

# ***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

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 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.*

## **CAROL SING**

CAROL (see p. 5)

*Away in a Manger*

CAROL NO. 102 (red hymnal, stanzas 1 & 3)

*Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

**L:** With eyes wide open and our ears on edge,

**P:** we look for shepherds and listen for the songs of angels.

**L:** In the light of winter's moon, with the star guiding the way,

**P:** we gather outside the door of a stable, wondering if we dare go enter.

**L:** With folks and friends we love, with strangers we have just met,

**P:** we gather, becoming the holy family for this time and in this place.

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

# BRINGING IN THE LIGHT\*

## OPENING PRAYER

\*CAROL NO. 145 (black hymnal)

*Once in Royal David's City*

## \*TIME OF CONFESSION

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION<sup>2</sup>

**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.

WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

arr. Martin

READING OF JOHN 1: 1-5

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM

*He is Born*

by Armstrong

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

## OFFERING

CALL TO OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY (played by Jackson Kollasch) *Prelude/Carol of the Bells* by Winston

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

INVITATION<sup>3</sup>

L: The poet Ann Weems says, "if there is no cross in the manger, there is no Christmas..." This table is open to everyone who hopes to know Christ better. May the God of silent nights be with you!

**P: May the God of herald angels be with you!**

L: Open your hearts to the One born in the little town of Bethlehem.

**P: May Emmanuel come to abide in our hearts.**

L: Join all believers in singing of our joy this night.

**P: May our voices blend with those of the angels and shepherds.**

COMMUNION PRAYER

L: In the silence of the night, God of holiness, your Child crept in among us, so small no one would notice, so poor no one would care...On this evening when we celebrate his birth, in the days to come when we follow him to Jerusalem, we sing carols of that mystery we call faith:

**ALL: Christ was born, so we might have life; Christ died, so we might have forgiveness; Christ was raised, so we might have resurrection; Christ will be born again, to gather us together with him.**

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.**

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

## BREAKING OF THE BREAD & POURING OF THE JUICE

### SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS *(all cups contain grape juice)*

*During the sharing of the elements, we will be singing various Christmas Carols. Words for the songs will be listed on the screens. The hymnal numbers are also listed below if you'd prefer to use a hymnal.*

*We will be singing the first verse of each hymn.*

*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, #107 (red hymnal)*

*O Little Town of Bethlehem, #108 (red hymnal)*

*O Come, All Ye Faithful, #112 (red hymnal)*

*The First Noel, #118 (red hymnal)*

*What Child is This, #148 (black hymnal)*

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

L: Loving God, we thank you for the gift of this time at the table with you.

As we go into the world, help us to be the gift another needs,

**P: sharing your blessings of love and grace, running to tell the Story we heard from the shepherds.**

L: Help us to be the comfort which can swaddle others,

**P: sharing Jesus' compassion with the poor and needy, welcoming the holiness offered by the most vulnerable we meet.**

L: Help us to enkindle the lives around us,

**P: sharing your peace with all the broken, learning your language of hope. Amen.**

## CANDLELIGHTING SERVICE

CAROL (see insert)

*Silent Night, Holy Night*

## CHRISTMAS BLESSING

## POSTLUDE

*Joy to the World*

Traditional

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

<sup>2</sup>The Prayer of Confession is from

<https://www.ministrymatters.com/worship/entry/3412/worship-elements-christmas-eve-option-3>, used with permission.

<sup>3</sup>The invitation is based on the poem, "The Cross in the Manger" by Ann Weems, while the remainder of the liturgy is adapted from liturgy by Rev. Thom Shuman,

<http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/2016/12/liturgy-wcommunion-for-christmas-day-a.html>

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

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

# Away in a Manger 149

*She gave birth to her firstborn, a son . . . and placed him in a manger. Lk. 2:7*

Unison

1. A - way in a man-ger, no crib for a bed, the lit - tle Lord  
2. The cat - tle are low-ing, the Ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord  
3. Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay close by me for -

Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked  
Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love thee, Lord Je - sus, look  
ev - er, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in

down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
down from the sky and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.  
thy ten - der care, and fit us for heav - en, to live with thee there.

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

# *Merry Christmas to All!*

Welcome Team & Communion Servers: Robin & Emily Schriver; Kathy & Bob Ensminger

Worship Tech: Barb Stebbins

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 presented in memory of John Skennonto, Jackson Bridgette, George Bridgette, and Darlyne Bridgette by Suzanne Skennonto — "*Missing you always*".

Thank you to Jackson Kollasch, Debbie Butcher, & 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 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.

