Christmas Eve

Trinity United Church of Christ

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Where God is Still Speaking!
Trinity United Church of Christ

CHRISTMAS EVE 8 PM

December 24, 2021

In-Person and Online Worship Service

*Awakening joyful service guided by our still speaking God*

We ask that you wear a mask while in the Church building.

Congregational responses in bold print.
* Denotes standing as you are able.

PRELUDE — “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly: Still, Still, Still” — P. Manz

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:2-7a

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. 5 You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

6 For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. 6 For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.

*CAROL #8 “O Come, All Ye Faithful”*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Through lush farmland and bleak alleys
sweeps good news of great Joy!

Through empty wants and desperate needs
blazes a star to light our way.

Through pounding turmoil and dazing fear
sounds an angel chorus:
Glory to God in the highest;
peace to God’s people on earth!
Receive the news! Follow the star! Heed the angels!
Through song and silence, word and wonder,
et us make our way to Bethlehem.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE
Christmas is a time of wonder, the wonder of Jesus; God with us;
the Promised One, the light of the world, the Holy One of God.
On this night we light the Christ candle and we wonder:
Is Jesus really here?
We light the Christ candle and we proclaim:
Jesus is really here!
We light this Christ candle and we know
God is with us, the Promised One has come,
the light of the world breaks through the shadows,
The Holy One of God brings peace, hope, love and joy.

(Lighting of the Christ Candle)

PRAYER
Emmanuel: God, you are with us.
We have heard the promise of the prophets.
We have caught the notes of an angel’s song.
We have seen a star in the heavens and we have believed.
Tonight we come to be with you because you have come to be with us.
We seek an innocent, helpless baby in a crude manger.
We seek a Messiah who will reign with justice.
And you, who are the weakest and the strongest,
the most humble and the most mighty, have found us.
Now we may find ourselves.
Now we may love each other, now we may truly worship you.
Singing aloud with the heavenly host: “Glory to God in the highest!
Peace on earth and goodwill among all people.” Amen.

ANTHEM
“Shine, Candle, Shine”
Words by J. Paul Williams; Music by Anna Laura Page
Senior Choir
POEM
“How the Light Comes”
By: Jan Richardson

PRAYER/CAROL #9 “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

God of life, tonight the world is reborn with the birth of Jesus.
We thank you for the gift of your Child, who came to show us your way;

O Little Town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in the dark street shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

Loving God, you are the guardian of the poor. Many children are being born tonight
in places no better than that stable in Bethlehem. We pray for them.

For Christ is Born of Mary and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth!

God of comfort, we thank you that we have a warm place to gather
and friends and family to care for us. We pray for all who are sick and lonely,
in trouble, or afraid, that they may be healed and comforted.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv’n;
So God imparts to human hearts the blessing of his heav’n.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

God among us, in the birth of Jesus you show us hope for the world.
We pray for ourselves and for each other,
that we may be filled with hope and new life, now and always.

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.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN SCRIPTURE AND SONG
Luke 1:26-32

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent to God to a town in Galilee called
Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David.
The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one!
The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.

ANTHEM
“No Golden Carriage, No Bright Toy”
Gilbert M. Martin
The Senior Choir

Matthew 1:19-23
Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:
“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel.”

CAROL #4 “Away in a Manger”

Luke 2:1-7
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 first born son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

CAROL #10 “The First Noel”

Luke 2:8-20
In that region there were shepherds living in their fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before 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,
carol #1 “angels from the realms of glory”

Communion Service

Invitation

(All are welcome around the table. We use Gluten Free bread and grape juice)

The words of our God echo to us across the ages,

“Be comforted, my people, for your sins are forgiven, your strife has ended,
and the birth of my son brings you peace.” God’s power and strength have been
unleashed in this world through the birth of a tender child. Just as a shepherd

gathers us in his arms the sheep of his flock, our God gathers us together
and carries us to Bethlehem, to witness the great thing which has happened.

People of God, come, come from the north and the south and the east and the west,
and gather about the table of the Lord. Come to Bethlehem. Come to a place of quietness and peace.

