

Mt. Zion United Church of Christ  
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Rev. Amy E. Northridge, Pastor  
Louis Allison, Tech Director  
Travis Pinci, Accompanist, Children's Music Coordinator, & Church Administrator

December 24, 2025

3:00 PM

### **CHRISTMAS EVE: Yet in The Dark Streets Shineth**

*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.*

*Thank you for worshipping 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! We have children's books and activity bags in the side hallway for them to enjoy! We pray God's blessing upon you. For today's service, we will be using the red & black hymnals.*

### **INSTRUMENTAL OPENING**

#### **CHRISTMAS WELCOME**

**PRELUDE** (sung by Norma Hull & Jen Miller)      *One Small Child*      arr. Emerson

### **ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**      *The First Noel in the setting of J. S. Bach's Minuet*      arr. Tufenkjian  
played by Danny McCracken

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: We look to the night that shines bright with promise; the waiting of Advent has reached its joy.

**C: We gather in celebration, for the light has come at last!**

L: In the glow of this evening, the story unfolds—a child is born, and love takes its first breath among us.

**C: Hope glows, peace shines, joy sparkles, and love burns bright.**

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

**C: Hope glows, peace shines, joy sparkles, and love burns bright.**

L: The Word has become flesh, and God's glory fills the earth.

**C: Glory to God in the highest! Peace and good will to all!**

L: The light that shone in Bethlehem's streets now shines in ours, as we lift our hearts in worship and song.

#### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

L: So together let us pray, God of glory,

**C: we have waited, we have hoped, and now we stand in the glow of your coming. The child of promise has arrived, and joy fills the air. Let the light of this night fill our hearts and spill into the world. You have found us and named us beloved — shine through us, O God. Amen.**

L: The promise has arrived — the light has come. Grace fills this day and glory fills the air. I invite you to stand now as comfortable and for the child of light is born among us. Come, let us adore him.

**\*GATHERING HYMN NO. 112** (red hymnal, see next page)

*O Come All Ye Faithful*



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

# O Come, All Ye Faithful (Traditional)

Tr. Frederick Oakley, 1841

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano

1. O come all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri -  
 2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul -  
 3. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py

5

- um - phant! O come ye O come ye to Beth - le -  
 - ta - tion, sing all ye cit - i - zens of heav'n a -  
 mor - ning Je - sus to thee be all glo - ry

9

- hem! Come and be - hold Him, born the King of  
 - bove: "Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the  
 giv'n; Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap -

13

an - gels; O come let us a - dore Him, O come let us a -  
 high - est;  
 - pear - ing;

17

- dore Him, O come let us a - dore Him Christ the

21

Lord!

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

## **\*PRAYERS OF CELEBRATION**

L: On this night of light and wonder, we pause our songs of praise to lift our hearts in prayer. Let us join together in these Prayers of Celebration, giving thanks for the Light that still shines among us.

L: God of radiant love, on this holy night Your light shines among us.

**C: We celebrate the love that finds us in every shadow and shines through every heart.**

L: God of peace that glows steady and sure, You come into the world not with power, but with presence.

**C: We celebrate Your peace that calms our fears and calls us to be peacemakers in our time.**

L: God of joy that sparkles in the darkness, You gladden the hearts of shepherds and angels alike.

**C: We celebrate the joy You awaken in us and in all who hear good news this night.**

L: God of love that cannot be contained, You choose the smallest places for Your greatest glory.

**C: We celebrate Your light shining in manger and heart alike—in this small place made holy by Your presence.**

L: God of compassion, You come to dwell among those who are weary, waiting, or afraid.

**C: We celebrate Your mercy that meets us here and ask Your healing for all who are in need this night.**

L: God of incarnation, when You became flesh, You made room for us all.

**C: We celebrate Your Kingdom come among us, where hope, peace, joy, and love still shine bright.**

L: God of Christmas, bless us as we once again behold Your glory.

**C: We rejoice that Your light still shines and Your grace still finds us—now and always. Amen.**

L: The angels sang of glory, and their song still echoes through the ages. Let us lift our voices to join their song—the song of joy, peace, and new life—as we sing together, Hark! the Herald Angels Sing.

