

Order of Service
First Parish in Concord
December 31, 2023

Prelude *Fugue in G Major* by Johann Sebastian Bach – Eric Huenneke, organist

Welcome & Announcements – Rev. Paul Langston-Daley

Opening Hymn #16 *Tis a Gift to Be Simple*

Call to Worship by Kalidasa – Rev. Lara Campbell

Chalice Lighting

Unison Response:

O flame of our faith, open our hearts
And fill our bodies and souls with persistent strength.
Enliven our spirits and engage us deeply in this life of ours,
This sacred essential moment now.

— Paul Sawyer

Wisdom Story “The Gift of Nothing” by Patrick McDonnell

Invitation to Offering

Offertory *Chorale Prelude* by Johann Sebastian Bach
Das alte jahr vergangen ist, BWV 614

To give to the Offering via text message, send a text to 855-691-2592.

Ritual of Release

Everyone is invited to think about the things they want to leave behind as the New Year begins – the sadness, the worries, or the disappointments. Write them on the special paper provided and come dissolve them in the water. Those of you at home can write on any paper; feel free to rip into small pieces while the music is playing.

Reading “A Prayer for Christmas” by M. Maureen Killoran

Interlude *Auld Lang Syne* arr. by E. Egorov – Eric Huenneke with Nancy Ackerman, clarinet

Sermon “The Gift of Nothing” – Rev. Lara Campbell

A Gift to Yourself

Write a note to yourself, saying those words of encouragement you may need to hear. Place it in the envelope and put your name on it. Then take it home and tuck it away someplace so that you can “find it” at the exact moment you need it.

Interlude *Pleasant Moments* by Scott Joplin

Parish Concerns, Calling of Names, & Prayer

Silence

Responsive Hymn #123 *Spirit of Life*

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.

Closing Words

Closing Hymn #350 *The Ceaseless Flow of Endless Time*

Benediction

Go out into the world in peace
Have courage
Hold on to what is good
Return to no person evil for evil
Strengthen the faint-hearted
Support the weak
Help the suffering
Honor all beings

Postlude *The Cascades* by Scott Joplin

We invite you to stay seated as our service concludes with the postlude.

Many people contribute to making our Sunday worship services a smooth and meaningful experience, both in person and on Zoom. Thank you to the many volunteers who give generously of their time, including our ushers and Zoom chat hosts. Thanks also to our staff worship team:

*Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd
Interim Senior Minister*

*Beth Norton
Director of Music Ministry*

*Arkadiy Barshteyn
AV Technician*

*Rev. Liz Weber
Minister for Congregational Care*

*Eric Huenneke
Organist*

*David Wisniewski
AV Technician*

*Rev. Amy Freedman
Minister of Religious Education*

*Anderson Manuel
Gospel Choir Director*

*Catherine Hill
Web & Office Administrator*

*Rev. Paul Langston-Daley
Minister of Social Action*

*Dawn Van Patten
Asst. Dir. of Religious Education*

*Bruce Davidson
Facilities Manager*