

*Mt. Zion United Church of Christ*  
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Rev. Danielle E. Neff, Senior Pastor  
Rev. Jeff Kardisco, Associate Pastor  
Mr. Denny Daugherty, Adult Choir Director & Tech Director  
Mr. Travis Pinci, Accompanist, Children's Music Coordinator, & Secretary

December 24, 2017

3:00 PM

### **CHRISTMAS EVE**

*Christmas Eve is a joyous time for all who open their hearts and minds to our loving Creator. Let us allow the true meaning of Christmas to stir up love within us. During the service today, we will be serving communion. Please know that all are invited to participate in Holy Communion. If you are a guest, thank you for worshiping with us today. We invite you to take a moment to complete a visitor's card located in the back of the pew in front of you and place it in the offering plate when it is passed. We also invite you to sign your name in our guest book located in the back entrance of the sanctuary. We pray God's blessing upon you.  
For today's service, we will be using the red hymnal.*

### **CAROL SING**

CAROL NO. 108 (red hymnal, stanzas 1, 3, &, 4)

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

CAROL NO. 118 (red hymnal, stanzas 1 & 2)

*The First Nowell*

### **CHRISTMAS GREETINGS**

**PRELUDE** (played by Jackson Kollasch)

*Christmas Fantasia*

by Sorensen

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

**L:** On this night, new joy entered our world.

**P:** May we try by our lives to share joy with others each day.

**L:** On this night fresh hope entered our world.

**P:** May we bring hope to those who are heavily burdened.

**L:** On this night love was visible in a child;

**P:** May we show our love for others in concrete ways of friendship and service.

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

L: On this day the promise of peace on earth was proclaimed.

**P: May we demonstrate a love for peace when we respond to life's challenges and trials.**

L: Son of God, light that shines in the dark, child of joy and peace,

**P: help us to come to you and be born anew this holy night.**

**\*CAROL NO. 112** (red hymnal)

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

## **\*OPENING PRAYER**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**      *Shining Light*      Rend Collective  
*During the season of Advent, we light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, highlighting the qualities of God that Christ exemplifies in the world. In the lighting of the Advent wreath this evening, we see these qualities of hope, peace, joy and love brought into the world through the Christ-light. Through our faith in Christ, we are called to then receive His light, and be bearers of God's hope, peace, joy and love in the world.*

Reading: John 1

Pastor Danielle

Dancers: Jen Cooper, Dani Kardisco, Sydney Cooper, Tama Allison, & Olivia Daugherty

## **\*TIME OF CONFESSION**

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**ALL: Holy God, you offer us life in the baby at Bethlehem, but we confess that we have made something trivial, something sentimental, out of Christmas. Your light comes into the world, and we see only the pretty lights on trees. You shine in the darkness, but we turn away from the darkness of our world, and miss you. Your Word is made flesh, but we would like something nicer, more spiritual, than the humanity of God with us in the flesh. Forgive us, God: strengthen us with the hope that cannot be packed away with the Christmas ornaments. May we who have beheld this glory hold it in our hearts forever. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ACT OF PRAISE NO. 102 (red hymnal, stanza 1)      *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*

**ALL SING: Hark, the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King; Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled! Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies, with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark, the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."**

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

**WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM**

*Joy Has Damned*

by Getty/Buda

**READING OF LUKE 2: 1-20  
CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**

**WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM**

*Hope is Born*

by Lee Dengler

**OFFERING**

CALL TO OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY (Sung by Braden and Jordan Bicher)

*Peace on Earth/The Little Drummer Boy* by Fraser, Grossman, and Cohan

\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE NO. 105 (red hymnal, stanzas 1 & 3)

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

**ALL SING: Angels we have heard on high, singing sweetly through  
the night, and the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight.**

**Gloria, in excelsis Deo, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.**

**Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing. Come,  
adore on bended knee, Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. Gloria, in  
excelsis Deo, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**SOPRANO SOLO (sung by Debbie Butcher)**

