



First Central Congregational

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ADVENT THEME: [UN]EXPECTED

December 24, 2021

Christmas Eve

Prelude

Christmas Selections

Please respect those who wish to sit in silence.

Chiming of the Hours

Call to Worship

liturgists, 6 p.m. the Patterson family

liturgists, 11 p.m. the Lowndes family

O sing to the Lord a new song:

Sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord, bless God's name;

Tell of God's salvation from day to day.

Declare God's glory among the nations,

God's marvelous works among all the people.

For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.

*Processional Hymn

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Red Hymnal, No. 195

ADESTE FIDELES

47-70
1-24-96

195

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Latin, 18th century; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841 (alt'd)

J. F. Wade, 1711-1786
St. 1 only

ADESTE FIDELES, 6.6.10.5.6 with refrain

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O
2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion;
3. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born that hap - py morn - ing;

1. come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem.
2. sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav'n a - bove:
3. Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry giv'n,

Refrain
1. Come and be - hold him born the King of an - gels: O
2. "Glo - ry to God, in the high - est!" O
3. Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing: O

come, let us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him; O

come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

*Invocation

O God, we have waited with anticipation for the coming of the Christ Child. We extend our arms to the heavens, reaching out toward your light in the darkness. We turn all around and see our neighbors, their faces shining with your joy. We open our hands to the world, ready to receive you wherever you are to be found. Let us pay open-hearted attention to the signs of your presence. Let us rest in the peace you so abundantly give us, that we may celebrate Christ's birth and meet the challenge of God-with-us in our world. Amen.

*Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo

Lighting of the Advent Candles

6 p.m., Patterson Family

11 p.m., Lowndes Family

We have waited and prepared for a baby to be born.
We have watched for signs of God's light breaking into the world.
We have we looked forward with wonder and delight.
We came to Advent with our expectations,
But we've also learned to be ready for the Unexpected.
And tonight we proclaim, "Those who walked in darkness have seen a great light."
Rejoice, Rejoice, Christ has come.
Tonight we light these candles rejoicing in God's promise of endless peace.
Rejoice, Rejoice, Christ has come.

Hymn

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Red Hymnal, No. 194

ST. LOUIS

O Little Town of Bethlehem

194

Second Tune

ST. LOUIS, CMD Irregular

Lewis H. Redner, 1868

1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie;
2. For Christ is born of Mar - y, and gath - ered all a - bove,
3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is given!
4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

1. a - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
2. while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.
3. So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
4. cast out our sin and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.

1. Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;
2. O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth;
3. No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
4. We hear the Christmas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;

1. the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
2. and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.
3. where meek souls will re - ceive him still, the dear Christ en - ters in.
4. O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

First Testament Lesson

Isaiah 9:2-7

Pew Bible, page 594

Anthem

Huron Carol

Bells

Gospel Lesson

Luke 2:1-20

Pew Bible, page 54-55

For the Word of God in scripture,
For the Word of God among us,
For the Word of God within us,
Thanks be to God.

Homily

6 p.m., Dr. Rev. Scott Jones

11 p.m. Rev. Katie Miller

* Hymn

Joy to the World!

Red Hymnal, No. 198

ANTIOCH

24-96
29-96

Joy to the World!

198

Isaac Watts, 1719

ANTIOCH, CM

Lowell Mason, 1832

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re - ceive her King;
 2. Joy to the world! the Sav - ior reigns: let us our songs em - ploy;
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the ground;
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions prove

1. let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room, and heaven and na - ture sing,
 2. while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains re - peat the sound - ing joy,
 3. he comes to make his bless - ings flow far as the curse is found,
 4. the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness, and won - ders of his love,
 and heaven and na -

1. and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 2. re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 3. far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 4. and won - ders of his love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.
 ture sing,
 and heaven and na - ture sing.

Call to Offering

Dr. Rev. Scott Jones

Offertory

Peace Child

*Hymn of Dedication

VENI EMMANUEL

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ, all creatures here below. Praise Holy Spirit evermore. Praise Triune God whom we adore.
 Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel has come to thee, O Israel.

***Offertory Prayer**

God of peace and joy, you bind us together as if in swaddling bands of cloth. We are meant to be together, meant to be active participants in your great story. We give these gifts to be signs of your ongoing presence with us, as they further your dreams for the world. Amen.

***Passing of the Peace**

"The Peace of God be with you."

In Unison: **Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

Celebration of the Sacrament of Communion

God be with you.

And also with you.

Open your hearts.

We open our hearts for the coming of Christ.

Let us give thanks and praise to God.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth. You formed all humanity in your image and called us to love you and serve the world. Even when we turned from you, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity and made covenant with us. In the fullness of time you sent Jesus. Your word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth, and we beheld your glory, Emmanuel. In the beloved community of your church, we celebrate the new covenant Christ Jesus made with us by water and the Spirit. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with the song of heaven and with all the faithful of every time and place, to forever sing the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy God, you are holy. Ruler of the sea and sky. Angel hosts above
a-dore you. Earth sings out its endless cry: "Hail hosanna in the highest!" "Peace on Earth,"
the heav'ns reply.**

Words of Institution

Invitation to the Table

Please come forward as the ushers indicate. If you are unable to come forward, remain in your seat and an usher will serve you. The bread is gluten-free.

The Bread and Cup

Laudate Dominum
Claire Bouma, Soprano

Mozart

Prayer of Thanksgiving

O God, we give you thanks, for a child has been born, filling us with wonder. We now take this Christ light, sharing it with one another and with all those whom we encounter. May it bring comfort and joy. Amen.

Passing of the Light

Hymn

Silent Night, Holy Night

Black Hymnal, No. 134

STILLE NACHT

CHRISTMAS

Silent Night, Holy Night

134

Joseph Mohr, 1818

Transl. John F. Young, c. 1863; alt.

Luke 2:1-20

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm, all is bright
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep-herds quake at the sight,
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Child of God, love's pure light,

Round you vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild,
Glo - ries stream from heav-en a - far, heav-en-ly hosts sing Al - le - lu - ia;
Ra - dian beams from your ho-ly face bring the dawn of re - deem - ing grace;

Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
Christ the Sav - ior is born, Christ the Sav - ior is born.
Je - sus Christ at your birth, Je - sus Christ at your birth.

The musical score is written in 6/8 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It features three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are provided in three versions: a three-line version, a single-line version, and a two-line version. Chord symbols (Bb, F, Eb, F7) are placed above the vocal line.

Benediction

Usher us forward into the world O God, taking the light, the joy and the peace.

Lead us to share with one another – not just in this season but every day.

As we extinguish these small lights, remember that we now bear the Light of Christ in our hearts, to let it shine for all to see.