## 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!

CHARLES WESLEY, 1739

7.7.7.7. D. with Refrain

MENDELSSOHN

FELIX MENDELSSOHN, 1840

Arr. by WILLIAM H. CUMMINGS, 1856

*Joyously*

1. Hark, the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;  
2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the Ev - er - last - ing Lord!  
3. Hail, the heaven-born Prince of peace! Hail, the Sun of Right-eous-ness!

Peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"  
Late in time be - hold Him come To the earth from heav - en's home;  
Light and life to all He brings, Risen with heal - ing in His wings.

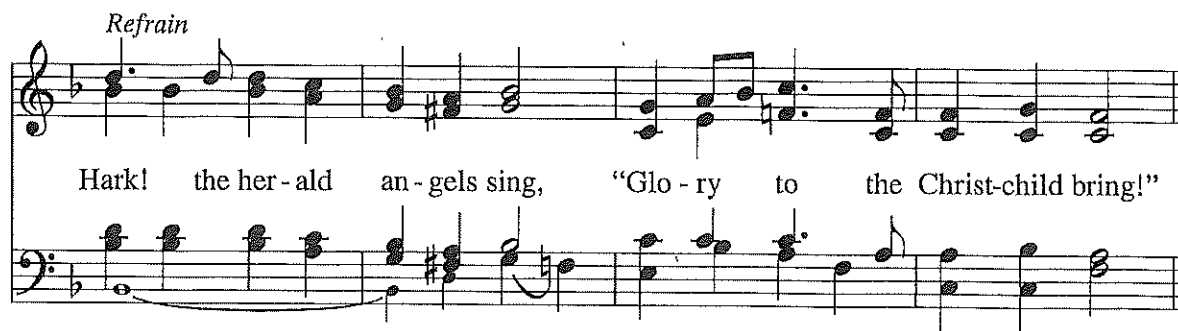
Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see; Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty,  
Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,

With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.

Hark, the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King."  
Hark, the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King."  
Hark, the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King." A-MEN.



*Refrain*



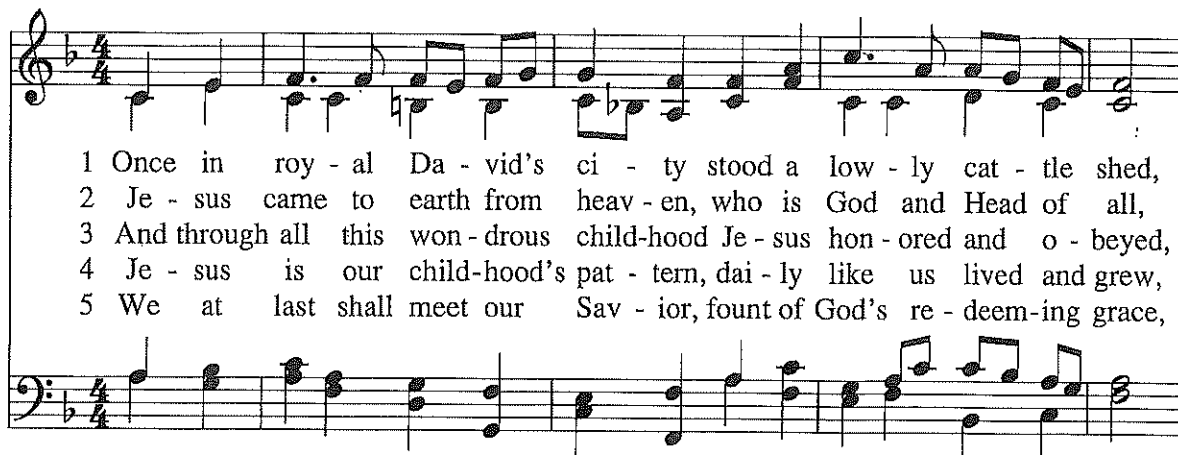
Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo-ry to the Christ-child bring!"

