

South Freeport Church

Congregational † United Church of Christ



Christmas Eve

*Candlelight Service of
Lessons and Carols*

December 24, 2023, 9:00pm

Welcome to South Freeport Church! We are glad you are with us.

As an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ, our mission is to be a source of worship, service, education, and healing for all. We welcome all people of any race, gender, nationality, ethnic origin, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression. We support full participation of everyone in the life and programs of this church. We recognize the rights of all persons, just as Christ accepted all people he encountered. We believe that in meeting each other in Christian love, God's Spirit frees us all to give, to grow, and to be ourselves. So whoever you are, and wherever you are on the journeys of faith and life, know that you are welcome here!

Hearing amplifiers are available for those who need them, please ask an usher.

Young kids are invited to explore the "Prayground" in the back of the sanctuary.

Children are always welcome to be their authentic selves here: noises, wiggles, and all!

Dear Christmas Eve Worshippers,

The ancient Prophet Isaiah dreamed of a light shining in the darkness, and a small child leading the way to a better world. His dreams echo faintly through the centuries, fading to a dull ember, but never dying. The Christmas story tells of a rekindling of Isaiah's dreams, as Mary receives a strange visitor, and says yes to a dangerous and difficult journey that will lead her to unexpected places and people.

This is a story of God's boundless, mysterious, wondrous love, which doesn't end around the manger in Bethlehem; it continues to unfold in our time and in each of us. You are the rekindling of an ancient dream. You are part of the story of God's wondrous love. You are a testament to the good news that bursts into the world on Christmas.

Tonight, may this Sanctuary be a holy place for you, and may you experience the profound love of God alive in your heart. We hope you will return again and again to experience more of life in community here. South Freeport Church is a holy place to be, belong, and become, and you are always welcome in this place.

Wishing you a Blessed Christmas!



Rev. Sean Patrick Coady, Minister

Order of Worship

**Please stand as you are able*

PRELUDE

WELCOME & PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Rev. Sean Patrick Coady

INTROIT No. 183

“Once in Royal David’s City”

Bella & Rosie St. Cyr

**Congregation joins in singing verses 3 and 4*

CALL TO WORSHIP

“The Mighty Pilgrimage”
by Christine Rodgers

Pastor Jeremy W. Young

*CAROL No. 182

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

All

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Matt, Rosie, and Bella St. Cyr

RESPONSE SONG

“Emmanuel”

Choir

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

Sarah Guzmán

The prophet Isaiah announces the reign of the Prince of Peace

CAROL No. 190

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming?”

SECOND LESSON

Luke 1:26-33

Pastor Jeremy W. Young

The angel Gabriel tells Mary she will bear a son

ANTHEM

“Mary, Did You Know?”

David Watts & Denis Drobinski

THIRD LESSON Luke 2:1-7 Lizzie McIntire
The birth of the babe in Bethlehem

CAROL No. 203 "Away in a Manger" All

FOURTH LESSON Luke 2:8-14 Chris O'Neil
An angel tells the shepherds of the birth

CAROL MEDLEY No. 191 "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" verses 1-2 All
No. 180 "O Little Town of Bethlehem" verses 1-2

FIFTH LESSON Luke 2:15-20 Amanda Kent
The shepherds travel to the manger

ANTHEM "Those Gospel Angels" Choir
words and music by Gilpin

CHRISTMAS HOMILY Rev. Sean Patrick Coady

OFFERING *given to Kaplan Fuel Fund and Freeport Community Services*

Invitation

Offertory "O, Holy Night" Will David

Prayer of Dedication

Lord's Prayer

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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.

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

*Please pass the light to your neighbor carefully,
keeping lit candles upright and tipping unlit candles into the light.*

Proclamation

John 1:1-5, 9-14
Light of the World

Rev. Sean Patrick Coady

Choral Anthem

“Night of Silence”
words by Kantor, music by Ferguson

Carol by Candlelight

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
‘Round yon virgin mother and child; holy infant, so tender and mild, Sleep in
heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven a-far, heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light,
Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus Lord
at thy birth, Jesus Lord at thy birth.

Moment of Dedication & Benediction

POSTLUDE

† † †

Thank you for returning your candles to the ushers on your way out.

Bulletin cover image: “The Nativity” by Scott Cupstid.

