The United Church of Christ, Congregational
Burlington, MA

Christmas Eve Service of Carols, Light, & Reflections
December 24, 2021
4:00 p.m.

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PRELUDE  Gesu Bambino - Yon/Martens, arr. Dana F. Everson
          Lisa Brooke, violin
          &
          What Child Is This - English traditional, arr. Catherine McMichael

WELCOME  Rev. Ed Koonz

CHRISTMAS SCRIPTURE  Genesis 1:1-3 & Galatians 4:3-5

CHORAL INTROIT  “Love Has Come”  Joe Stoddard, organist
text, Ken Bible; tune: UN FLAMBEAU, harm., Ronald F. Krisman
  Love has come, a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
  See, all heaven has come to proclaim it. Hear how their song of joy arises:
  Love! Love! Born unto you a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high!

CALL TO WORSHIP
One:  On this holy night, we gather to worship God!
Another:  We remember and celebrate the birth of Jesus, God’s Christ-child!
One:  In Jesus, God has given us the greatest Christmas gift of all!
Another:  In Christ, Jesus, we have a teacher who is our Savior!
One:  Let us welcome God’s wondrous gift of grace into our lives!
Another:  We worship God with joy and thanksgiving!

OPENING 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; Ruler of all 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!
THE INVOCATION

Holy God, grateful for the gift of life, we worship you on the eve of Jesus’ birthday. With holiday sights in our eyes and Christmas sounds in our ears, we pray Christ will be born in us tonight. May his light shine bright and be reflected in our hearts, our homes, our relationships, and our world tonight - and in the days to come. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

THE LIGHT UNFOLDING  
Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 & Luke 1:5, 8-17

CAROL  
“O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL”

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind.
Bid all our sad divisions cease; fill the whole world with heav’n’s peace
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE  
Mary's Light  
Luke 1:26-38

One: This light reminds us of the angel who visited Mary.
Another: Mary was troubled and confused.
Another: But, full of faith, Mary became God's servant!

PIANO SOLO:  
Angels We Have Heard on High  
Amelia Lewis

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE  
Joseph's Light  
Matthew 1:18-25

One: This light reminds us of the angel who visited Joseph.
Another: Joseph was upset and afraid to take Mary to be his wife.
Another: But, full of faith, Joseph wed Mary!

DUET  
“What Child is This?” text: William C. Dix; tune: GREENSLEEVES

Debbie Claar & Precious Kabagahya

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE  
Shepherds' Light  
Luke 2:8-15

One: This light reminds us of the angel who appeared to shepherds.
Another: The shepherds in the field were weary and frightened.
Another: But full of faith, the shepherds went searching for Jesus.

CAROL  
“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-ri-a, in excelsis Deo! Glo-ri-a, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav’nly song?
Glo-ri-a, in excelsis Deo! Glo-ri-a, in excelsis Deo!
LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

*Magis’ Light*  
*Matthew 2:1-10*

**One:** This light reminds us of the bright star the magi saw in the sky.

**Another:** The wise magi were lost and discouraged.

**Another:** But full of faith, the magi followed the star to the manger!

PIANO SOLO  
It Came Upon the Midnight Clear – E.H. Sears and R.S. Willis,  
arr. Nancy & Randall Faber  
Molly Calandrelli, piano

CHRISTMAS EVE REFLECTION  
Rev. Ed Koonz

“How the Grinch SAVED Christmas”

![The Grinch](image)

CHORAL OFFERING  
“Shout for Joy!”  
Traditional spiritual, arr. Patrick M. Liebergen

*O Lord, shout for joy! O Lord, shout for joy! O Lord, shout for joy! O Lord, shout for joy!*

Mary had a baby, shout for joy! Mary had a baby, shout for joy!  
Born on-a Christmas, shout for joy! Born on-a Christmas, shout for joy!  
Laid Him in the manger, shout for joy! Laid Him in the manger, shout for joy!  
Everybody sing and shout for joy! Everybody sing, won’t you shout for joy!

*He was the Prince of Peace, the Mighty Counselor,*  
*The King of kings, on Christmas in the morning!*

Mary rode the donkey, shout for joy! Joseph walked beside her, shout for joy!  
Shepherds came to see Him, shout for joy! Angels watching over, shout for joy!  
Shout for joy on Christmas!

*He was the Prince of Peace, My Lord, the Mighty, Counselor,*  
*The King of kings, My Lord, on Christmas in the morning!*

*O Lord, shout for joy! O Lord, shout for joy! O Lord, shout for joy, shout, shout for joy!*

*O Lord, shout for joy! O Lord, shout for joy! O Lord, shout for joy!*  
*O Lord, we shout for joy! Shout for joy!*
THE CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER TIME

Preparation

“O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM”, verse 1
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.

Christmas Eve Prayer

Response

“O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM”, verse 3
How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the glorious love of heaven.
No ear discerns God's coming, but in this world of sin,
Where yearning souls long to be whole, the dear Christ enters in.

THE CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“O Holy Night” – Adolphe Adam, arr. Craig Duncan
Lisa Brooke, violin

CHRISTMAS EVE DOXOLOGY (5TH Century) NCH, #782
To God, all glorious heavenly Light, To Christ, revealed in earthly night,
To God the Spirit, now we raise, Our joyful songs of thankful praise.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Jesus' Light Luke 2:1-7

One: This light reminds us of salvation that came into the world through Jesus' life!
Another: The light of God's love in Christ shines in the darkness,
Another: And the darkness has not overcome it!

CAROL

“HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING”

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the Christ-child bring!"
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled
Joyful, all ye peoples, rise, join the triumph of the skies.
With th' angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem."
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heav'n adored: Christ, the everlasting Lord;
Late in time the savior comes, offspring of the favored one.
Veil'd in flesh, the Godhead see; hail, th' incarnate Deity:
Pleased on earth with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail! the heav'n born Prince of peace! hail! the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life our Savior brings, risen with radiant, healing wings
Mild he lays, his glory by, born that we no more may die:
Born to raise us all from earth; born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"
THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD  

FRAGMENT FROM JOHN 1:4-5 10-12 &16

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

CAROL  “SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT”

(Tip your candle to light it from another, and hold it high after sharing so it may be seen!)

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, 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

THE SENDING FORTH

DEPARTING HYMN  “JOY TO THE WORLD”

Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth receive its King!
Let ev'ery heart prepare Christ room, and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and heaven, and nature sing!

Joy to the world! the Savior 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

Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of God’s righteousness and wonders of God’s love,
And wonders of God’s love, and wonders, wonders of God’s love.

PASTORAL BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE  “Die Wiener Sonatinen,” First Movement (allegro brillante) from Sonata I

Lisa Brooke, violin

– Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, arranged for violin and piano by Gustav Lenzewski

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Tonight’s Christmas Eve offering will support the Lowell Transitional Life Center and the Church’s mission projects.

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Thanks, Joe, singers, instrumentalists & readers for your Christmas gifts of worship leadership tonight!

Thanks, Michael, for your Zoom hosting!

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS
Interim Pastor: Rev. Ed Koonz
Organist: Joe Stoddard, Jr.
Violinist: Lisa Brooke
Lay Leader: Debbie Claar
Ushers: Sally Willard & David McNeil
Greeter: Jan McSheffrey
Poinsettias: Donated by members and friends of our Congregation
Collector: Everett Langley

Coming Sunday: First Sunday of Christmastide Worship, 12/26 10:30 am
Wear or Bring a Christmas Gift for a Reflective Children of God Time Show ‘n Tell!

Christmas Eve Blessing,
May peace be your gift at Christmas and your blessing all year through.

Merry Christmas!