

# The United Church of Christ, Congregational Burlington, MA

## Third Sunday of Advent - Joy

*"We gather for worship, study, planning and mission to celebrate the life, teachings, death and living presence of Jesus Christ which frees us to love boldly and to serve gladly as God would want us to do."*

December 15, 2024

10:30am

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*John Stuart*

***We believe God calls us to love unconditionally, following the example of Jesus Christ.***

***Recognizing that all people are equal in the sight of God, we seek to be an inclusive and respectful community for persons of every color, age, sexual orientation, gender, ability and economic means.***

***In our calling to express the love and welcome of Christ, we affirm the dignity and worth of every person, and declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation.***

***We strive to respond to the needs of our town and world with practical deeds of love.***

***We welcome individuals and families of every configuration into the full life and ministry of this church, and invite you to join us on our faith journey!***

## ***Coming...***

**Musical Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Introit**

Angels We Have Heard on High v 1 and 2

Pew Booklet

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**\*Please rise in body or spirit.**

## *Praising & Learning...*

**\*Lighting the Candle of Joy**

Sunday School Volunteers

**\*Opening Hymn**

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Pew Booklet

**Adults of God Time**

**Sharing of Joys, Sorrows, & Concerns**

**\*Open Prayer**

**\*Devotional Hymn**

Away in a Manger

Pew Booklet

## *Reflecting & Praying...*

**Scripture**

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Sharing the Christmas Story**

"New Star"

Our Sunday School

**Anthem**

We Three Kings

Our Choir

**Popcorn Prayer**

## *Committing...*

**Stewardship Invitation**

**Offertory**

What Child is This?

**\*Doxology**

Lyrics adapted by William Abernethy; tune *NCH* #780

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;**

**Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.**

**\*Prayer of Dedication & Consecration**

## *Going...*

**\*Closing Hymn**

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Pew Booklet

**\*Benediction**

**Postlude**

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Rev. Andrew Harris, Pastor  
Brian Gionet, Director of Music Ministries  
Deb Raymond, Director of Christian Education  
Bobbie Killilea, Administrative Assistant  
Uccburlington.org / 781-272-4547

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

Deana's sister and brother-in-law,  
Linda and Jim Sutton  
Thelma Tibbitts  
Nancy Davis's son George  
Barbara's daughter Nancy  
Laura's cousin Nigel  
Molly and Family  
Joan Zink's daughter Jen  
Christa Brown  
Tom Killilea's brother Jim  
Carpenter Family  
Claire Simas, niece Janice and  
daughter Marianne  
Lynn and Lee Tirrell's friend Bob  
Sarah Tredeau's friend Megan  
Sally Willard's friends Maureen and Jack  
Chris Stahlinski's sisters  
Brian Gionet's Dad  
Roberta Low  
Shirley Garside's daughter Lynn  
Jessy McNeil's sisters Grace and Joyce  
Skip Glancy's sister Dorothy  
Marilyn Langley's brother Bill  
Kelly Sievert  
Bill Hitchcock  
Jan Blandino's grandson Toby, her  
Daughter Brenda and Son-in-law Rick  
Ginger Mungillo's daughter Cindy and  
Ginger's son Jim  
Jean Bastos  
Barbara Garland  
  
Hurricane Victims  
Middle East, Ukraine,  
Mother Earth!

## CHURCH VISION STATEMENT

### Adopted February 2017:

At the UCC Burlington, we cultivate a thriving environment, which empowers us to embody the beloved, diverse community that Jesus modeled for us, proclaiming that *all are welcome, all are loved*. We celebrate our colonial roots as we change, adapt and grow into who God is calling us to be. We respect the sanctity of each person's spiritual journey and we are blessed by the gifts that each person brings to the life of the church. We join together in faithful service and advocacy with the ongoing hope that we can make the world a better, more just, and peaceful place for everyone.