**\*HYMN OF PRAISE NO. 102** (red hymnal, see next page)

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

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

# 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-born 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  
Righteous 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  
heaven'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 angel - ic host proclaim, "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 angel ssing, "Glo ry to the new-born King!"  
- man - u - el. Hark the her-ald angel ssing, "Glo ry to the new-born King!"  
second birth. Hark the her ald angel ssing, "Glo ry to the new-born King!"

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

## FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7 (CEB)

P: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

**C : Thanks be to God!**

## WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM

*Jesus, What a Wonderful Child*

arr. Dilworth

## SECOND LESSON

Titus 2:11-14 (CEB)

L: The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

## HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 107 (red hymnal, see below)

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

# It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

Richard S. Willis, 1819-1900

Piano  $\text{♩} = 80$

The musical score is written for piano on a single staff in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 80. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are printed below the staff, with line numbers 6, 11, and 16 indicating the start of new lines of music. The score ends with a double bar line.

1. It came up - on the mid-night clear, that glo-ri-ous song of old, From  
2. Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace - ful wings un - furled, and  
3. And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low, Who  
4. For lo, the days are hasten-ing on, by proph - et bards fore - told, when

6  
an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, good  
still their heav-en-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wear - y world; A - bove its sad and  
toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow, Look now! for glad and  
with the ev - er - cir-cling years comes round the age of gold; When peace shall o - ver

11  
will to all, great news of joy we bring." The world in sol - emn still-ness lay, to  
low-ly plains they bend on hov-er-ing wing, And ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the  
gold-en hours come swiftly on the wing; O rest be-side the wea-ry road, and  
all the earth its an-eient splen - dors fling, and all the world send back the song which

16  
hear the an - gels sing.  
bless-ed an - gels sing.  
hear the an - gels sing.  
now the an - gels sing.

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

## GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-20 (CEB)

L: The Word of God for the people of God.

C: Thanks be to God!

## WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM

*He is Born*

by Armstrong

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY NO. 108 (red hymnal, see below)

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

# O Little Town of Bethlehem (Traditional)

Phillips Brooks, 1868

Lewis H. Redner, 1868

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano

1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem how still we see thee  
2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry and gath - ered all a -  
3. How si - lent - ly how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is  
4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us we

5

lie! A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go  
- bove while mortals sleep the an - gels keep their watch of wond'ring  
giv'n! So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the blessings of his  
pray; Cast out our sin and en - ter in, be born in us to -

9

by; Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing  
love. O morning stars to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly  
heav'n. No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of  
- day. We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings

13

Light. The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to -  
birth, and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to all on  
sin, where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christen - ters  
tell; O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Em - man - u -

17

- night.  
earth.  
in.  
- el!

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

## OFFERING

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY & DISCIPLESHIP

OFFERTORY (sung by Caitlin Damon)

*Messiah*

by Battistelli

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

L: God of holy light,

**C: you have entered our world with grace upon grace. Receive these offerings, given with thankful hearts. May they brighten dark corners, comfort the weary, and remind all people that your love has come near. Amen.**

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION & PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

WORDS OF INSTITUTION & CONSECRATION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(sung to the tune of Away in a Manger)

L: And now, as God's children gathered in the light of Christ, let us pray the prayer he taught us, saying:

**ALL: Our Father in heaven, all praise to Your name! Your kingdom among us, your will done the same By mortals and angels, Come, Lord, reign alone; Oh hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for provide us each day; As we forgive others, our sins take away; In times of temptation, to lead us be near; From evil deliver Your children most dear.**

**For Yours is the kingdom; o'er all things Your reign. And Yours is the power; all things You maintain. To You be the glory, resounding again From all of creation, forever! Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

*At Mt. Zion all are welcome to share in Christ's meal. Today, Communion will be distributed by our Welcome Team members and passed down the pews for distribution —first bread, then the cup which is filled with grape juice. Gluten Free wafers are available as desired. We invite you to hold your bread and cup until the community is invited to eat together by the Pastor. Please dispose of your cup after worship.*

*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 on the next page if you'd prefer to use a hymnal.*

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



*The First Noel*, #118 (red hymnal, vs. 1 & 2)  
*Angels We Have Heard on High*, #105 (red hymnal, vs. 1 & 2)  
*Away in a Manger*, #109 (red hymnal, vs. 1 & 2)

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

*O Holy Night*

by Adam

**\*CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS**

L: Tonight the waiting ends, but the wonder begins. The light we've longed for is here—fragile, radiant, real. Still, we come carrying shadows from the year behind us: regrets unspoken, hopes unmet, griefs we still cradle. Yet God's light does not shrink from the dark; it shines within it. Let us join together in confession and forgiveness.

