



Our Emptiness, Love's Birth

photo by No Revisions (@norevisions) on unsplash.com,
curated by Sara Armstrong for the Board of Music & Arts

ORDER OF WORSHIP

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 24, 2023

*As we gather to worship, notice the image on the cover of your bulletin.
Members of the Board of Music and Arts have curated images
to enrich our exploration of "Our Deep Longing" throughout the season of Advent.*

GREETING

Xan Morgan

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: As with Mary long ago, the voice of God has come to us.

Many: We open our hearts to hear the good news.

One: Like her, let us give ourselves to God's will for us.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

PRELUDE

Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen
(A Rose Has Sprung Up)

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897, German)

*INVOCATION

Robbie Stapleton

*HYMN 220

Angels from the Realms of Glory

REGENT SQUARE

*THE PSALM

from Psalm 96

Robbie Stapleton

One: O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Many: Declare God's glory among the nations, God's wonders among all the people.

One: Honor and majesty are before the Lord; strength and beauty are in God's holy place.

All: Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Let the heavens be glad and let the earth rejoice!

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

DJ, Heather, Danny, and Lincoln Reed

Congregational Response (Hymn 211, verse 7):

O come, Desire of nations, bind all people in one heart and mind.
From dust thou brought us forth to life; deliver us from earthly strife.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

SCRIPTURE READING

John 1:1-5, 10-14

Robbie Stapleton

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

CONGREGATIONAL SONG (Hymnal 204)

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

MCGEE

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.

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

TIME AS CHILDREN

Xan Morgan

(Following Time as Children, kids (through 5th grade) will leave for Church School.)

ANTHEM

*Thus Saith the Lord of Hosts and
But Who May Abide the Day of His Coming
from Messiah*

- G.F. Handel
Sam Kidd, *baritone*

Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.

The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth?
For He is like a refiner's fire.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (Lord's Prayer ("debts") on hymnal page 896)

Robbie Stapleton

*HYMN 249

There's a Song in the Air

CHRISTMAS SONG

SERMON

Our Deep Longing: Our Emptiness, Love's Birth

Paul Simpson Duke

SILENT REFLECTION

OFFERING OF GIFTS

Star in the East

- Arr. David Ashley White

*Brightest and best of the stars of the morning;
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.*

Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining,
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all.

Shall we then yield him in costly devotion
Odors of Edom and offerings divine?
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean
Myrrh from the forest, and gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gifts would his favor secure,
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

*HYMN 218

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

CAROL

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Greeting: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Response: And also with you.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Robert J. Powell
(b.1932, American)

We pray for Dave Lamkin, Beth Foster, Marlene Francis, Eva Kelly, Jill Damon, Betty Gerstler, Marilyn Marsh, Esther Floyd, Mervyn Juchartz, David Gregg, Mike Kelly, Chuck Suits, Lovely Varghese, Paul Larson, Grange Burnside, the Sanford family, Mrs. Essie Slaughter, Simona Butler, John Rowe, and Fay Key.

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Xan Morgan, *Director of Community Life*

Valerie Francia, *Associate for Youth Ministry and Communications*

Bonnie Kidd, *Sanctuary Choir Director*

Dr. Shin-Ae Chun, *Organist*

Coley Roberts, *Children's Choir Director*

Kate Gregg, *Nursery Caregiver*

Lee Foley, *Facilities Manager*

Kat Becker, *Administrator*

We're glad you're here! Please take a moment to fill out the Connection Card in your bulletin and place it in an offering plate when it comes by later in the service. You can indicate any prayer requests you have and let us know if you'd like a name tag and/or our bi-weekly communication about the life of the church.



You may place your offering in one of the plates when they are passed. Or make your offering online using this QR code or via PayPal (@fbca2) and place a Connection Card indicating so in the offering plate.

Church service hearing aids are available at the back of the sanctuary.

Join us for refreshments in the fellowship hall. We look forward to connecting with you!

No formation classes for adults, youth, and children today and no children's choir. We will start back up on January 7.

Children's Ministry. All children are welcome in worship; Worshipful Play Bags are available as you enter the sanctuary. Nursery care is available for children (infant through 3 years). Children (through 5th grade) leave for Church School following Time as Children. You may pick up your children at 11:30 from their Church School classrooms. If you would like more information about Children's Ministry, please connect with Xan Morgan (xan@fbca2.org).

Christmas Eve at 4:00p: A Nativity Story. Come as you are to this simple, informal, family-friendly service. We'll sing carols and listen to the Christmas story. The service will last an hour. Optional childcare for children under the age of 3 will be available. We'll sing carols and listen to the Christmas Story with special music from our Children's Choir and Youth Ensemble. Call time for both Children's Choir and the Youth Ensemble is 3:00p.

Christmas Eve at 7:30p: A Festival of Lessons & Carols. First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor presents a Festival of Lessons and Carols, modeled on the world-famous carol service from King's College in Cambridge, England. Come hear the Christmas story, join in singing beloved Christmas carols, and enjoy beautiful music from our choir and organist.

Adult Formation Class in January. During the month of January, Pastor Paul will be leading a discussion of *Everything Happens for A Reason: And Other Lies I've Loved* by Kate Bowler. We hope you'll join us for this conversation and time of connection each Sunday in January (11:30-12:30p). Books are available to purchase (\$15/book) at church; swing by the ministry station and pick one up this Sunday or next.

Our next Shared Suppers evenings are January 13 and 14. The Board of Care and Community sponsors this opportunity for our FBC Family to gather and get to know one another better. What better way to do that than around a table? We gather in smallish groups (6-8ish) in homes for Shared Suppers. The groups will be different every time so folks can interact with those they may not know so well. If you are interested in being on the list of participants, email Mary Davis or stop by the Ministry Station at church to leave your name and email. Being on the list only indicates interest, not a commitment to come. You will be contacted for availability about two weeks before each supper. Of course, everyone won't be able to come every time. Children/youth are welcome to participate. Shared transportation can also be arranged.

Seek, serve, and grow with us! More information about these opportunities at fbca2.org/connect or use the QR code to the right.



Calendar

December 18-29	Host Daytime Warming Shelter
December 24	Christmas Eve @4:00p
	Lessons & Carols @7:30p
December 25	Christmas Day (church office closed)
December 26-29	Church office open 9:00a-1:00p
January 1	New Year's Day (church office & buildings closed)
January 13 & 14	Shared Suppers
February 4	Annual Congregational Meeting @11:15a

Poinsettias have been given by

in honor of:

The Alaniz Family
Allen & Paula Burton
Astrid Beck
David Robbins

Maria Alaniz and Carol & Murphy Stumpf
Our family at Christmas
Our church family
Joyce Robbins

Poinsettias have been given by

in loving memory of:

Katherine Becker
Dee & Madeline Drake
Paul, Rob, & Charlie
Nancy Fajardo
Roberta Hause
Mara Miles
David Robbins
Lynn Suits
Their Family
Jodylynn Wood & Karen Rayner

Emory & Louise Eley, Carl & Helen Becker
David Drake
Stacey Simpson Duke
Doris George and Leslie Guy George
Jim Hause
Graham & Bonnie Miles
Omer & Elsie Robbins
Jim, Jerry, and Kathy Suits
Burne and Phylis White
Lori Elizabeth Brummett & Kenneth Joe Brummett

***** Poinsettias may be taken home after the Festival of Lessons & Carols tonight *****