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES



**4PM** FAMILY WORSHIP WITH CAROLS AND  
CANDLELIGHT  
**10PM** CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

*Today's Flowers were given by Jan Costa in celebration of this beautiful Christmas Season here at UCC. And the altar arrangement was donated by Nancy Davis in honor of all our Tree Fundraiser Volunteers!*

### December 15, Third Sunday in Advent

#### Worship 10:30am

Pastor:	Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist:	Brian Gionet
Lay Leader:	Andie Joseph
Advent Lighter:	Sunday School
Christmas Story:	Alexa, Carver, Holy, Nemaniah, James, Sawyer, Amelia and Alex
Head Usher:	
Usher:	Chris Stahlinski
Greeter:	Anna Karwan
Flowers:	Nancy Davis and Jan Costa
Collector:	Deb Raymond
Nursery:	
Sunday School:	Deb Raymond Donna Ferro
Coffee Host:	Jan McScheffrey
Bakers:	Donna Felcchia Liz Silva

#### Blue Christmas Worship Service 4:00pm

Pastor:	Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist:	

#### **BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS AT 2PM**

Join us in the conference room or on  
Zoom livestream.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86101550567>

**POINSETTIAS FOR OUR CHRISTMAS  
WORSHIP SERVICES**



If you would like to purchase a plant for our Christmas Services, please see the form attached to the Hilltop or at coffee hour. Plants are \$12 each. If you would like to take your plant (after Christmas) or donate one to be delivered by our Deacons to those who have been on our prayer list, please indicate that on the form. You can make payment out to UCC and add Poinsettia on the memo line. Return to the church office please.

Deadline is today, December 15th.

**BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE  
TODAY AT 4PM**

This is a small, quiet, prayerful and hopeful service for anyone who is struggling with the Christmas season, whether because of pain or a loss, the need for hope at a difficult time, not feeling the joy that's expected during the holiday season or just needing a 'time-out' from holiday tasks.

**UPCOMING IN SUNDAY SCHOOL**

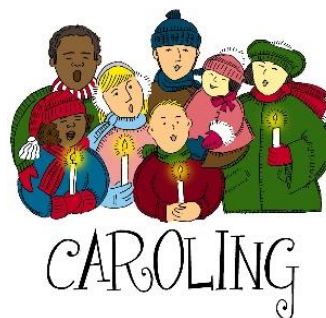
- 12/15 All church service
- 12/22 Science Sunday
- 12/29 New Year's Eve party

**NURSERY ATTENDANT NEEDED!**

CE is urgently looking for a paid nursery attendant Sundays 10 am-12pm. This can be every Sunday or a job share. The candidate must be 17 years or older & will be CORI'd. Ask around, you never know who may be interested.

**CHRISTMAS CAROLING!**

December 22 meet promptly at noon.  
All church Caroling in Burlington



This is a fun, heartwarming song day to bring cheer to people of our Church.

**Burlington Christmas  
Tree Lot**

Opening Friday November 29th  
10am-7:00pm

Fridays 3:00pm - 7:00pm

Saturdays 10:00am -7:00pm

Sundays 12:00 pm - 6:00pm

UCC Burlington  
6 Lexington St

CASH AND CREDIT ACCEPTED  
A Portion of proceeds going to People Helping People



## A Christmas Story "NEW STAR "

OLD: Welcome, New Stars! You're looking nice and bright this evening.

NEW: Thank you, Old Star. We've been working on Our shiny-ness!

OLD: Good job! And THIS is a great night for us all to look our best.  
Because it is Christmas!

NEW: Yeah! Uh... What's Christmas?

OLD: Oh, that's right. You're brand-new stars! This is your very first Christmas!

NEW: Yes! Is it your first Christmas, too?

OLD: Oh, no! I've seen over 2000 of them. In fact, I am old enough to tell you about the very First Christmas!  
And I can explain why we still celebrate it, even after all these years.

NEW: Oh, please do. I want to hear all about it.

