

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, 2019

10:00 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 welcome infants and children and all their wiggles & voices 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 pray God's blessing upon you. For today's service, we will be using the red & black hymnals.

GATHERING MUSIC

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

Traditional

Silent Night

Traditional

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Now in the silence, a whisper of joy which comes into every life.

P: Now in the comfort of carols, we sing of hope which takes away the despair that threatens to envelop us.

L: Now in familiar words heard anew, we speak of grace which is born into barren lives, of peace which is birthed in war's shadowed fears.

P: Now leaning next to those who have always been a part of us, and those from whom we have been apart, we are reminded of the God in Christ, who always accepts us, always welcomes us.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

L: Now in the love which is ours forever, we draw close to heart of God,
P: so we can be surprised by wonder, swaddled in serenity, embraced by tenderness.

L: We come to be transformed once again by the Christmas story,
P: God in Community, Holy in One, we come to welcome the Newborn King.

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT*

OPENING PRAYER

*CAROL NO. 108 (red hymnal)

O Little Town of Bethlehem

*TIME OF CONFESSION

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION²

L: God of Joy, we come to celebrate again the arrival of Love Incarnate here in our very midst. Your glorious arrival is enough to cause the forests to sing for joy, yet we still find reasons to complain and sigh. Your light of salvation is bright enough to illuminate every corner of our lives, yet we still find ourselves shrouded in worry and doubt. Your gift of Love is big enough for the whole world, yet we still find ourselves resentful that your love extends to those whom we deem to be unworthy. God, you invite us into the light of the stable where the overlooked and forgotten have gathered to celebrate the miracle of your love. Give us the strength and courage to join you at the manger. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ACT OF PRAISE 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.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

**READING OF JOHN 1: 1-5
CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**

QUARTET ANTHEM

He is Born

by Armstrong

OFFERING

CALL TO OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY (sung by Mike Gibbs & Braden Bicher)

The Peace Carol

by Bob Beers

OFFERTORY RESPONSE NO. 128 (black hymnal, v. 4) *In the Bleak Midwinter*

**ALL SING: What can I offer, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise one, I would do my part; but
what can I offer: all my heart.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SOPRANO SOLO (sung by Debbie Butcher)

O Holy Night

by Adam

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The communion liturgy will be sung to the tune of "What Child is This." Please join in this liturgy as we prepare for the sacrament of Holy Communion.

L: Lift up your hearts unto the Lord. Sing unto God your praises. We gather on this holy night. We gather at this table.

**ALL SING: Lift, lift your hearts up high! Sing praise to God, and glorify!
Praise, praise, the Prince of Peace, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**

L: God breathed in us the breath of life. God gave the gift of Eden. We turned away and sin was born; We sought for greener gardens.

**ALL SING: Lift, lift your hearts up high! Sing praise to God, and glorify!
Praise, praise, the Prince of Peace, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**

L: God called to us from age to age through messengers and prophets. When we would not our hearts give way, the Word-made-flesh God sent us.

**ALL SING: This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and
angels sing; Haste, haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**

L: O Holy God of power and might! Hosanna in excelsis! Blessed be the one who in your name comes! Hosanna in the highest!

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

ALL SING: This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing; Haste, haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

L: The Word-made-flesh, Emmanuel; God, come to live among us! He preached good news: the kingdom come! A light shone in the darkness.

ALL SING: Nails, spear shall pierce Him through! The Cross be borne for me for you. Hail! Hail, the Word made flesh; the Babe, the Son of Mary.

L: And on the night he was betrayed, Christ took the bread and broke it. Thanking God, he shared this gift. "Remember, when you eat it!"

ALL SING: Nails, spear shall pierce Him through! The Cross be borne for me for you. Hail! Hail, the Word made flesh; the Babe, the Son of Mary.

L: He took the cup and raised it up. "My life I pour out for you. From sin, set free! Remember me! We covenant anew."

ALL SING: Nails, spear shall pierce Him through! The Cross be borne for me for you. Hail! Hail, the Word made flesh; the Babe, the Son of Mary.

L: Pour out your Spirit, Holy God, upon these gifts, and bless them. Make them for us the Bread of Life, the Cup of our Salvation!

ALL SING: Raise, raise the song on high! The Virgin sings her lullaby: Joy, joy for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS (all cups contain grape juice)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (to the tune of "What Child is This")

L: Thank God for Holy Mystery; Body of Christ; the gift of life! As we depart, let us take heart: God's light will lead us always!

ALL SING: Raise, raise the song on high! The Virgin sings her lullaby: Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary!

CANDLELIGHTING SERVICE

CAROL (see p. 5)

Silent Night, Holy Night

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Carol of the Bells

Traditional

¹The Call to Worship was adapted from <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/2016/12/liturgy-wcommunion-for-christmas-eve-a.html>, used with permission.

²The Prayer of Confession is from <https://www.ministrymatters.com/worship/entry/3412/worship-elements-christmas-eve-option-3>, used with permission.

*The poem read during this time is "How the Light Comes" by Jan Richardson.

*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: Becky & Jerry Hester; Nancy Kinard, & Tori Everhart

Worship Tech: Mary Jane Snyder

One poinsettia is placed in honor of our children and grandchildren by Steve & Barb Stebbins.

One poinsettia is placed in honor of the congregation of Mt. Zion UCC. It is a blessing to serve you! Merry Christmas, Pastor Danielle.

The bulletins are sponsored by the Bevivino Family – Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and may the message of Christmas fill your life with blessings of Peace, Joy, Love, and Hope into the New Year and beyond!

Thank you to Mike Gibbs, Braden Bicher, & Debbie Butcher for enhancing today's worship with their talents. Thank you to the vocal quartet for their meaningful musical contribution to this evening. The quartet is made up of: Debbie Butcher, Brenda Beyer, Mike Gibbs, & Braden Bicher.

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 2020 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 29th, 2019 in order to get credited to your 2019 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.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Our Lord Jesus Christ


108

PHILLIPS BROOKS, 1868

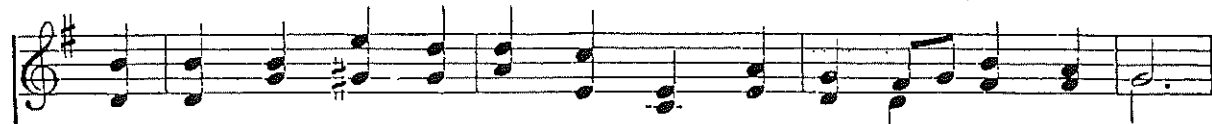

8. 6. 8. 6. 7. 6. 8. 6.

ST. LOUIS
LEWIS H. REDNER, 1868



With joy and serenity





1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie;
2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry, And gath - ered all a - bove,
3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is given!
4. O Ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem! De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep The si - lent stars go by:
While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of! won - dering love.
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heaven;
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The Ev - er - last - ing Light;
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth!
No ear may hear His com - ing, But in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad ti - dings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night,
And prais - es sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth!
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in,
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Em - man - u - el! A - MEN.

