

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

Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:00 AM

*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 black hymnal.*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

When Hope Was Born

by Deford

CALL TO WORSHIP & ADVENT CANDELIGHTING

L: And in these days a decree goes out to all the world, for these are taxing times. We are called again to go to Bethlehem, no matter the state of our health or our world.

P: We come, obedient and faithful, for we have heard the message, we have dreamed the dream that God will come to dwell among us.

L: We come, expectant with joy, pregnant with anticipation, for God has done great things for us.

P: We come searching for a sign; bearing our gifts, we come.

L: We come, called from the silent hillsides of our hearts, startled and frightened by the magnitude of light, we huddle together toward Bethlehem.

P: We come, one by one, and yet, as one, dancing into the Promise.

L: This morning, we light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love—knowing that it is through Christ that these qualities are made manifest in the world.

P: Jesus, the Shepherd of Hope, the Prince of Peace, the Joy-Giver, the Love-Bearer, is coming into the world! Thanks be to God!

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

***TIME OF CONFESSION**

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION²

L: Too often our answer to the darkness is not running toward Bethlehem but running away.

P: We ought to know by now that we can't see where we're going in the dark. Running away is rampant... separation is stylish: separation from mates, from friends, from self.

L: Run and tranquilize, don't talk about it, avoid. Run away and join the army of those who have already run away.

P: When are we going to learn that Christmas Peace comes only when we turn and face the darkness? Only then will we be able to see the Light of the World.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON³

"When the Holy Child is born into our hearts, there is a rain of stars, a rushing of angels, a blaze of candles, this God burst into our lives. Love is running through the streets." May we proclaim that love and grace to each other and to the world. Amen.

ACT OF PRAISE NO. 165 (NCH, v. 1)

Love Came Down at Christmas

**ALL SING: Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas; star and angels gave the sign.**

SCRIPTURE

MESSAGE

"A Walk One Winter Night"

by Al Andrews

HYMN NO. 216 (UM Hymnal, see attached)

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

SPECIAL MUSIC

OFFERTORY

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Welcome to Our World

by Rice

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE NO. 165 (black hymnal, vs. 2 & 3)

Love Came Down at Christmas

ALL SING: Worship we the God-head, love incarnate, love divine;

Worship we our Jesus, but where is God's sacred sign?

**Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine; Love to God
and neighbor, love for plea and gift and sign.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 121 (black hymnal)

All Earth is Waiting

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

Lift Up Your Head, Ye Mighty Gates

by Weissel

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

We welcome infants and children in our worship! For your comfort, we also have a children's corner in the back of the sanctuary where your child can relax and play and you can still participate in the worship experience. We also have nursery care downstairs during our 10:30 AM worship service. Please see a member of the welcoming team for assistance!

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.

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.

9 AM Worship Tech: Coordinated by staff members

9 AM Welcome Team: Coordinated by staff members

9 AM Sound Tech: Ryan Neal

9 AM Video Tech: John Schriver

9 AM Camera Tech: Coordinated by Denny Daugherty

¹Based on "The Decree" by Ann Weems in the book "Kneeling in Bethlehem"

²Based on "Toward the Light" by Ann Weems in the book "Kneeling in Bethlehem"

³Based on "Godburst" from Ann Weems' "Kneeling in Bethlehem"

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.