

Christ Church

an Open & Affirming Congregation
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



December 24, 2025

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Ministers: Every member of this congregation

Worship Leaders: Revs. Sandra Graham and John Helt

Music Director: Terryl Dietert

Guitar | Visuals: Paul Mayeshiba

Video: Richard Tremarello

Bell Choir: Ruth Boretsky, Joan Gaeth, Pam Kothrade, Michael Key,
Doris Mayeshiba, Sue Pfeifer, Betty Streng, Randene Wick,

**Please stand as you are able*

Prelude

See Amid the Winter Snow - arr. Thompson

Bell Choir

See, amid the winter's snow
Born for us on earth below
See the tender Lamb appears
Promised from eternal years

REFRAIN:

Hail, thou ever blessed morn
Hail, redemption's happy dawn
Sing through all Jerusalem
Christ is born in Bethlehem

Say, ye holy shepherds, say
What's your joyful news today
Wherefore have ye left your sheep
On the lonely mountain steep

REFRAIN

Sacred Infant, all divine
What a tender love was Thine
Thus to come from highest bliss
Town to such a world as this

REFRAIN

Lighting the Christ Candle

Isaiah 9:2-7 (NRSVUE)

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.
You have enlarged the nation
and increased their joy;
they rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice
when dividing the plunder.
For as in the day of Midian's defeat,
you have shattered
the yoke that burdens them,
the bar across their shoulders,

the rod of their oppressor.
Every warrior's boot used in battle
and every garment rolled in blood
will be destined for burning,
will be fuel for the fire.
For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this..

*Call to Worship

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Jesus, sun of righteousness, splendor of light eternal,

Glory be to you, O God.

Born of Mary, shepherd of souls, prince of peace,

Glory be to you, O God. Alleluia!

Protector of the poor, joy of the angels, crown of all the saints.

Glory be to you, O God. Alleluia! Amen!

*Opening Hymn *O Little Town of Bethlehem (verses 1–3)*

Hymn #180

*Opening Prayer

God of grace and truth, in Jesus Christ you came among us as light shining in darkness. We confess that we have not welcomed the light or trusted your good news to be good. We have closed our eyes to glory in our midst, expecting little and hoping for less. Forgive our doubt. Renew our hope, so that we may receive the fullness of your grace, and live in the truth of Christ the Lord.

*Assurance of Grace

**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.**

*Passing the Peace of Christ

A Message for The Young and The Young at Heart

Hymn *It Came upon the Midnight Clear*

Hymn #191

Psalms 96 (NRSVUE)

Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.

For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.

Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.

Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth.

Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns."
The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity.

Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.

Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes,
he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Gift of Music

Silent Night of Wonder

Solo, Terryl Dietert

by Sandra Graham/music by Terryl Dietert

Silent night of wonder
I wonder now tonight
How within the darkness
Is born the star so bright
How within the silence
The inner voice is known
How within the birthing
We each become God's own

Silent night of glory
Where glory finds a home
Here among the homeless poor
and those by power disowned
Where power dwells in loving
The poor and dispossessed
Like candlelight in darkness
The heart can find its rest

Silent night of stillness
Surround my restless heart
Let peace reside within me
Let peace be who we are
The new birth that you offer
Gives hope to weary souls
In wonder we now ponder
The ways you've made us whole

Silent night of wonder
I wonder now tonight.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14 (NRSVUE)

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was

pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

*Hymn

Angels We Have Heard on High

Hymn #188

Gospel Continued: Luke 2:15-20 (NRSVUE)

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Hymn

What Child is This?

Hymn #184

Meditation

Rev. John Helt

Prayers of the People

(see Weekly Newsletter for details)

For those experiencing trials or ongoing health concerns: *Kathy B, Gloria H, Judy B, Jerry G, Bonnie & Jeff J, Nicole, Bart, Tom, Laurel, Bill, Blair, Joe, Kozy, Stacy, Susie*

The Lord’s Prayer

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.

Invitation to Generosity

Something in us changes, when we live our lives with a spirit of giving and grace. Something in us changes when we share what we have and who we are. Something in us changes when we choose generosity as a way of life, without judging or questioning those who need us to be generous. That change is a gift of God, and we find God’s love filling our hearts and our lives with every good gift we give freely and without question.

SCAN TO DONATE



Offertory *Tiny Infant, Holy King*- Ray/Callaway Sanctuary Choir

*Offertory Hymn *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing* **Hymn #185**

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation

Words of Institution

Distribution (all are welcome to come forward for the bread and wine)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Darkening the Church (tip unlit candles only)

A Reading from the Prologue of the Gospel of John “In the beginning was the Word...”

*Hymn *Silent Night* **Hymn #186**

*Benediction

*Hymn *Joy to the World!* **Hymn#179**

Postlude *All My Heart this Night Rejoices* – arr. Post



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