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Advent Candle Lighting litany by Rev. Sarah Are, A Sanctified Art, www.sanctifiedart.org

We are grateful to David Kahn, for sharing his gift of trumpet in this service. Thank you to our Ushers this evening, Bill and Linda McCullough.

The Christmas Poinsettias are Generously Provided by:

Meg Broderick – *In Memory of Peter Broderick*

Rev. Sean Patrick Coady and Steven Belnavis – *Happy Christmas, South Freeport Church!*

Sheri and Dan Bunting – *In Memory of Moms and Dads Everywhere*

Anne and Jim Cram – *In Loving Memory of our Parents*

Genie and Joe Field – *Merry Christmas!*

Mabel Gerquest – *Hope and Joy*

Meg and Tom Goodyear – *In Loving Memory of Barbara & Rich*

Jennie Gwilym – *Presence is the best present*

Jerry Kennedy

The Manganello Family – *In Loving Memory of Rob Manganello*

Laura McDill – *PEACE*

Leanne, Jon, Maisy, and Marion, Nichols – *In Loving Memory of Aunt Louise*

Fran Philip – *In Loving Memory of Vicky Devlin and Stu Jones*

SueAnn Randall – *In Memory of Lucy Violette*

SueAnn Randall – *In Memory of Jeanne Douglas, Happy & Jim Marsh, and Muriel Wilson*

Evelyn Sawyer – *In Loving Memory of My Parents, Ellis and Eva Snodgrass*

Jeremy W. Young – *Merry Christmas, beloved Children of God!*

Family Worship Space Available

On Christmas Eve, as we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, we recommit ourselves to be welcoming of the littlest ones in church. Babies are always welcome in our Sanctuary, whether “sleeping in heavenly peace” or making a fuss! If parents want to take a break with their little ones, the Nursery is open for families who might like to be in a child-centered space, where you can hear the service. You can find the Nursery in the classroom just beyond the doors by the organ.

Upcoming Worship & Fellowship Opportunities

New Years Eve Open Sanctuary *Sunday, December 31, 9:30am*

All are welcome to come to our "Open Sanctuary" service beginning at 9:30am, for a peaceful and meditative time with few distractions. Instead of the usual service, we will offer a space for quiet reflection and prayer, with a background of contemplative music, and some simple prayer stations. The Deacons are excited to provide this unique opportunity for a prayerful end of the calendar year.

Epiphany! *Sunday, January 7, 9:30am*

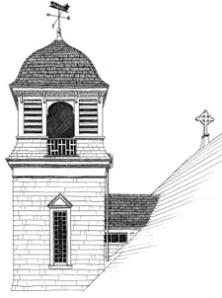
Join us at 9:30am for a worship service focusing on the Three Magi bringing their gifts to the Christ Child. We will also share in Communion together and receive Epiphany “Star Words” to guide us as we begin a new year.

A Capella and Ice Cream *Wednesday, January 10, 7:00pm*

All are welcome to a fun and engaging concert by the Maine Steiners, an A Capella group from the University of Maine. We will gather in the Sanctuary to hear them sing, then meander down to the Community Hall for ice cream.

Youth Service Trip *Sunday, April 14 – Saturday, April 20*

South Freeport Church is sending a group of youth down to Maryland for a weeklong service trip in April. We will be staying and volunteering at *Deep Roots at Clairvaux Farm*, which is a shelter for families experiencing homelessness. This will be a fun, engaging, and transformational experience. If you know of a youth in grades 8 through 12 who might like to attend, please reach out to Rev. Sean Patrick at seanpatrick@southfreeportchurch.org.



South Freeport Church

*An Open and Affirming Congregation
of the United Church of Christ*

Lay Leadership

Cole Tamminen, President of Council
Kathryn Morrison, Vice President of Council
Bill Gilman, Immediate Past President of Council

Staff

Rev. Sean Patrick Coady, Minister
sp@southfreeportchurch.org

Jeremy W. Young, Pastoral Resident
jeremy@southfreeportchurch.org

Bethany Dunfee, Administration & Education Director
beth@southfreeportchurch.org

Denis Drobinski, Music Director
denis@southfreeportchurch.org

Will Bristol, Interim Organist

Kessa Benner, Livestreaming Technician

Ella Brown and Chloe Monk, Nursery Care Providers



South Freeport Church
98 S. Freeport Rd, South Freeport, ME 04078
southfreeportchurch.org | (207) 865-4012

