

FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF GROTON

December 24, 2017

Ringing of the Bell

Rebecca Pike

Thought as the Service Begins:

This is the irrational season
when love blooms bright and wild.
Had Mary been filled with reason,
there'd been no room for the child. (Madeleine L'Engle)

(We ask that you put your electronic devices into worship mode by turning off all ringers. Please also turn off the flash on your camera. Join us in a time of quiet during the prelude.)

Prelude: Walking in the Air (H. Blake, arr. by Melanie Thorne)
Wolcu Yole (Benjamin Britten)

Call to Worship: A Soalin' (Stookey, Batteaste, Mezzetti)
Youth and Children's Choirs

Welcome and Announcements Loretto Roney, Worship Leader

***Hymn** Little Drummer Boy (insert)

Lighting of the Chalice and Advent Wreath
Deborah, Jai and Sofia Santoro

Response Hymn (please remain seated) #123
Spanish trans. Rev. Lilia Cuervo and Ervin Barrios

Fuente de Amor, ven hacia mí.
Y al corazón, cántale tu compasión.
Sopla al volar, sube en la mar;
Hasta moldear la justicia de la vida.
Arráigame, libérame,
Fuente de Amor, ven a mí, ven a mí.

Spirit of Life, come unto me.
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;
Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close; wings set me free;
Spirit of life, come to me, come to me.

Offertory Sussex Carol (Vaughan Williams, trans. by John Gibson)

Today's offering is for the Caring Committee's ministry of providing gas and grocery cards to church families and people who come to our doors in need. If you are in need of a gas or grocery card today, please speak to the minister after the service.

***Offertory Response** (Words: Melinda Green; Music: Shawn McCann)

We thank each other for these gifts
Which makes our giving bless-ed.
We bless the works our gifts sustain
And pray they ripple outward.
With grace and generosity
We show our faith enacted.

Hymn Do You Hear What I Hear? (insert)

The Story of the Nativity, according to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke (also known as The Paper Bag Pageant!)

Narrators: Gina Perini Benedict and Rev. Elea Kemler

***Hymn** Once in Royal David's City #228

***Sung Benediction** #414

As we leave this friendly place,
love give light to every face.
May the kindness which we've learned,
light our hearts 'til we return.

Postlude Hodie Christus natus est (Francis Poulenc, arr. by Margery Goldstein)
Diana's Aria from the Hunt Cantata (Johann Sebastian Bach, arr. by Margery Goldstein)

(You are invited to come light a candle silently during the Postlude. We ask the congregation to remain seated until the last candle; if you are not able to stay, please leave quietly.)

***Please stand as you are able.**

Large Print Hymnals, Sunday Bulletins and Assisted Listening Devices are available at the sanctuary doors.

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*Join us downstairs for good food and conversation
immediately following the service!*

Special thanks today to: Carol Swift for altar decorations and Meghann Marshall for pageant management!

Greeters: Tom Roney, Carol Sarasin, Nancy Burdine

Ushers: Avery and Ivan Sturm, Amy and Jason Grosso

Coffee Hosts: Dmitri Foster, Jacob Tessier, Kiernan DeMeis-Dullea

A warm welcome and thank you to this morning's musicians:

Paul Funch, flute

Mike Jacobs, alto flute, flute

Margery Goldstein and Claire Rindenello, flute, piccolo

Maria Rindenello, harp

The candle hanging from the pulpit at the front of the church carries a flame that originated at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem then transported to Austria where it was greeted and distributed to 1000 Boy Scouts from 20 countries. It arrived in the United States on November 25, 2017 and since has been transported by members of Scouting units to thousands of homes, churches, hospitals, retirement homes and other organizations. As it burns in Groton, it also flickers in cities and towns across North, Central and South America, Europe, Australia, Africa, the Middle and Far East carrying the message and hope for Peace on Earth. Thank you to Sam Kimpton for bringing us this light today.

Christmas Eve Service: 6:45 pm Caroling in the Vestry, Candlelight Service at 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary. Child Care will be provided. There will be cider and cookies both before and after the service so plan to come early or stay after!

All are welcome next Sunday morning, Dec. 31 at 10 AM for our annual Shelter Sandwich Making Service when we will make and pack about 200 lunches for residents of several area shelters.

WELCOME TO ALL VISITORS. We are so glad you are here. Join us for coffee, tea and conversation after the service in the Vestry, the large room beneath us, where you can meet our minister, Rev. Elea Kemler and visit the Welcome Table to learn more about us. Please sign one of the Guest Books on the tables near the front and back entrances so we can send you the monthly print newsletter and weekly emails about life at First Parish.

First Parish Church is a Welcoming Congregation. We joyfully welcome all!

FIRST PARISH CHURCH

Groton, Massachusetts



Artwork by Lindy Hanninen

"We are a community seeking to deepen spiritually, to take care of one another, and to be a blessing to the world."

Please visit our website: www.uugroton.org and our Facebook Page at First Parish Church of Groton, MA

There is childcare for infants and toddlers through age 4 years beginning at 9:50 AM on the second floor of the East Wing, and you are welcome to take children there at any time during the service. There are quiet toys in the fabric pouches and picture books in each pew. The service is also broadcast downstairs in the large room beneath us if anyone needs to take a break during the service.