OLD: Okay! To start with we have to go back before the first Christmas and visit a little place called Nazareth.

NEW: Is Nazareth a place in the sky? You know... Up in Space?

OLD: No, it's a place down on Earth; on that little bitty planet right down there.

NEW: Do you mean Pluto? I didn't think it was still a planet!

OLD: No...Not Pluto! To the Right!

NEW: You mean the little blue and green one?

OLD: Exactly! That is the town of Nazareth!

NEW: Who's the pretty girl?

OLD: That's Mary. She is going to have a baby and marry a man named Joseph. Joseph is a carpenter and good man.

NEW: Who's that other person all shiny like us.

OLD: That's Gabriel, an angel. Gabriel has come to talk to Mary. Let's listen.

GABRIEL: Greetings! The Lord is with you.

Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

MARY: How will this be?

GABRIEL: The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.

MARY: I am the Lord's servant. May it be as you have said.

OLD: Now about Joseph. Joseph knew the baby wasn't his. But Joseph was a good man, he didn't want to leave Mary alone but was scared. God sent an angel to speak to him in a dream.

GABRIEL: Joseph do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because She will give birth to a son of the Holy Spirit.

NEW: What did Joseph do when he woke up?

OLD: He did just what the angel had told him to do.

NEW: Okay... So, what happened next?

OLD: Next there was a little drama that went on in Rome. Caesar, the Roman ruler, ordered that everyone had to be counted. Something about taxes. But, in order to be counted, everyone had to go back to their family's hometown.

NEW: Where did they have to go?

OLD: They went to a town called ...Bethlehem.

NEW: Wait a minute! Bethlehem... Isn't that the one they sing about? The one they call "O, little town" of Bethlehem?

NEW: They even sing about how "the silent STARS go by..."

OLD: Yes, that is the town. For Mary and Joseph, it was a pretty long and difficult trip; especially since Mary was expecting a baby.

NEW: But I thought this was a story about the First Christmas. When do we get to the part with the tree and the STAR?

OLD: There was no tree on the first Christmas, but there was a STAR. We'll see about that later. So, Joseph went to Bethlehem to be counted, and Mary went with him.

NEW: Look! Mary and Joseph have arrived in Bethlehem. I hope they have somewhere nice to stay. Mary looks tired.

OLD: You're right. But there was no room for them in the inn. So, Mary and Joseph stayed in a stable.

NEW: A stable!?! Do you mean like for cows, horses, and goats?

OLD: Yep. Mary and Joseph stayed in a humble stable. There Mary had her baby, and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger.

NEW: Why did they put the baby in a manger?

OLD: It was probably the safest place they had for Him. I'm sure Joseph lined it with fresh, new hay and stood watch over Mary and the baby during the night.

And now for the first time up in the sky there was a New STAR; announcing the birth of the Messiah.

NEW: Just think. A new STAR in the sky! How wonderful! How glorious! No one on earth could have missed that!

OLD: God didn't rely on a single new star to announce the birth of His Son. He also sent an angel to tell a group of shepherds all about it. It really frightened the shepherds to suddenly see an angel.

GABRIEL: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy for all people. In Bethlehem a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. The STAR will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.

OLD: So, they hurried off to find Mary Joseph, and the baby.

They found them where they were told. When they had seen him, they spread the word about this child Jesus.

All: who heard were amazed at what the shepherds told them. The shepherds praised God for all the things they had heard and seen.

NEW: So, that's the story of the First Christmas and the Star. That's amazing! And how do you know all this?

OLD: I saw it all from up here in the sky; for you see I am the new star that appeared that night.

NEW: Really!!! You are the NEW Star? But you are so old.

OLD: So is the story, over 2000 years old.... But it is still as true today as it was on that very 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas. And that's why we still celebrate Christmas today.

ALL: STARS That's amazing! Thank you for telling us the story. We will shine a little brighter now that we know all this!

ALL: Merry Christmas!