

CHRISTMAS EVE 2023 ONE UCC

CHRIST
THE savior
is born



One United Church of Christ

Pastor.....Rev. Rebecca Hoover
Lay Pastor.....Mrs. Nancy McNabb
Director of Music.....Jeff Miller

Bold face type indicates optional congregational responses.

* Indicates please rise in body and/or spirit

Gathering

Preludes

“Angels We Have Heard On High” - Avery Reaser on flute

“The Christmas Story” - Choir

“Good King Wenceslas” - Bell Choir

“When Love Was Born” - sung by Nancy Weiss

“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen Improvisation” - Jeff Miller

Welcome and Invitation into Worship with John 1:1-9, 14a (CEB)

*Carol

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,

O come ye, o come ye to Bethlehem.

Come and behold Him, Born the King of Angels.

O come let us adore Him,

O come let us adore Him,

O come let us adore Him – Christ the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation!

Sing all ye citizens of heaven above.

Glory to God all glory in the highest!

O come let us adore Him,

O come let us adore Him,

O come let us adore Him – Christ the Lord!

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
O Jesus, forever be Thy Name adored.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing.
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him – Christ the Lord!*

Opening Prayer

Hearing

Carol *“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”*
Hymnal #131, verses 1 and 4

*It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old.
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold.
“Peace on the earth, good will to all,
Great news of joy we bring.”
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.*

*For lo, the days are hastening on,
By prophets bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years,
Comes round the age of gold.
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling.
And all the world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.*

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 52:7-10 (NRSV)

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Children's Message

Carol "*The First Nowell*" Hymnal #137, verses 1 and 4

*The first Nowell, the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Born in a manger, Emmanuel.*

*This star shone bright in the northwest
Over Bethlehem it seemed to rest
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Born in a manger, Emmanuel.*

The Problem of Incarnation and Luke 2:1-14 (NRSV)
incorporating verses from "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

... And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Congregation singing:

*O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.*

...And he will call us to do the same, to learn and to embody God's life into ours.

Congregation singing:

*O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!*

Meditation

Rev. Rebecca Hoover

*Carol

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

*Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth, and mercy mild*

*God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With the angel host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King."*

*Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace
Hail the Sun of Righteousness
Light and life to all He brings
Risen with healing in His wings
Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King."*

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

Communion Prayers (*responsively*)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Story of the Last Supper

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing the Meal

If you are joining us online for virtual communion today, we ask you to have some sort of bread product and either grape juice, wine, or water to serve as your elements. If you are joining us in person, communion elements are found just outside the sanctuary if you have not already picked them up on your way in. At the direction of the pastor, we will eat the bread and drink the cup together.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (*unison*)

We give you thanks, O God, for all the gifts you give us. You meet us here through bread and cup, through story and community, providing us with what we need to hold on to hope. When the world is silent and good news is scarce, we pray for a song to sing your praises and the words to proclaim what you do in Jesus. A Savior is born this night, and creation is forever different. All thanks and praise be to you, Holy God! Amen.

Celebration

Lighting of the Christ Candle and Lighting our Candles

(During this part of worship, you will need a candle. If you are joining us in-person, a candle was provided to you when you arrived at church. If you're joining us virtually, please find a candle. As the worship leaders light their candles, you are invited you light yours and keep it close while singing "Silent Night". Know that while your candles shine, they are part of candles all over the world lighted to honor the Christ Child's birth. Please keep your candles illumined through the Lord's Prayer...or longer if you wish!)

Carol

"Silent 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 afar,
Heav'nly 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.*

Prayer/The Lord's Prayer (*responsively*)

We believe in Christmas.
We believe that the words of the prophet
that speak of justice to the oppressed
and care for the widow
are God's Word that sets the world free.

**For love came down at Christmas.
We believe in Christmas.**

We believe in Christmas.
We believe that the light of the world that crushes all darkness
and exposes all lies
is God's light that shines through every darkness.

