

"Star of Bethlehem"
by Hannah Garrity

Epiphany Sunday

January 12, 2025 • 10:00 AM



*an Open & Affirming
congregation*



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Adopted by the Council - 2020

The Guiding Principles of First Congregational Church of St. Louis describe the values that guide our church and its members throughout our faith journey. We will...

Practice Extravagant Welcome

- Invite and honor the contributions of every member, quirks and all.
- Be grateful for the gifts and time that each of us dedicate to FCC.

Demonstrate Faithful Leadership

- Value people and our faith community over money and material things.
- Share concerns with the appropriate person and keep discussions and comments of others confidential.
- Celebrate successes, own mistakes, and fail faithfully together and in community.

Engage in Inclusive Decision-Making

- Be thoughtful, respectful, and transparent in our decision making.
- Value building consensus and move forward faithfully once a decision is reached.
- Listen to one another and debate with respect; honor the contributions of every member.

Overall, we will be guided by FCC's mission to

**Know God's Word,
Do God's Work,
and Live God's Love.**

WELCOME

to First Congregational Church of St. Louis!

*an Open & Affirming congregation
of the United Church of Christ*



If you are visiting with us, we invite you to share your contact information on a Connect Card, found in each pew. You may give your card to an usher or place it in an offering box at either entrance to the sanctuary. You may also scan the QR code on the card to access the digital version.

Restrooms on the main level are located at the back of the sanctuary and down the hall on the right side.

Changing tables are located in the Nursery on the main floor and by the restroom at the back of the sanctuary.

Offering Boxes are located at each sanctuary entrance.

Children are always welcome in worship, either in the pews or at the Playground at the front of the sanctuary. Except for the first Sunday of the month (Communion) we have Sunday school each week for elementary-aged children downstairs in the Purple Room during worship.

***An asterisk** is an invitation to rise, in body or spirit.

Bolded text is an invitation for the congregation to read or sing in unison.



Sunday January 12, 2025

Prelude

“Greensleeves Aria”

James Biery

Introit

“Jesus, the Light of the World”

***Call to the People** *Based on Isaiah 60*

Leader: Arise, shine; for your light has come!
God’s glory has risen upon us.

**People: Despite the state of this world: Despite illness, despite fear;
Despite disappointment, despite injustice;**

Leader: Despite sadness, despite violence;
Despite grief, and despite despair—

**People: God’s glory will appear over us.
Lift up your eyes and look around:**

Leader: See the light of God’s hope, the light of God’s peace,
the light of God’s joy, the light of God’s love.

**People: See the light of God’s healing for us, for our community,
for our world. Let us lift up our eyes and look around.**

Leader: Then we shall see and be radiant, our hearts shall thrill and rejoice.

***Hymn**

#129 “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” *New Century Hymnal*
Tune: IN DULCI JUBILO

Invitation

Leader: Here at this table and in this sanctuary,
let the Divine Spark enter our lives.

People: Let the Holy Light aid us in seeing the Christ in our midst.

Leader: The Brightness of Jesus the Christ will illuminate our way.

People: The Radiance of the Christ will warm our hearts.

Leader: God is shining upon you!

People: And God's light streams upon you!

Leader: Open your hearts.

People: We open them to the brilliance of God.

Leader: Let us give thanks for the light and love of God.

People: We praise our Creator with joy and thanksgiving.

Communion Prayer

Distribution of the Elements

Please come forward by the center aisle to receive a piece of bread or gluten-free wafer and a cup of wine (red) or juice (white). Return to your pews by the side aisles with your elements so we may partake together.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison)

**God of Light and Love, we cherish this table in this season
when the nights are long and cold.**

**Through this meal, the Christ, and our neighbors,
our hearts have warmed.**

**May the comfort in our souls sustain us through winter
and nudge us to create welcoming spaces for our neighbors.**

**With gratitude, we leave here energized to kindle your love
in this world. Amen.**

***Passing of the Peace**

Announcements

Karen Safe

Anthem

"Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree"

Arise! Shine! Your light has come; the Lord's glory has shone upon you.
Though darkness covers the earth and gloom the nations,
the Lord will shine upon you; God's glory will appear over you.
Nations will come to your light and kings to your dawning radiance.
Lift up your eyes and look all around: they are all gathered; they have come to you.
Your sons will come from far away, and your daughters on caregivers' hips.
Then you will see and be radiant; your heart will tremble and open wide,
because the sea's abundance will be turned over to you;
the nations' wealth will come to you.

