



CELEBRATE

first covenant church of saint paul ~ 1280 arcade street ~ saint paul, mn 55106  
(651)774-0344 ~ [www.first-covenant.org](http://www.first-covenant.org) ~ prayer line: 651-772-9212

# Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Welcome to worship at First Covenant Church as we celebrate the birth of our Savior this Christmas Eve. Whether you are a long-time member of our congregation or this is your first time worshipping with us, we are so glad you have included this worship service into your own personal Christmas Eve tradition this year. If you would like to know more about our life together beyond Christmas Eve, stop by the Welcome Center and pick up a copy of our January/February calendar.

**December 24, 2016**

**4:00 p.m.**

Gathering Time

*Jazzin' The World*  
Jazz Band

Greeting

*Please complete the connect card and place it in the offering plate.*

Invitation to Worship

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* (arr. M.R. Keller)  
Handbell Choir

\*Call to Worship

\*Opening Hymn 146

*Joy to the World*

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Ron and Donna Erickson  
Chuck, Pam, Lauryn, Dylan, Mitchell Feske

Hymn of Response 165 vs 1

*Away in a Manger*

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7, Benni Gilmore, Grant Huso  
Selah McClain, Daizah Robinson  
Luke 2:4-16, Don Pelto and Ryan Voth

Children's Message

Donovan DeGaetano

*Children are invited to come forward at this time.*

Carol of Response 156 vs 1,2

*While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks*

Christmas Eve Offering

Paul Carlson Partnership  
and First Covenant General Fund

Tom Verdoorn

Choral Offertory

*Sing We Now Of Christmas* (arr. Fred Prentice)

Message

The Mystery of Christmas

Pastor Anne Vining

Song of Response

*Worship the King* (Byron Cage)

Gospel Choir, Steve Pittman, Director

Christmas Prayer

Passing of Light and Carol Medley

*When passing the light, tip unlit candle toward the lit candle.*

*I Light Candles this Christmas*, by Howard Thurman

Sam David, reader

*Still, Still, Still* (arr. Paul Manz)

*O Little Town of Bethlehem 154*, vs 1, 3

*Night of Silence / Silent Night*

Elaine Ryden, piano, Pat Kohnen, organ

Adina DeGaetano, flute, Ellen Jacobson, oboe

*The Congregation will join the choir as directed.*

Sending Words

*Please extinguish your candle and place in the basket as you exit.*

Postlude

*Christmas is Here* (arr. Dale Wood)

*\*All who are able are invited to stand.*

*~The nursery is open this evening during the worship service;  
however, there will not be volunteers to stay with the children.  
Please feel free to use the nursery if you need to for your child,  
and if you have any questions, ask one of the ushers. ~*

**This year, our Christmas Eve offering will benefit two areas.**

**The Paul Carlson Partnership:** We are in year three of our five-year commitment to partner with Bethlehem Covenant Church, Minneapolis and First Covenant Church, Red Wing to provide \$10,000.00 annually to financially support our medical clinic in Bobangala, in the northwest quadrant of Congo. These funds will enable the clinic to move into the "water phase", addressing the ongoing issue of access to clean water. For more information, please stop by the clinic display in the lobby, or [www.first-covenant.org](http://www.first-covenant.org).

**First Covenant Church:** Any funds collected above our \$3,334.00 (one year of clinic support) will be used to help First Covenant close the 2016 financial gap. Thank you!

Please join us:

Sunday, December 25th at 10:30am as we sing carols, share stories of God's faithfulness in the past year and anticipate God's leading into the New Year.

Sunday, January 1st at 10:30am as we begin the New Year and share in Holy Communion.

Wednesday, January 4th at 6:15pm for our "In it Together" community prayer gathering, sponsored by Contender for the Faith Church, Family Values for Life, and First Covenant Church of Saint Paul. Dinner will be served at 5:45pm. The event is free. All are welcome!



### **I Will Light Candles This Christmas**

I will light candles this Christmas;  
Candles of joy despite all sadness,  
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,  
Candles of courage for fears ever present,  
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,  
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,  
Candles of love to inspire all my living,  
Candles that will burn all the year long.

Howard Thurman

Howard Thurman (1899-1981) was a prominent African American author, theologian, educator, and civil rights leader. In 1944, he was instrumental in founding the Church for the Fellowship of all Peoples, one of the first racially integrated churches in the United States.

God's richest blessings this Christmas, and in the New Year.

~The First Covenant Church Ministry Team