Come with wonder, awe, and adoration. Take your place about the manger,
sing with joy, for the time has come. Sing the Good News of Emmanuel; God-with us!

The Christ has come!

Carol #176 “je sus, je sus, oh, what a wonderful child”

Communion Prayer/Lord’s Prayer

We do not come to this communion table trusting in ourselves.

We know that whenever we try to be our own gods, we become confused and lost.

We humble ourselves before you, and we confess our sins and our need for your guidance.

May our participation in this holy meal allow you to be Emmanuel, “God with us”.

May it remind us that we are your community, and may it lead us to the mangers
of our modern world, where you are alive, to the silent nights and sights where
your glory is known, to the humble places, where you are honored.

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.
WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION
Tonight we celebrate the mystery of your birth, your life, and your death...all gifts to us.
Bless us, Lord, and these elements of Bread and Cup, that as we receive them,
we might also receive anew your gift of life. O Holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us we pray. Cast out our sin and enter in. Be born in us today. Amen
On a night long ago, Shepherds received glorious news from heaven, and ran in joy to the
stable. Now let us, with that same Spirit of joy, come unto our Lord, and receive His gifts.

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND OF THE CUP
(Please come forward wearing your masks. When it is your turn to receive the Elements, remove
your mask. Take the bread and consume it, take the cup and drink it and then place into the waste
basket provided. Please put your mask back on and return to your seat. If you prefer to remain in
your seat, raise your hand and an Elder will bring the Elements to you.)

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING
God of Grace, we give you thanks for prophecy fulfilled, for a manger filled with your love and light.
We thank you for this Holy Supper, which is for us a sign
of his returning to claim us as his people.

We thank you for the gift of your Son, light in the darkness,
Savior for all, who was born into poverty, but now reigns in victory over the world.
May our Communing at this table, so fill us with the spirit of Christ,
that we might also go out bringing light to the darkness, and peace to all the nations. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING
"O Holy Night"
Julia Brown, Soloist

CANDLELIGHTING
Christ the Light of the world gives each one of us light, so that we too may shine
with gratitude, hope and love. Please light your candles knowing
that their light is the thread that unites us now and forever.

*CAROL #11 “Silent Night”

*FINAL BLESSING
May you experience the gladness of Christmas which is hope; the spirit of Christmas which is peace;
the heart of Christmas which is love. Amen.

*CAROL #7 “Joy to The World”

*POSTLUDE – “Joy to the Word” – M. Burkhardt
Portions of today’s worship elements have been taken from the following:


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Worship Leaders:
Rev. Dr. Frederick Young Pastor
Nina and Russell Redding Serving Elders and Lay Liturgists
Roberta Weiant Serving Elder
John McKay Choir Director
Jane Eiker Organist
Julia Brown Soloist
Nina and Russell Redding Ushers
Prestyn Wetant Acolyte
Georgia Hollabaugh, Kara Young, Luke Milhimes, Carl Barrick, Russell Bailey, George Steckert, Stacy Rushwald, Rayna Cooper, Garrison Redding Tech Team
8  O Come, All Ye Faithful

Latin: John F. Wade, 1751
Tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841, and others

ADESTE FIDELES Irregular
John F. Wade's Cantus Diversi, 1751

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O
Come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

2. 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,

3. Yes, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jeans, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;
O come, let us adore him,
Away in a Manger

1. Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;

2. The cattle are lowing; the baby wakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.

3. Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.

Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus asleep on the hay.

down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morn- ing is nigh.

1. The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

2. I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

3. Bless all the dear children in your tender care and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.
The First Noel

1. The first Noel the angel did say was to
2. They looked up and saw a star shining
3. And by the light of that same star three.
4. This star drew near to the north west, o'er.
5. Then entered in those wise men three, full.

Certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; in fields where
in the east beyond them far; and to the
wise men came from country far; to seek for a
Bethlehem it took its rest; and there it
reverently upon their knee, and offered

they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's
earth it gave great light, and so it continued
king was their tent, and to follow the
did both stop and stay right over the
there in his presence their gold, and

Repeat

night that was so deep,
tinued both day and night,
star wherever it went. Noel, Noel, Noel,
place where Jesus lay.
myrrh, and frank incense.
el. No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.
1 Angels, from the Realms of Glory

1 Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sages, leave your contemplations, bright-er visions beam a far;
4 All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son,

once you sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:
God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant light.
seek the great desire of nations, you have seen his natal star.
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One.

