

FIRST CHURCH WEST HARTFORD

DECEMBER 28, 2025

PRELUDES

Magnificat V
The Shepherds at the Manger

Marcel Dupré
Franz Liszt

WELCOME

†CALL TO WORSHIP

Bob Calef

One: Praise God for God’s mercy and love.
Many: Praise God with the angels in the highest heavens.
One: Praise the Savior of humankind, who came as a child.
Many: Praise Christ Jesus, people of every generation.
One: Praise the Holy Spirit, who calls us here.
Many: Praise the Spirit from the depths of our souls!

†HYMN 149

Angels from the Realms of Glory

REGENT SQUARE

†OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we come into your presence with joy in this holiday season. We also come with a slight sense of regret that we didn’t recognize your presence in real time this past year. During this time of worship, by your grace, let us recount your gracious deeds – your praiseworthy acts and your great favor. In so doing, may we become better equipped to share hope, peace, joy, and love as we follow Christ Jesus. Amen.

ANTHEM

On Christmas Night
The First Church Choir

arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 63:7-9 (OT p. 848)

†RESPONSE (HYMN 134)

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

McGEE

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

Used with permission from CCLI, License #4720828

SERMON

Holiness in Hindsight

Rev. Fredd

HYMN 163

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

W ZLOBIE LEZY

PASTORAL PRAYER AND 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 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.

CALL TO OFFERING

Just as visitors from the East brought gifts to the Christ child, we too are invited to bring gifts to Christ’s church in support of God’s work in the world. Every expression of love is a gift as precious as gold.

OFFERTORY

Angels Sing Above the Stable
The First Church Choir

arr. J. William Greene

†DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

†OFFERTORY PRAYER

Generous God, thank you for the gift of Christ Jesus in our lives and in our world. Bless the gifts we return to you now. We pray that our ministries reflect the lifechanging influence of your great love for humankind. Amen.

†HYMN 155

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE

Rejoice! Rejoice!
The First Church Choir

VENI EMMANUEL

POSTLUDE

Allein Gott in der Hoh' sei Ehr'
("All Glory Be to God on High")

J. S. Bach