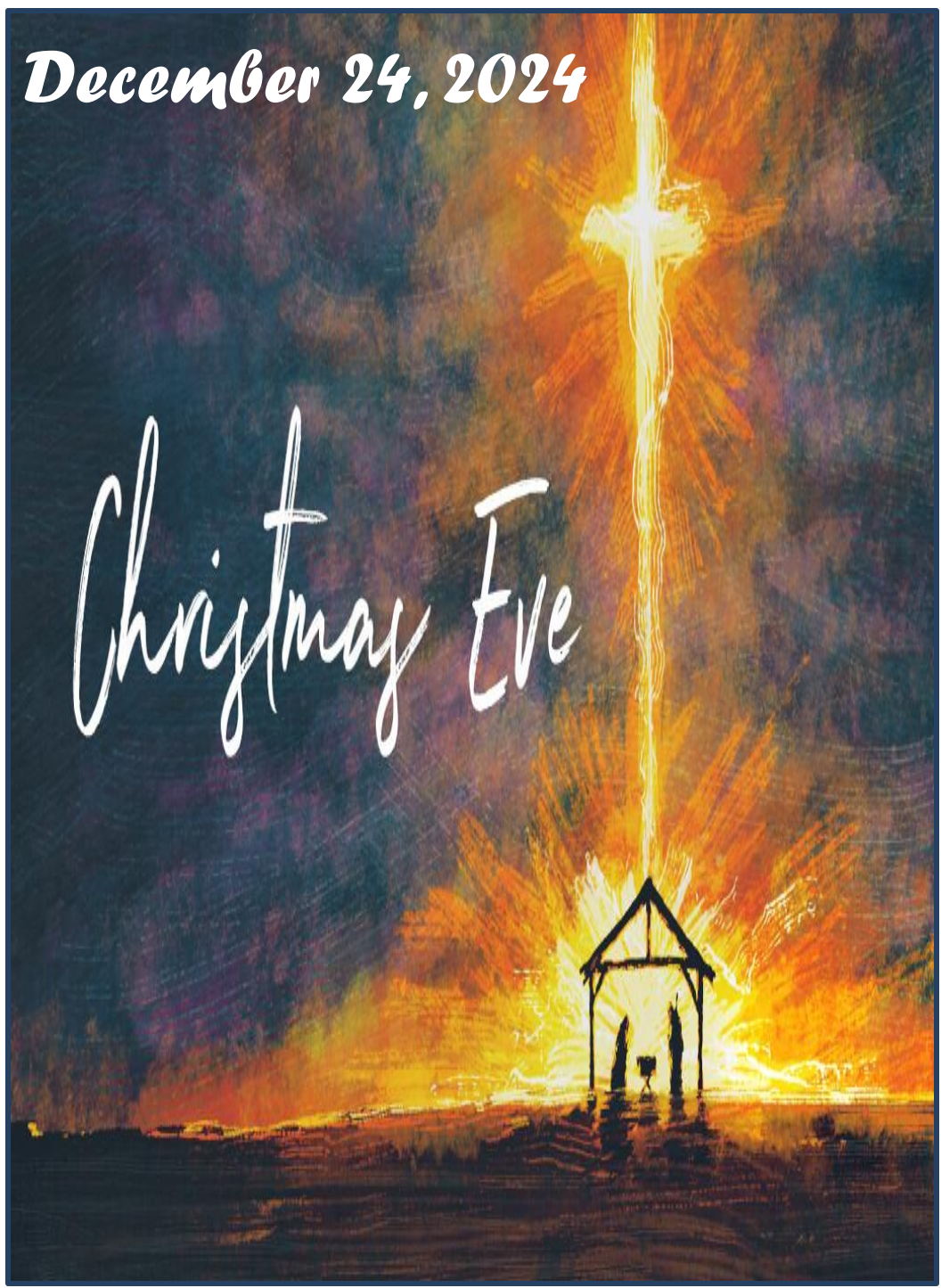


*December 24, 2024*

*Christmas Eve*



# One United Church of Christ

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

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**Bold face type indicates optional congregational responses.**

\* Indicates please rise in body and/or spirit

## *Gathering*

Preludes

*“The First Nowell”* Avery Reaser on flute  
*“Love Came Down at Christmas”* Choir  
*“We Three Kings”* Bell Choir  
*“O Holy Night”* sung by Nancy Weiss  
*“Christmas Eve 2024”* Jeff Miller

Welcome and Invitation into Worship

\*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 (*unison*)

**Holy God, we praise you for this night where earth and heaven come close together! Here, among people we've known forever and people we don't even know, we're joined in a common purpose: listening for sounds of love and salvation in the midst of a confusing world. Through ancient words and angel songs, tell us of your glory. By candlelight and messages of peace, shower us with your grace. God, we pray tonight isn't just a beautiful bit of nostalgia, but a night that transforms us—even just a little—to live more faithfully your good news of great joy. Amen.**

### *Hearing*

\*Carol            *“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”* verse 1

*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."*

<sup>5</sup>During the rule of King Herod of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah. His wife Elizabeth was a descendant of Aaron. <sup>6</sup>They were both righteous before God, blameless in their observance of all the Lord's commandments and regulations. <sup>7</sup>They had no children because Elizabeth was unable to become pregnant and they both were very old. <sup>8</sup>One day Zechariah was serving as a priest before God because his priestly division was on duty. <sup>9</sup>Following the customs of priestly service, he was chosen by lottery to go into the Lord's sanctuary and burn incense. <sup>10</sup>All the people who gathered to worship were praying outside during this hour of incense offering. <sup>11</sup>An angel from the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup>When Zechariah saw the angel, he was startled and overcome with fear.