Refrain

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the new-born king.
Jesus, Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child

African-American traditional; alt.

Luke 1:30-35; 2:8-14

Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child.

Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek, and mild; new life, new hope the Child will bring. Listen to the angels sing, "Glory, glory, glory," let the heavens ring!

This gospel song praising the newborn Child might be effectively used by repeating it several times. It could be sung softly as a background for dance, story, or drama. Finger-snaps on the off-beats might be used to fill the rests.

Tune: WONDERFUL CHILD 11.10.8.7.11.
African-American traditional
Arr. Jeffrey Radford, 1992
1. Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright
2. Silent night, holy night, Shepherds quake at the sight,
3. Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light

Round yon Virgin mother and child, Holy Infant so tender and mild
Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia;
Radiant beams from thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace,

Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.
Christ, the Saviour, is born! Christ, the Saviour, is born!
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.
Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
   Let ev'ry heart prepare him songs employ, while fields and
   Fest the ground; he comes to make his blessings plains repeat the sound- ing joy,
   Re peat the sound- ing joy.

2 Joy to the earth, the Sav-ior reigns! Let all their room and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature
   And heav'n and nature sing.
   And heav'n and nature sing.

3 No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns in- ness and wonders of his love, and wonders of his
   Nations prove the glories of his righteous room and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature
   Sing.

4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the room and heav'n and nature sing.
   Joy, repeat, repeat the sound- ing joy.
   Found, far as, far as the curse is found.
   Love, and wonders, wonders of his love.
In Memory of:

William M., Alleman, Helen S., and Paul E. Alleman by Jane Alleman (1)
Helen Price, John F., Donald L., and Frederick E. Seibert by Jane Alleman (1)
Thomas Blackstone by Audrey Blackstone (1)
Herbert & Doris Bailey by Russell Bailey (2)
Qinglie Dong and Yumei Liu by Suhua Dong (1)
Our loved ones who are forever in our hearts by The Garskof family (4)
John & Elizabeth Hilbert, and Charles & Mary Harman by the Hilbert family (2)
Charles R. Kreitz, Sr., and Mary Kreitz by Ruth & Terry Kreitz (2)
Loved ones lost to COVID by Nancy MacMeekin (1)
Emerson (Buck) and Aileen Muller by Barbara Muller (1)
Virginia & Charles Kreitz, Jean & Donald Poland, Sr.
    by Pam & Jerry Polant and Megan & Brendan Mullooly (2)
Lawrence & Lula Redding and Daniel & Alice Hoffman by Russell & Nina Redding (4)
Edward Warren, Sr. by Ruby Warren (1)
Thomas and Scarlett Weiant and Victoria Timms by Roberta Weiant (1)
Loved ones gone from sight but forever in our hearts by Pat & Jack Ziegler (1)
In Honor of:

The White poinsettia is presented by the Hilbert Family
in celebration of the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ

My four Great Grandchildren by Audrey Blackstone (1)
Our Parents by Sandy & Tom Busche (2)
Trinity Staff by Nancy MacMeekin (1)
Our Sons, Jeff and Mike and their families by Suzy & Bob Miller (1)
All of my friends at Trinity Church by Bonnie Smith (1)
Mya Plank and Donald Hubbard Sr., by Christina Swinn (2)
My Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren by Roberta Weiand (1)
Beloved offspring scattered far and wide by Pat & Jack Ziegler (1)

Donations towards church decorations:
Marilyn J. Alleman
Russell Bailey
Audrey Blackstone
Sandra & Tom Busche
Suhua Dong
Ruth & Terry Krietz
Nancy MacMeekin
Barbara Muller
Nina & Russell Redding
Bonnie Smith
Rebecca & Tim Woodward
Pat & Jack Ziegler

And our thanks to:
The Altar Guild and other members who decorated the Sanctuary, Gathering Area and outside doors.
The Hilberts for the Poinsettia Tree