Reflection

Valerie Jackson

***Hymn**

#139 "The First Nowell"

New Century Hymnal
Tune: THE FIRST NOWELL

Prayers for the Community

**Our Mother, 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 sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Anthem

"The Holly She Bears a Berry" *arr. James E. Clemens*

*Oh, the holly she bears a berry as white as the milk,
And Mary she bore Jesus, all wrapped up in silk.
And Mary she bore Jesus, our Savior for to be,
And the first tree that's in the greenwood, it was the holly.*

*Oh, the holly she bears a berry as green as the grass,
And Mary she bore Jesus, who died on the cross.
And Mary she bore Jesus, our Savior for to be,
And the first tree that's in the greenwood, it was the holly.*

*Oh, the holly she bears a berry as black as the coal,
And Mary she bore Jesus, who died for us all.
And Mary she bore Jesus, our Savior for to be,
And the first tree that's in the greenwood, it was the holly.*

*Oh, the holly she bears a berry, as blood, it is red,
And we trust in our Savior, who rose from the dead.
And Mary she bore Jesus, our Savior for to be,
And the first tree that's in the greenwood, it was the holly.*

***Blessing**

**All: May God who led the wise men by the shining of a star,
also lead us to find the Christ in this world.**

Postlude

"Go, tell it on the Gigue"

A.D. Miller



Thank you to those serving this morning:

Ushers/Communion Servers: Kevin Ceballos, Mark Barlow,
David Greenhaw, Owen Solomon

Announcements & Scripture: Karen Safe

Pastor Mia Out of the Office

Pastor Mia is out of the office on vacation until January 14 and will return to the office January 15. Valerie Jackson will preach the first two Sundays of January. Pastor Mia will also take the second part of her sabbatical leave during the month of February. Rev. Dr. David Greenhaw will preach and Valerie Jackson will cover pastoral care during that time.

2025 Stewardship

Thank you to those who have turned in your 2025 pledge cards, which helps us plan for the new year. If you would like to make a pledge, there are extra pledge cards at each entrance to the sanctuary, and you can also complete your pledge online by scanning the QR code.