**For love came down at Christmas.
We believe in Christmas.**

We believe in Christmas.
We believe that the song of the angels that celebrates peace on earth
and to all people on the earth
is God's peace that the world cannot find but Jesus can offer.

For love came down at Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.
We believe that Mary's poem Magnificat,
where God turns everything upside down,
where the poor are lifted up
and the powerful are brought down,
is God's poem that changes the balance of the world.

For love came down at Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.
We believe the Word becomes flesh,
the promise is fulfilled,
the light breaks through,
the oppressed are set free,
the lowly are lifted up
and the baby cries.

For love came down at Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.

...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.

Sending

Blessing

*Carol

“Joy to the World”

*Joy to the world the Lord is come
Let earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing
And heaven and heaven and nature sing*

*Joy to the earth the Savior reigns
Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy*

*He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His Righteousness
And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love
And wonders, wonders of His love...
And wonders, wonders of His love!*

Liturgists: Izzy Tipsword, Katie Hoover, and Nancy McNabb

Copyright Information for This Service:

"Angels We Have Heard On High" - Traditional French Carol (author unknown); Arranged by Jeff Miller

"The Christmas Story" - Arranged by Jeff Miller; "Only A Baby Came" by Natalie Sleeth, "Sing We Now of Christmas" (Traditional French Carol), "What Child Is This" (Traditional English Tune)

"Good King Wenceslas" - Traditional 13th Century tune; Arrangement by Jeff Miller

"When Love Was Born" - by Bernie Herms, Stephanie Lewis, Mark Schultz

"God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen Improvisation" - Traditional English Melody; Arrangement by Jeff Miller

"O Come All Ye Faithful" – by John F. Wade

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" – Music by Richard S. Willis; Lyric by Edmund H. Sears

"The First Nowell" – Traditional English carol (author unknown)

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" – Words by Charles Wesley; Music by Felix Mendelssohn

"Silent Night" – Music by Franz Gruber, Lyric by Joseph Mohr

"Joy To the World" – Music by Lowell Mason, Lyric by Isaac Watts; Arrangement by Jeff Miller

The opening prayer is written by Louise Gough, the prayer after "Silent Night" is written by Roddy Hamilton, the blessing is written by Peter Siney and all are from Ruth Burgess' compilation *Winter*. The rest of the liturgy is written by the Rev. Rebecca Hoover.

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This Christmas Eve service is being livestreamed to our YouTube Channel and will be available after tonight. Please take the time to enjoy God's best gifts of love, joy, peace, and hope, however they look in your life tomorrow. The link to our YouTube Channel is:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHUua_X9q0AuoI1gEn7vahQ?view_as=subscriber

The altar flowers are given in memory of Raymond and Helen Adams by the West family.

The bulletins and eternity candle are given to the Glory of God by the Hertzog & Tipsword Families.



The poinsettias which adorn the sanctuary are sponsored by the following:

The Biehl Family – in memory of loved ones

The Candy Makers – to honor our shut-ins

Dee Constable – in memory of father Ed and in honor of mother Rosalie

The Hoover Family – in memory of Bill and Gail Powell

Bob & Susan Lehr – in memory of loved ones

Bob & Nancy McNabb – in memory of parents

Pam Rathman – in memory of my mom

Thomas & Brenda Spencer – in memory of parents

Becky & David Tipsword – in memory of David’s mom and Jeff Hertzog Jr.

The West Family

We’re having a short devotional Service on Sunday, 12/31/23, followed by a New Year's Eve party in the Fellowship Hall downstairs. We will be having hors d’oeuvres followed by a New Year's countdown at **noon**. Everyone is welcome for fun and fellowship, complete with party hats and noisemakers! Please bring an hors d'oeuvres or an appetizer to share.

The Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 21, 2024 following worship. The snow date for the meeting is January 28. Please make plans to bring a dish to share and attend.

A special thank you to all who helped to make the Christmas season brighter for the children at Bethany Children’s Home by contributing a total of 21 gifts!