

*Glory to God
in the highest,*

AND ON EARTH *peace,*
good will TOWARD MEN.

Luke 2:14



THE FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Austinburg, Ohio

December 24, 2024 *CHRISTMAS EVE* p.m.

A Joint Service With First Congregational UCC – Jefferson, Ohio

GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE

Welcoming Music: Ensemble

BELL/ PRELUDE / CANDLELIGHTING

GREETINGS AND INSTRUCTIONS:

CHORAL INTROIT: “Lift Up Your Heads” Combined Choir

*CALL TO WORSHIP: *(Responsively)*

L: Have you not heard? Something has happened upon our earth!

P: Yes, we have heard! Rumors say there has been a child born, a savior given!

L: People of God, these are not rumors. For unto us is born this night, in Bethlehem, Christ, who is our savior!

P: This is good news of great joy, which has come to all people!

ALL: Let us go to see this savior of God, and bring gifts of praise!

Let us go to Bethlehem!

*HYMN:: “ O Come All Ye Faithful” *(Red/ Pilgrim)* #132

*UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

O Holy God, we pause in the beauty of this night, to admit that we have not lived as you like, or as we wish for ourselves. Despite our best words, and best intentions, we fall victim to our short-sightedness, temper, and selfish nature. Help us to respond to the needs of people, both near, and far from us. Send us your Holy Spirit, to fill us with the Joy, which knows no end; the Love, which knows no boundaries; and the Peace, which passes all understanding. Amen.

*PRAISE RESPONSE: *(to be sung)*

What child is this, who laid to rest on Mary's lap, is sle-eping.

*Whom angel gre-et, with anthems sweet, while shep-herds watch are
kee-ping.*

*GOOD NEWS OF FORGIVENESS: Pastor

Christ has come, to bring us peace. Christ has come to fulfill God's love.
Christ has come, and all things are new. Because, Christ is here, and God
lives with us!

*PASSING THE PEACE:

L: Merry Christmas!

P: Christ has come!

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE:

Marilyn Leehan and Gary Yost

UNISON PRAYER:

Thank you, God, for the Love you share. As we behold your Holy
presence in the birth of Jesus, we ask that you remain with us in our
lives. Help us to worship you, to hear your Word, and to do your will
by sharing your love with each other. We ask this in the name of the
one who was born in Bethlehem. Amen.

RESPONSE: *(remain seated to sing)*

This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard, and angels
sing. Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the Son, of Mary.

HYMN- "Angels From The Realms Of Glory" (Red) # 117

HEARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST

MARY:

FIRST SCRIPTURE: Luke 1: 26-36 Cameron Hartley
FIRST REFLECTION: "Spirit" Rev. Bill Terry
FIRST ANTHEM: "Christmas Prayer" Combined Choir

THE INNKEEPER:

SECOND SCRIPTURE: Luke 2: 1-7 Ginny Seifert
SECOND REFLECTION: "Time and Place" Rev. Bill Terry
* HYMN: "What Child Is This" (Red/ Pilgrim) # 140

SHEPHERDS:

THIRD SCRIPTURE: Luke 2: 9-19
THIRD REFLECTION: "Witness and Wonder" Pastor Bill
SECOND ANTHEM: "Child Of Promise" Combined Choir

RESPONDING TO THE LOVE OF CHRIST

A Christmas Pastoral Prayer / 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.
Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen

Prayer Response

Celebration Of Christmas Offering:

Offertory:

A Doxology (Red Hymnal) # 515

***UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION:**

Precious God, your gift of Jesus is the greatest thing imaginable. Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, are all met in you tonight. Help us to unwrap the essence of each, to revel in life today, and through eternity. May our Christmas offerings, be the first step toward a renewed, and rededicated life, in the glorious freedom, of our new born Christ. Amen.

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

(See Insert for the rest of the service)

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE CHRISTMAS EVE

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST:
A MEDLEY OF CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT:

AWAY IN A MANGER

Away in a manger no crib for a bed. The
little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky look down where he
lay. The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

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.

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains. And,
the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains; Glo—ria, in
excelsis Deo, Glo—ria, in excelsis Deo!

JOY TO THE WORLD!

Joy to the world the Lord is come, Let earth receive her king. Let
ev'ry heart, prepare him room. And heaven and nature sing, and
heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

*Hymn of Faith: 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.

Heavenly 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.

(over)

*Christmas Benediction:

*Response by All: *"Let There Be Peace on Earth"*

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me;

Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.

With God our creator, brothers all are we.

Let me walk with my sister in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.

With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow: to take each moment

And live each moment in peace eternally

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

***POSTLUDE**

* Those who are able are invited to stand.

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and deposit in the bin at the door as you exit.*

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