

Mt. Zion United Church of Christ
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Rev. Amy E. Northridge, Pastor
Mrs. Amy Peck, Worship Choir Director
Mr. Travis Pinci, Accompanist, Children's Music Coordinator, & Church Administrator

December 29, 2024

9:45 AM

The First Sunday of Christmas: Joy to the World!

Thank you for worshiping with us today. If you are a guest, 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 narthex where your child can relax and play and you can still participate in the worship experience. We have children's books and activity bags for them to enjoy! Additionally, after the children's message, children from 3 years old—6th grade are invited to participate in Sunday school in our classroom downstairs. They can choose to attend Sunday school or return to their seats to sit with their parents. Please see a member of the welcoming team for assistance!

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Gesu Bambino

by Marten

CALL TO WORSHIP¹

L: Later, after the angels, after the stable, after the Child, they went back...

C: as we always must, back to the world that doesn't understand our talk of angels and stars and especially not the Christ Child.

L: We go back complaining that it doesn't last. The stores and radio stations have moved on. They went back singing praises to God!

C: We do have to go back, but we can still sing out joy to the world!

L: Glory to God in the highest!

C: And hope to every discouraged heart.

L: Glory to God in the highest!

C: And peace to every conflicted soul.

L: Glory to God in the highest!

C: And joy to every downcast spirit.

L: Glory to God in the highest!

C: And love to everyone.

L: Let us sing praises to our God.

C: Let us find joy amidst the sorrows.

L: Let us offer this light against the darkness

C: Glory to God in the highest!

***CAROL NO. 102** (red hymnal, see below)

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Hark the Herald Angels Sing (Traditional)

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847

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Piano $\text{♩} = 80$

1. Hark the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the
 2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ the Ev - er -
 3. Hail, the heaven-erborn Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of

4
 new-born King; Peace on earth, and mer cy mild, God and sin ners
 - last - ing Lord! Late in time be - hold him come to the earth from
 Right eous ness! Light and life to all He brings, Risen with heal - ing

8
 rec on ciled!" Joy ful all ye na - tions rise, Join the triumph
 heav-en's home; Veiled in flesh the God head see; Hail the'in car nate
 in His wings. Mild He lays His glo ry by, Born that man no

12
 of the skies; With the'an - gel - ic host pro claim, "Christ is born in
 De i ty, Pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em -
 more may die, Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them

16
 Beth le hem!" Hark the her ald an gels sing, "Glo ry to the new-born King!"
 - man - u - el. Hark the her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King!"
 sec-ond birth. Hark the her ald an gels sing, "Glo ry to the new-born King!"

*TIME OF CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION FOR CHRISTMAS²

L: O God, you search us out and know us, and all that we are is open to you.
We confess that we have sinned.

C: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

L: When we make no room for Christ, and fail to welcome him into our lives,

C: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

L: When we follow shooting stars and squander our gifts in Herod's court,

C: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

L: When we seek to cut down those who might rise above us,

C: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

L: When we sanitize your birth place and erase from memory the poor and displaced,

C: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

L: When we sing sweet sentiments over Christ's birth, and fail to rejoice over his everyday presence,

C: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.

L: We turn to you, O Christ, perfect union of Spirit and flesh;

C: We renounce evil; We claim your love; We choose to be made whole.

L: Let the world rejoice—the Christ child frees us from the weight of sin.

C: Let the joy be known—in Christ we are forgiven! Alleluia! Amen.

*ACT OF PRAISE³

The Debut, to the Tune of Jingle Bells (refrain, v. 2, refrain)

Refrain

ALL SING: In this crowd sing out loud: Glory to the One! God has made things personal by sending us the Son. In this crowd sing out loud: Glory! Allelu! Celebrate the birth of Christ --the day of his debut.

Stanza 2

ALL SING: God's love is for all, there can be no doubt. The poor, the weak, the small--no one is left out! The reason Jesus came: God wanted to be near; God wanted to draw close to us, and that is why we cheer!

Refrain

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 98 (CEB)

CHRISTMAS CAROL SING

AWAY IN A MANGER

ALL SING: Away in a manger no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down where He lay. The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus no crying He makes. I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay close by me forever and love me I pray. Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care and fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

ALL SING (Chorus): Go tell it on the mountain over the hills and ev'rywhere. Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

CHORUS

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo above the earth rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth.

CHORUS

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR (vs. 1, 2, & 4)

ALL SING: It came upon the midnight clear that glorious song of old from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold. Peace on the earth good will to men from heaven's all gracious King. The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings Unfurled and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world. Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing. And ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

For lo the days are hastening on by prophet bards foretold. When with the evercircling years comes round the age of gold. When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling. And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

THE FIRST NOEL (vs. 1 & 6)

ALL SING: The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay. In fields where they lay keeping their sheep on a cold winter's night that was so deep

CHORUS: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell! Born is the King of Israel!

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far. And to the earth it gave great light and so it continued both day and night.

