

Christ's Belovedness is Born

Justice

Love

Peace

Care

Hope

Joy

Faith



ZION REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

December 24, 2024 - 7pm

GATHERING MUSIC AND BELLS

WELCOME TO ZION REFORMED UCC!

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP and LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

One: Tonight is the night. The light has come. Jesus is born!

All: In the cold, dark night, a star brightly shines!

One: Slowly but surely we traveled the road to Bethlehem. Along the way, we lit the candles of Justice, Care, Faith, Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Tonight, we light them again adding the beloved Christ candle, for Jesus is God's gift to us.

(pause to light the first seven candles)

All: This is a holy night, for Jesus Christ is born!

One: As we light the Christ candle, we remember what Christ brings: Rest for the weary, Peace for the troubled, Hope for the despairing, Justice for the oppressed, And love for each and every one. Tonight, we see the light and we believe! May our hearts be full of Christmas light.

(light the Christ candle)

*CAROL *O Come All Ye Faithful*

GG 133

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:1-20

NRSV

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to

be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

One: Listen to what the Spirit is teaching us.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

SCRIPTURE

John 1:1-14

NRSV

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of humanity, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

***CAROL** *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

GG 119

HOMILY

Rev. Scott Winnette

***CAROL** *Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming*

GG 129

PRESENTATION OF THE CHRISTMAS OFFERING

We may not have gold and incense to offer, but the gifts we offer to God are part of God's dream to spread the love of the Christ Child to our generation.

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
come, rich and poor, to own him,
the King of kings salvation brings,
let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
the Babe, the Song of Mary.

GG 145

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

Fresh and Faithful God,
this night You startle us with love.
You come to be with us
to be for us
to be among us.
And we are grateful.
Holy Life, receive the gifts of our lives.
Heal us with hope.
Fill us with wonder.
And send us to be Good News to the world.
We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

*CAROL *Angels We Have Heard on High*

GG 113

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

One: Let us pray.

All: God of miracle and manger, God of mystery and magi,

One: we thank you for the wonder of Christmas –for goodwill that fills even the crustiest souls, for smiles on the faces in spite of worries that will return in a day or two, for generosity that lights up homes and hearts and touches those with too little of their own this year.

All: Steadfast God, we thank you for Joseph and all he stands for:

One: For everyone in our lives and communities we can count on – people there in the background, looking after things; for those with dreams, patiently waiting and working so things can improve; for those with courage to cope when the world turns dark and Herod and his ilk threaten. Steadfast God, may Joseph inspire all of us in the year ahead.

All: Compassionate God, we thank you for Mary and all she stands for:

One: For everyone in our lives and communities who embraces us with comfort and encouragement; for those who are willing to follow your leading even when it means personal sacrifice and criticism from others; for those who nurture children with hope and wisdom so they become a blessing to others; Compassionate God, may Mary inspire us all in the year ahead.

All: God with us, thank you for the Christ Child and all he means to us:

One: For his gift of mercy so that we can let the past be the past and make a fresh start; for his open arms, offering us strength and hope whenever we feel lost or lonely; and for his willingness to suffer and die so that we will know your presence with us in the midst of our hardest times. In these moments of silence, we remember those who need Christ's embrace this Christmas:
(silence)

All: God with us, take us from this holy place to find your holiness in many places and to

meet Christ in many faces so that we may live with the blessing of Christmas every day and offer that blessing to all whom we meet, in the name of Christ, our friend and Savior. Amen
(Wild Goose Worship Group)

PASSING THE LIGHT

During the candle lighting, the ushers will stop at the end of each row. The person at the end of the row will tip a candle to the usher's candle and then pass the flame down the row. Always hold the lighted candle upright and tip the unlighted candle to the flame. Please be fire-safety conscious and be especially watchful of the children.

***CAROL**

Silent Night

GG 122

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.
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.

***BENEDICTION** (in unison)

**We go into the world with the simplicity of the manger in our hearts, with the peace of the baby in our minds, and with the promise of the angels on our lips.
May the grace of God, the love of Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit abide with us along our way. Amen.**

(Extinguish candles)

***POSTLUDE**

Service Credits
CCLI Number: 6212519
December 24

- Gathering music: Christmas Carol medley. Performed by C. M. Moblard (harpsichordist) of Zion Reformed UCC.
- Prelude: Still, Still, Still. Traditional Austrian Carol. Arr. by Jason W. Krug. Ó 2022 by Lorenz Publishing Co. Performed by C. M. Moblard (pianist) of Zion Reformed UCC.
- Hymns: O Come, All Ye Faithful. GG 133. Tune: Adeste Fideles. Words and music by John Francis Wade. Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.
- Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. GG 119. Tune: Mendelssohn. Words by Charles Wesley (1739). Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.
- Silent Night. GG 122. Tune: Stille Nacht. Composed by Franz Xavier Gruber (1818). Words by Joseph Mohr (1816). Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.
Source(s): Hymnary (hymnary.org).
- Choir Anthem: It Came Upon a Midnight Clear. Composed by Richard Willis and J. S. Bach. Words by Edmund H. Sears and Rose Aspinall. Ó 2018 by Lorenz Publishing Co.
- Offertory: Cantique de Noel. Composed by Adolphe Adam. Ó 1957 by Consolidated Music. Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.
- Postlude: Grand Fantasia on "Joy to the World." Composed by Marc F. Cheban. Ó 1994 by H. W. Gray Publications. Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.