Annual Meeting - Sunday January 26

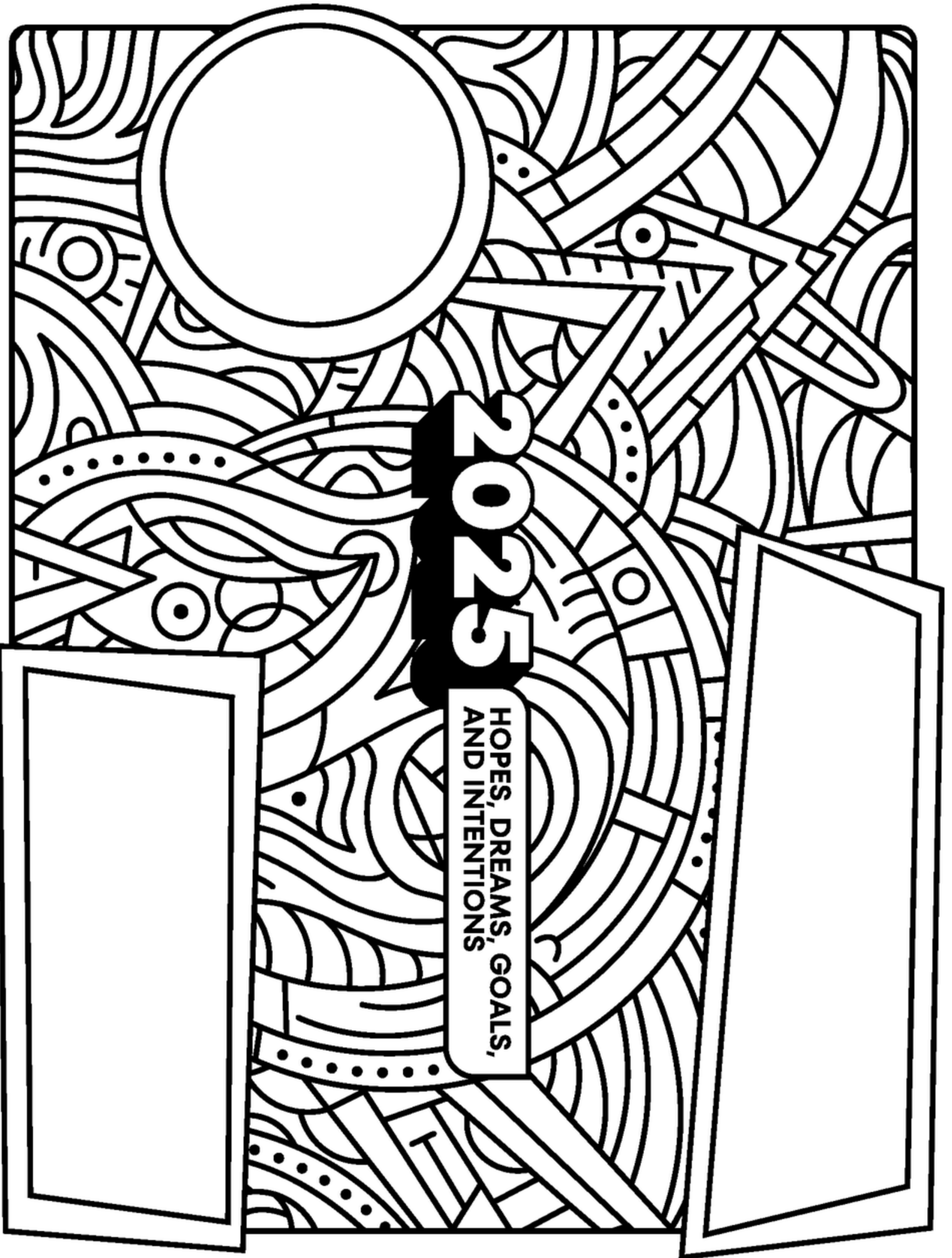
Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the members of The First Congregational Church of St. Louis will take place on Sunday, January 26, 2025. The meeting will follow an abbreviated worship service and will begin at 10:15 a.m., for the following purposes:

1. To vote on changing the quorum for congregational and special meetings from 40 to 20.
2. To approve a budget for 2025.
3. To approve a slate of Council and Ministry Team members for 2025.
4. Such other business as may come before the congregation.

A quorum of forty (40) members must be present before a vote can be taken. Members of any duration are eligible to vote and friends of the Church are invited to attend, although they are not eligible to cast a ballot.

By order of the Church Council,
Katherine Buchowski, Clerk

The Executive Team is urging members who can commit to attending the Annual Meeting to contact the church office by clicking the link in the email newsletter, or you may respond by contacting Hannah Rice, Minister of Administration and Membership.



2025

**HOPES, DREAMS, GOALS,
AND INTENTIONS**

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ST. LOUIS
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Our Ministry Team

Bert Merrell, Sunday Sexton

LaBar Verner, Custodian

Mehran Moslehikhah, Maintenance

Tim Clark

Minister of Music

(tclark@firstcongregational.org)

Joyce Haynes McCowan (MDiv)

Minister of Faith Formation

(jhaynesmccowan@firstcongregational.org)

Hannah Rice (MDiv)

Minister of Administration and Membership

(hrice@firstcongregational.org)

Rev. Mia White (MDiv, MATS, CSD)

Senior Minister

(revmia@firstcongregational.org)



Online
Giving



FCC News



Website



Calendar



Worship
Volunteers

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