

Christmas Eve
Service of the Word and Eucharist



Thursday, December 24, 2020

7:30 PM

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We Gather

Prelude

Jonas Dawson

"Altes Weihnachtsleid", from Weihnachtsbaum, Franz Liszt (1876)

"Die Hirten an der Krippe", from Weihnachtsbaum, Franz Liszt (1876) **Piano

"The Sussex Mummers' Christmas Carol", Percy Grainger (1961) **Piano

"Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen", Johannes Brahms (1897) **Organ

"Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord", George Blake **Organ

Welcome

Call of the Engelbrecht Memorial Bell

Call to Worship

L: Christ is born; give him glory!

P: Christ has come down from heaven; receive him! Christ is now on earth; exalt him!

L: O you earth, sing to the Lord!

P: O you nations, praise him in joy, for he has been glorified!

Processional

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

#112

1. Adeste fideles laeti triumphantes

Venite, venite in Bethlehem

Natum videte regem angelorum

Venite, adoremus,

Venite, adoremus,

Venite, adoremus, dominum!

2. Oh, come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him,
Born the King of angels;
[Chorus]
Oh, come, let us adore him;
Oh, come, let us adore him;
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.

3. Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation;
— Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God,
Glory in the highest; (Chorus)

4.. Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning;
— Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n.
Son of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing; (Chorus)

Opening Prayer

**Gloria in Excelsis
Glory to God in the highest
and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly One,
Almighty God and Sovereign,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of God,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
You are seated at the right hand of the Eternal:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Eternal. Amen.

Lighting the Christ Candle

ONE: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world

ALL: A light no darkness can extinguish!

Sung Response: **Gloria in Excelsis Deo!** (From Angels We Have Heard on High)

First Reading

Isaiah 9: 2-7

Special Music

"Cantique de Noel",
Adolph Adam, arr. Chip Davis

Jonas Dawson

Second Reading

Titus 2: 11-14

Carol

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!"
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;

#102

Join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem!

[Chorus]

Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King!

2. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!

Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n 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.

Gospel

Luke 2: 1-20

Children's Moment

Sermon

The Power of a Yes!

Rev. Rob Apgar-Taylor

Video Response

Joseph's Dilemma

We Respond

Pastoral Prayer

Communion Carol

"Joy to the World"

NCH # 120

1. 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.

2. Joy to the world! the Saviour reigns;
Let all their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

4. 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.

The Great Thanksgiving

ONE: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

ONE: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them to the Lord.

ONE: Let us give thanks to the Lord Most High.

ALL: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

ONE: We give you thanks and praise Eternal Spirit that you come to us in saving love...

With the shepherds and angels and saints throughout the ages we join our voices in grateful song:

Response (sung)

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

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, the power,
and the glory forever. Amen.

Holy Communion

Prayer of Thanksgiving (in unison)

We thank you, God, for inviting us to this holy meal, wherever we are this night.
Here, we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts.
Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth
your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Benediction

*Candlelight Carol

"Silent Night"

#101

(You are invited to light a candle at home at this time!)

Verse 1

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.

Verse 2

Silent night! holy night! Darkness flies, all is light;
Shepherds hear the angels sing: Alleluia! hail the king!
Christ the Saviour is born, Christ the Saviour is born.

Verse 4

Silent night! Holy night! Wondrous Star, lend thy light!
With the angels let us sing Alleluia to our King!
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

(extinguish candles)

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***Fellowship following  
Christmas Eve Service...***

It is Grace UCC tradition to meet for  
dinner after Christmas Eve Service  
for food and fellowship.

However, this year is a little different!

***Join us virtually via Zoom  
For some fun and fellowship  
(and food if you'd like)  
following Christmas Eve Service  
9-11PM***

***Zoom link:***

***[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81249653032?  
pwd=NVBjaHJpUUxuS1pIdlJabORkb0twUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81249653032?pwd=NVBjaHJpUUxuS1pIdlJabORkb0twUT09)***

***Meeting ID: 812 4965 3032***

***Passcode: 620052***

***All are Welcome!!***

***Contact: Trish Abell***

***biz@juno.com***



## Daily Bible Reading

**Thursday, December 24 & 25, 2020:**

**Nativity of the Lord - Proper III**

Isaiah 52:7-10 •

Psalm 98 •

Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12) •

John 1:1-14

**Sunday, December 20, 2020:**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46b-55; or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

**Monday, December 21, 2020:** Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Samuel 1:1-18; Hebrews 9:1-14

**Tuesday, December 22, 2020:** Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Samuel 1:19-28; Hebrews 8:1-13

**Wednesday, December 23, 2020:** Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Mark 11:1-11

**CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY**

**Thursday, December 24 & 25, 2020:**

**Nativity of the Lord - Proper I**

Isaiah 9:2-7 •

Psalm 96 •

Titus 2:11-14 •

Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

**Thursday, December 24 & 25, 2020:**

**Nativity of the Lord - Proper II**

Isaiah 62:6-12 •

Psalm 97 •

Titus 3:4-7 •

Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

**Saturday, December 26, 2020:**

Psalm 148; Jeremiah 26:1-9, 12-15; Acts 6:8-15; 7:51-60

**Sunday, December 27, 2020:**

**First Sunday after Christmas Day**

Isaiah 61:10-62:3 •

Psalm 148 •

Galatians 4:4-7 •

Luke 2:22-40

**Monday, December 28, 2020:**

Psalm 148; Jeremiah 31:15-17; Matthew 2:13-18

**Tuesday, December 29, 2020:** Psalm 148; Isaiah 49:5-15; Matthew 12:46-50

**Wednesday, December 30, 2020:** Psalm 148; Proverbs 9:1-12; 2 Peter 3:8-13

**Thursday, December 31, 2020:** Psalm 148; 1 Kings 3:5-14; John 8:12-19

Dear Friends,

On this most holy night, I can't help but reflect on how much this year has changed us. I usually pick a different nativity scene to put on my Christmas letter each year. This year I just searched for "Holy Family". 2020 seems to have been so much about family. Its odd not being together this year. No family dinners for the holidays. No opening presents around the same tree. No messy grandkids screaming far too loud making huge messes with ripped wrapping paper all over the floor! Funny, that drives me absolutely crazy every year..."Throw your wrapping paper in the trash bag, NOT on the floor!" What I wouldn't give to see that mess this year.



But the other thing I have to tell you that I will miss just as much is being with you on this night. Confession time: You may not have ever noticed, but I am the only one in Church who doesn't sing "Silent Night" at the end of the Christmas Eve service. I try, but I get through the first verse and I start to choke. The words, the sight of my church family glowing with candle-light. The emotions of that moment get me every year. They are creeping up on me as I write these words to you. How I will miss that moment tonight. How I will miss your faces and your voices. But how much joy will there be when we sing together again!

And so, on this night, we can't move on and pretend everything is as it should be. But that realization is its own gift. This Christmas may we be truly focused on the gifts that matter. The gift of piles of gift wrap left by noisy grandchildren. The gift of loved ones gathered around a tree or a table, even if only united by the internet. And the gift of the faces of our Church family bathed in the soft glow of the light of Christmas.

Thank you, for your kind expressions of Love at Christmas and throughout the year. Know that on this holiest of nights, you are greatly missed and dearly loved.

Merry Christmas!

*Rob and Rob*



## *Grace United Church of Christ*

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

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Mat Lutman, Caretaker

Sarah Petermann, Church Admin/Bookkeeper

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### SUNDAY WORSHIP

11:00 AM

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of every month.

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**