L: God of holy night and heavenly light,

**C: We confess that we forget how near you are. We have rushed through your wonder, and we have not always made room for your love. Forgive us, O God. Meet us in our weariness, in our silence, in our awe. Shine your light into every shadow until all that is broken glimmers with grace. Find us in the dark streets and shine your light, O God. Amen.**

*(Silence)*

P: Hear the good news: The light has come and dwells among us. In Christ, you are forgiven—we all are forgiven--and renewed.

**C: Thanks be to God. Christ's light is here! The light shines, and the darkness cannot overcome it. Amen.**

**\*INVITATION TO THE LIGHT**

*Our Welcome Team members will distribute Christ's light to the ends of the aisle. When passing Christ's light, we ask that lit candles stand tall and steady while unlit candles tip to receive the light.*

\*CAROL (next page)

*Silent Night, Holy Night*



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

# Silent Night

Franz Gruber, 1818

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**Piano**  $\text{♩} = 80$

1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm,  
 2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep-herds quake,  
 3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God,  
 4. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, won-drous star,

all is bright round yon vir - gin mo-ther and child.  
 at the sight; Glo - ries stream from hea-ven a - far,  
 love's pure light; ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face  
 lend thy light, with the an - gels let us sing,

Ho - ly in - fant so ten-der and mild, sleep in heav - en-ly  
 heav - enly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ the Sav - ior is  
 with the dawn of re - dee - ming grace, Je - sus Lord at thy  
 Al - le - lu - ia to our King; Christ the Sav - ior is

peace, born, sleep in heav - en-ly peace.  
 born. Christ the Sav - ior is born.  
 birth, Je - sus Lord at thy birth.  
 born, Christ the Sav - ior is born.

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

**\* PROCLAMATION OF JOY**

P: The light of Christ now shines in every heart that has made room.

L: What began in stillness now bursts forth in song.

P: The waiting is over; the joy has come.

**C: The Light of Christ shines within us and around us! Glory to God in the highest!**

L : Let us proclaim it—

**C: Joy to the World!**

**\*SENDING HYMN NO. 120** (red hymnal, see next page)

*Joy to the World*

**\*BENEDICTION**

L: As you leave this holy day, carry the light that has found you here—bright enough to guide your way, warm enough to fill your heart, and radiant enough to shine through you for all to see. May Christ's love dwell within you, God's grace go before you, and the Spirit's light surround you. Go in peace, and may the Light of Christ go with you—shining before you, within you, and through you.

**C: Amen.**

**POSTLUDE**

*Joy to the World*

Traditional

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

# *Merry Christmas to All!*

**Welcome Team & Communion Servers:** Jennifer Damon, Faye Heal, Charlie Hull, Alex & Michelle Kollasch, Barb Stebbins

**Guest Preacher:** Rev. Susan Emmons

**Liturgist:** Jen Miller

**Tech Team:** Deb Herlocker, Jack Herlocker, & John Kollasch

Thank you to our Advent Team: Elaine Bevivino, Deb Herlocker, Lana Fritz, Cindy Hogentogler, & Melody Stine for arranging the beautiful decorations in our sanctuary!

Thank you to Braden Bicher, Jack Bicher, Debbie Butcher, Hayden Dallam, Caitlin Damon, Norma Hull, Alex Kollasch, Christian Maletz, Danny McCracken, Scott McCracken, Sean McCracken, Jen Miller & 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.

Thank you to Jim Beyer for creating the beautiful art for our bulletin cover!

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 2026 offering envelopes** if you haven't already done so. They are on the table in the west narthex. All 2025 contributions must be received at the church on or before December 28th, 2025 in order to get credited to your 2025 giving statements.

**Mt. Zion is Streaming!** This service will be posted on the Mt. Zion website at: [www.mtzionucc.org/live](http://www.mtzionucc.org/live), with both a live feed (during the actual service) and a version you can watch later.

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