<sup>13</sup>The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah. Your prayers have been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will give birth to your son and you must name him John. <sup>14</sup>He will be a joy and delight to you, and many people will rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup>for he will be great in the Lord's eyes. He must not drink wine and liquor. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before his birth. <sup>16</sup>He will bring many Israelites back to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup>He will go forth before the Lord, equipped with the spirit and power of Elijah. He will turn the hearts of fathers back to their children, and he will turn the disobedient to righteous patterns of thinking. He will make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

<sup>18</sup>Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this? My wife and I are very old."

<sup>19</sup>The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in God's presence. I was sent to speak to you and to bring this good news to you. <sup>20</sup>Know this: What I have spoken will come true at the proper time. But

because you didn't believe, you will remain silent, unable to speak until the day when these things happen."

Carol            *"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"* (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            **Luke 1:26-38 (CEB)**

<sup>26</sup> When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup> She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. <sup>31</sup> Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his

father. <sup>33</sup> He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."

<sup>34</sup> Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?"

<sup>35</sup> The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God's Son. <sup>36</sup> Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled 'unable to conceive' is now six months pregnant. <sup>37</sup> Nothing is impossible for God."

<sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

### Children's Message

Carol                    "*O Little Town of Bethlehem*" verses 1 and 4

*O little town of Bethlehem  
How still we see you lie  
Above your deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by  
Yet in your dark streets shines forth  
The everlasting Light  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in you tonight*

*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;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel!*

<sup>18</sup>This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. <sup>20</sup>As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

<sup>23</sup>*Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,  
And they will call him, Emmanuel.  
(Emmanuel means "God with us.")*

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife.

Carol                    "*What Child is This?*" verse 1

*What Child is this, who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,  
while shepherds watch are keeping?*

*This, this, the angels sing,  
is Christ's, God's holy offering;  
Haste, haste your praise to bring,  
the babe, the child of Mary.*

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. <sup>2</sup>This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. <sup>3</sup>Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. <sup>4</sup>Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. <sup>5</sup>He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. <sup>7</sup>She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Carol                    "*Angels We Have Heard on High*" verses 2 and 3

*Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be,  
which inspire your heavenly song.*

*Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.  
Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.*

*Come to Bethlehem and see  
Christ whose birth the angels sing;  
Come adore on bended knee,  
God, our world now entering.*

*Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.  
Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.*

<sup>8</sup>Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. <sup>9</sup>The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified.



<sup>10</sup> The angel said, “Don’t be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. <sup>11</sup> Your savior is born today in David’s city. He is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, <sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors.”

Meditation

Carol

*“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”* verse 3

*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, you meet us here through bread and cup, through story and community. May the gifts we receive strengthen us to be builders of hope, doers of peace, believers in joy, and people of love. When the world is silent and no one speaks your good news, 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 to 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.)*

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.*

“When the World was Dark Prayer”/The Lord’s Prayer  
(*responsively*)

**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: Bob Lehr, Katie Hoover, and Nancy McNabb

**Copyright Information for This Service:**

“The First Nowell” arranged by Jeff Miller

“Love Came Down at Christmas” by Roger Copeland; arranged by Jeff Miller

“We Three Kings” by John H. Hopkins; arranged by Jeff Miller

“O Holy Night” by Adolphe Adam

“Christmas Eve 2024” - 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

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” Words by Phillips Brooks; Music by Lewis H. Redner

“What Child Is This” Words - William C. Dix; Music – 16<sup>th</sup> Century English melody (author unknown)

"Angels We Have Heard on High" - Traditional French 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

“When the World was Dark” Prayer is from *Cloth for the Cradle* copyright © 1997 WGRG, Iona Community, Glasgow G51 3UU, Scotland and used by permission. 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](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHUua_X9q0AuoI1gEn7vahQ?view_as=subscriber)



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

**The West Family** – In memory of loved ones.

**Thomas & Brenda Spencer** – In memory of loved ones.

**Bob & Nancy McNabb** – To the Glory of God and In memory of loved ones.

**Candy Makers** – In honor of the Shut-ins.

**The Lehr Family** – In memory of loved ones.

**The Hoover Family** – In memory of Bill and Gail Powell.

**Nancy Weiss** – To the Glory of God.

**The Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 19, 2025 following worship.** The snow date for the meeting is January 26. 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 33 gifts!

*On behalf of the Pastor, staff, and leadership of One UCC, we wish you and your family a wonderful Christmas, and may God's gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love be made more real to you in 2025!*