commitment. We have had 135 giving commitments returned, with \$223,024.04 pledged toward our 2017 goal of \$258,000. For a more recent total, see the signs in the Narthex and at Coffee Hour.

**Merry Christmas to my church family!** Instead of sending cards, I will be making a donation to Pay It Forward. Please accept my best wishes for a happy, healthy and meaningful 2017. Paul M. Shimer

The **Care Network** is offered by the Deacons as a helping hand during difficult times. If you are in need of a ride to church, the doctor, hospital, grocery store, etc., in need of meals or a visit, contact Cheryl Purnell, 860-712-8124 or Sue Pilkons, 860-875-4122.

**Teddy Bear Ministry:** Teddy Bears are sitting in the pews for you to take and give or send to someone in need of a bit of caring love. In order to keep this ministry going, we are asking for monetary donations to the Women's Fellowship Teddy Bear Ministry Fund or you may buy a bear (10"-12") and leave it in the Church Office. Contact Joanne Myer at 860-872-9222 or [jmyer0146@yahoo.com](mailto:jmyer0146@yahoo.com) if you have questions.

**Child Care is available** for church activities when notice is given 3 days prior to the event. Call Child Care Coordinator, Jen Jensen, 860-836-5824.

**To request a visit with the pastor,** please call the Church Office, 860-875-7580.

<b>Church Office</b>	860-875-7580
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:church.secretary@firstchurchofvernon.org">church.secretary@firstchurchofvernon.org</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.firstchurchofvernon.org">www.firstchurchofvernon.org</a>