*O Holy Night*

by Adam

**SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION<sup>†</sup>  
INVITATION**

L: This is a magical night. God-with-us has come to touch our world, our lives. God-with-us has come to bring us out of darkness into a glorious light. God-with-us invites us now to come to the table, believing in the promises of God fulfilled tonight. Here we hear angels, and see shepherds, and are transformed by a baby. Here love is offered, and love is found, in sharing of the bread and cup. Here we find our journey's end and its beginning. This table is open to anyone who wishes to know Christ better. May the God of holy nights be with you!

**P: And also with you!**

L: People of God, this is the night of transformation.

**P: This is the night when God bends low.**

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

L: God of wonder, we come to this table to be surrounded by the mystery of heaven's radiance. Lift us from the ordinary, that we may be touched by things extraordinary this night. We praise you for coming to humankind, for being a child for all children, and for living as Son of Man for all humankind.

**P: "For unto us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."**

L: Into a silent and fearful world, you sent your son Jesus to Bethlehem, born that we might draw nearer to you. So with shepherds, angels, and Mary and Joseph, with those who sing carols and those whose pain only brings silence, we lift our songs to you:

**P: Holy, holy, holy are you, God of the manger. Creation hears the angel songs and rejoices. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the one who is born this night. Hosanna in the highest!**

#### REMEMBERING THE STORY

#### PRAYER OF CONSECRATION & THE LORD'S PRAYER

**ALL: 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.**

#### BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE WINE

#### SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

*(The outer ring of cups contain grape juice, the inner rings contain wine.)*

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**ALL: We thank you, O God, for your presence at this table. Grant that the angel's song may be continually on our lips, that Christ's light may radiate in our lives, and that we may bear the good news of your love in a dark and waiting world. Amen.**

#### CANDLELIGHTING SERVICE

CAROL (see p. 5)

*Silent Night, Holy Night*

#### CHRISTMAS BLESSING

#### POSTLUDE

*Joy to the World*

by Han

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

## Silent Night, Holy 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.

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!

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

# *Merry Christmas to All!*

Welcome Team & Communion Servers: Tim Snyder, Barb Stebbins, Robin & Emily Schriver

Worship Tech: Clyde Snyder

One poinsettia is placed upon the altar in honor of Zachary Shiffer's 10th birthday from Nanna and Pop-Pop, Sue and Jim Shiffer.

One poinsettia is placed upon the altar in honor of Steve and Christal's 15th wedding anniversary and in honor of our whole family being together for Christmas by Mike and Kathy Ferree.

The bulletins are presented in honor of all our friends and family from Lyn Schleeter and Barbara Krier. Merry Christmas!

Thank you to Jordan Bicher, Braden Bicher, Debbie Butcher, Jen Cooper, Dani Kardisco, Sydney Cooper, Tama Allison, Olivia Daugherty, Jackson Kollasch, & the Worship Choir for enhancing today's worship with their talents.

Thank you to Patsy & Lee Brown, of Brown's Tree Farm, for donating our Christmas tree and wreaths.

If you commune, please complete a communion card found in the pew racks and place it in the offering plate.

During the candle lighting ceremony, please hold lighted candles vertical, and **tip the unlighted** candle to the lighted one.

**Please pick up your 2018 offering envelopes** if you haven't already done so. They are on the table in the west narthex. All contributions must be received at the church on or before December 31st, 2017 in order to get credited to your 2017 giving statements.

**Mt. Zion is Streaming!** This service will be posted on the Mt. Zion website at: <http://www.mtzionucc.org/services-online.html>, with both a live feed (during the actual service) and a version you can watch later. We offer a hearing assistance system called *Listen Technologies*. If you would like to use a receiver, please check with the volunteers at the sound booth at the rear of the sanctuary.

† Much of tonight's liturgy was adapted from Ministry Matters, Christmas 2014 worship options.

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.