## Once in Royal David's City

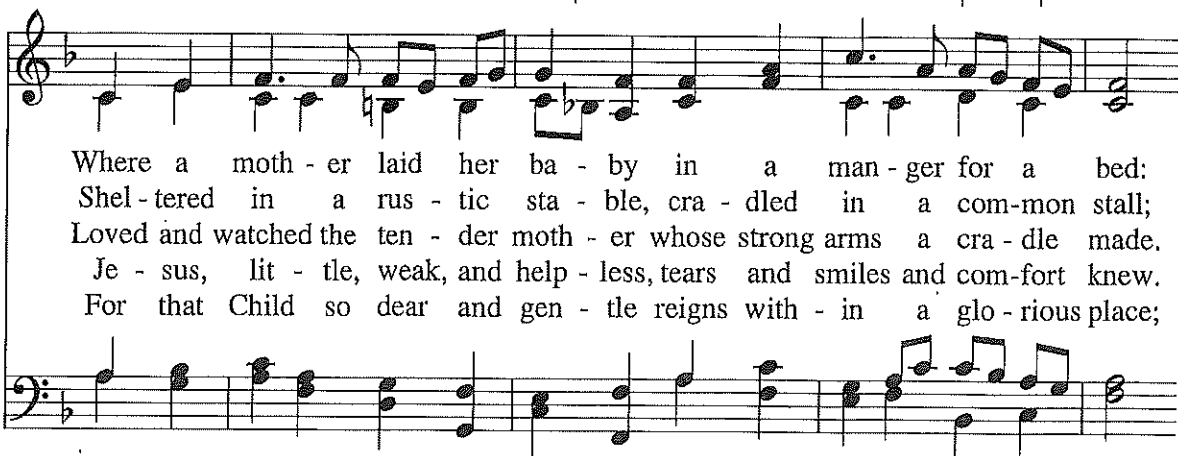
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*Cecil F. Alexander, 1848; alt.*

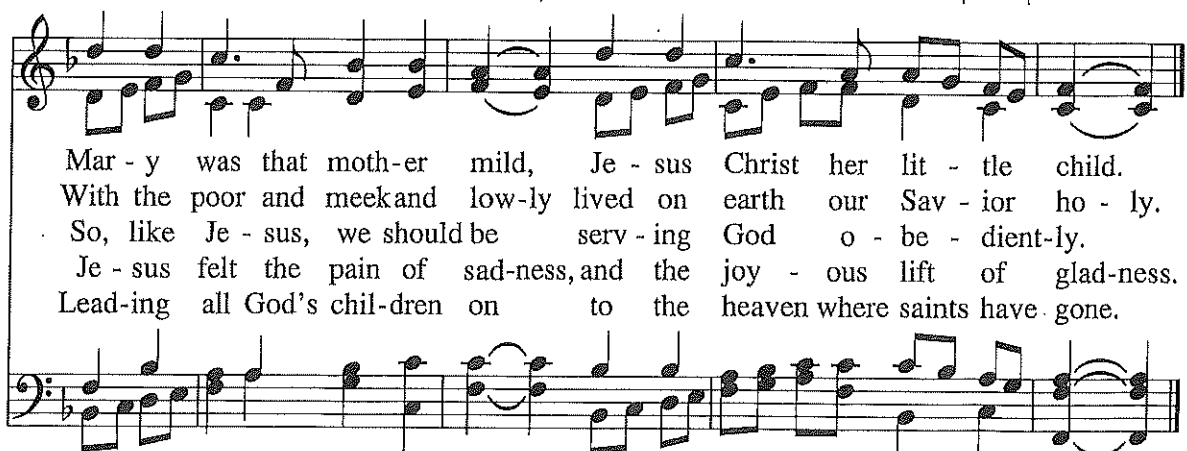
*Luke 1:26-35; 2:1-7; 1 Thess. 4:13-18*



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci - ty stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,  
 2 Je - sus came to earth from heav - en, who is God and Head of all,  
 3 And through all this won - drous child - hood Je - sus hon - ored and o - beyed,  
 4 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern, dai - ly like us lived and grew,  
 5 We at last shall meet our Sav - ior, fount of God's re - deem - ing grace,



Where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for a bed:  
 Shel - tered in a rus - tic sta - ble, cra - dled in a com - mon stall;  
 Loved and watched the ten - der moth - er whose strong arms a cra - dle made.  
 Je - sus, lit - tle, weak, and help - less, tears and smiles and com - fort knew.  
 For that Child so dear and gen - tle reigns with - in a glo - rious place;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.  
 With the poor and meek and low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
 So, like Je - sus, we should be serv - ing God o - be - dient - ly.  
 Je - sus felt the pain of sad - ness, and the joy - ous lift of glad - ness.  
 Lead - ing all God's chil - dren on to the heaven where saints have gone.

*Cecil Frances Alexander, wife of the bishop of Ireland, wrote a series of children's hymns commenting on the Apostles' Creed. This hymn, elaborating on the words "... born of the Virgin Mary," tells the whole life of Christ.*

Tune: IRBY 8.7.8.7.7.7.  
 Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849  
 Harm. A. H. Mann, 1919