CHORUS: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell! Born is the King of Israel!

SILENT NIGHT (vs. 1 & 4)

ALL SING: 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.

ALL SING: 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!

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION FOR CHRISTMAS⁴

L: God of life, God of new life, by the birth of Jesus you have brought light into our darkness. Shine in our lives. Christ Jesus, by your coming,

C: Set us free for your ministry—let us bring joy to the world.

L: God of life, God of new life, nothing will ever separate us from your love. Give us faith to trust your promise. Christ Jesus, by your coming,

C: Set us free for your ministry—let us bring joy to the world.

L: God of life, God of new life, you call us to serve the hungry, the poor, the lonely and the outcast. Show us how we can respond. Christ Jesus, by your coming,

C: Set us free for your ministry—let us bring joy to the world.

L: God of life, God of new life, Jesus was born into poverty and lived under oppression. Open our eyes to injustice, and inspire us to proclaim your reign. Christ Jesus, by your coming,

C: Set us free for your ministry—let us bring joy to the world.

L: God of life, God of new life, by the birth of Jesus, bring your healing to those in need, especially those we name before you now, aloud or in our hearts.

L: Christ Jesus, by your coming,

C: Set us free for your ministry—let us bring joy to the world.

L: God of life, God of new life, inspire this congregation to reach out beyond our walls, beyond our fears, beyond our past. Help us to welcome your future. Christ Jesus, by your coming,

C: Set us free for your ministry—let us bring joy to the world.

L: God of life, God of new life, by the birth of Jesus you have brought light into our darkness. Shine in our lives. Christ Jesus, by your coming,

C: Set us free for your ministry—let us bring joy to the world.

L: We pray in the name of Jesus, our light, our life, and our hope.

C: Amen.

L: With joy and hope we pray the words our Savior taught us.

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.

A TIME FOR SHARING

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY & DISCIPLESHIP

OFFERTORY CAROL NO. 128 (black hymnal, see below)

In the Bleak Midwinter

In the Bleak Midwinter

Christina Rossetti

Gustav Holst

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano 

1. In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
2. Our God tran - scends all heav - en, earth, and its do - main;
3. An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there,
4. What can I of - fer, poor as I am?

6



earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
heaven and earth shall flee a - way when Christ comes to reign;
cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim thronged the mid - night air;
If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb.

10



Snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed the
But his moth - er on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,
If I were a wise one, I would do my part; but

14



in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
sov - ereign God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.
wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.
what can I of - fer: all my heart.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Joy to the World

Isaac Watts

George Handel

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♩ = 80

Piano

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let
 2. Joy to the earth! The Sa - vior reigns; Let
 3. He rules the world with truth and grace, and

5

earth re - ceive her King; Let ev - ry
 men their songs em - ploy! While fie - lds and
 makes the na - tions prove the glo - ries

9

heart pre - pare Him room and heav'n and na - ture
 floods, rocks, hills and plains re - peat the sound - ing
 of his right - eous ness and won - ders of His

13

sing, and heav'n and na - ture sing, and hea - v'n and
 joy, re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat re -
 love, and won - ders of His love, and won - ders and

17

hea - v'n and na - ture sing.
 - peat the sound - ing joy.
 won - ders of His love.

References

¹The Call to worship is both based on "Later" by Ann Weems and found in the book, "Kneeling in Bethlehem" and adapted from the writings of Joanna Harader, and posted on Spacious Faith. <http://spaciousfaith.com/>. Accessed for use 12/22/24.

²The Christmas Confession was adapted from the writings of Nathan Nettleton on Laughingbird website and accessed for use 12/22/24.

Thank you to all serving in worship this morning!

³The Debut was accessed for use at <https://re-worshipsongs.blogspot.com/2012/11/christmas-song-debut-to-jingle-bells.html> on 12/22/24.

⁴The Prayer of Intercession for Christmas was written by Rick Pryce, and posted on Rick Pryce. <http://rickpryce.wordpress.com/> and accessed for use 12/22/24

⁵The Christmas Blessing is written by Roddy Hamilton, and posted on **Mucky Paws**. <http://www.nkchurch.org.uk/index.php/mucky-paws> and accessed for use 12/22/24

Thank you to Jim Beyer for providing the beautiful cover art for the bulletin.

Thank you to Lee & Patsy Brown for donating our beautiful Christmas tree and the Christmas wreaths!

We also give thanks for the nativity scene at the front of the church. Longtime Mt. Zion member, Dick Koch, built the right side, minus the dome about 40 years ago. Then a bit later... as the inn keeper was more "prosperous," he built the left side. He added the "dome" 15 years ago, and his son Karl reworked the lighting before donating to the church after Dick's passing last winter.

Welcome Team Members—Deb & Terry Barnes, Vanessa Bicher

Liturgists— Brenda Beyer & Stella Fletcher

Tech Team—Jack Herlocker, Paul Ramsey, & Deb Herlocker

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