

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

December 24, 2025

7:00 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.

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

CHRISTMAS WELCOME

SPECIAL MUSIC	<i>Jingle Bells</i>	played by Jack Bicher
	<i>Deck the Halls</i>	played by Hayden McCarthy
	<i>Away in a Manger</i>	sung by Nova Ramsey
	<i>Silent Night</i>	sung by Olivia Abbott
	<i>Joy to the World</i>	played by Addie Bickleman
	<i>Allegro</i>	played by Elliot Stine

HOLY DINGALINGS

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Traditional

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: The waiting is nearly over, yet the wonder remains.

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

P: We have searched and listened and leaned toward this moment.

C: Now the light finds us — here, in this place.

P: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace.

C: We have found your light in the darkness, and it shines still.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: God of glory,

C: we have waited, we have searched, and now we stand in the glow of your coming. The child of promise has arrived, and still the wonder takes our breath away. Let the light of this night fill our hearts and spill into the world. You have found us in the dark streets — shine through us, O God. Amen.

P: The promise has arrived — the light has come. Glory fills the night and grace fills the air. Stand now as comfortable and let us join the choirs of angels in song, for the child of light is born among us. Come, let us adore him.

CAROL 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.

***LITANY OF PRAISE**

L: As we gather to adore and praise the Christ child, we continue in celebration—as we join in a litany of praise all are invited to ring their bells each time we read the song of the angels: “Glory to God in the highest!”

L: On a night like this, when the world was dark and still, a baby was born, and the quiet of that night was broken as the angels sang:

C: Glory to God in the highest! God’s light has come!

L: On a night like this, when the stars lit up the sky, their light spilled over the dark streets of Bethlehem, and the quiet of that night was broken as the angels sang:

C: Glory to God in the highest! God’s light has come!

L: On a night like this, when shepherds watched in the shadows, the sky blazed bright with good news, and the quiet of that night was broken as the angels sang:

C: Glory to God in the highest! God’s light has come!

L: On a night like this, when God’s love took on tiny hands and feet, the darkness was filled with light, and the quiet of that night was broken as the angels sang:

C: Glory to God in the highest! God’s light has come!

L: On this night, right here where we stand, God’s light still shines in our world and in our hearts. So we break the silence again as our voices sing:

C: Glory to God in the highest! God’s light has come!

L: Let us join the angels’ song, singing *Angels We Have Heard on High!*

CAROL NO. 105 (red hymnal, see next page)

Angels We Have Heard on High

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Angels We Have Heard on High (Traditional)

$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano

1. An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing
 2. Shepherds why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous
 3. Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the

4
 o'er the plains, and the mountains in re - ply ech - o - ing their
 strains pro - long? What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your
 an - gels sing; Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee, Christ the Lord, the

8
 joy - ous strains Glo -
 heav'n - ly song?
 new - born King.

12
 ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo -

16
 ri - a, in ex - cel - sis

20
 De - o.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

TELLING GOD’S STORY

Luke 2:1-20 (CEB)

CHILDREN’S CHOIR

Joy! Sing and Shout!

FAMILY CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Deb Herlocker

CHILDREN’S CHOIR

Go Tell It on the Mountain

OFFERTORY

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY & DISCIPLESHIP

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

PRAYER OF DEDICATION & PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: God of light and love, thank you for the gifts we bring tonight—for coins, for kindness, for hearts that shine with joy. Bless what we offer and use it to brighten the world you love. Let these gifts be like candles, glowing in dark streets and quiet hearts everywhere.

C: Let your light shine through us, O God.

P: For families gathered near and far, for those who share this night in homes, hospitals, and shelters, and for every person who longs to feel your peace—

C: Let your light shine through us, O God.

P: For children all around the world who fall asleep tonight dreaming of warmth and wonder, and for grown-ups who still need hope—

C: Let your light shine through us, O God.

P: For our earth, wrapped in winter’s quiet, for creatures great and small, and for the care of your creation—

C: Let your light shine through us, O God.

P: For those who are lonely, sad, or missing someone tonight, may your love hold them close like the glow of a candle’s flame.

C: Let your light shine through us, O God.

P: For your church, O God—for this family of faith and all who gather across the world—may our words, our songs, and our lives reflect your joy and peace.

C: Let your light shine through us, O God.

P: And now, as the angels once sang over Bethlehem, we lift our hearts and voices together, saying:

C: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill to all. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC (sung by Caitlin Damon)

Messiah

by Battistelli

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

TIME OF COMMUNION³

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

L: Holy God, we give you thanks for your love that shines brighter than every star. In the beginning, your voice spoke light into the darkness. In Bethlehem, your Word became flesh and lived among us. In every time and place, your Spirit still glows within us. So on this holy night, we remember the story that begins in a stable and continues here at this table. With grateful hearts, we join the song of the angels:

C: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth!

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

L: And so, we remember this gift of love and light as we pray together the prayer Jesus 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.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

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 below if you'd prefer to use a hymnal.

What Child is This, #148 (black hymnal)

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

Away in a Manger, #109 (red hymnal)

*USHERING IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

L: On this holy night, God's light shines again—in our hearts, in our world, in every dark street and quiet place.

C: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness shall not overcome it.

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

P: Tonight, we remember the light of hope—the promise that even in waiting, God is near.

C: We carry the light of hope!

L: We remember the light of peace—the stillness that settles even in the midst of noise.

C: We carry the light of peace!

P: We remember the light of joy—the laughter that grows from love and grace.

C: We carry the light of joy!

L: We remember the light of love—the warmth that began in a manger and fills the world even now.

C: We carry the light of love!

P: And so, as light spreads from candle to candle, from heart to heart, we remember that Christ's story is not over—it lives in us and shines through us.

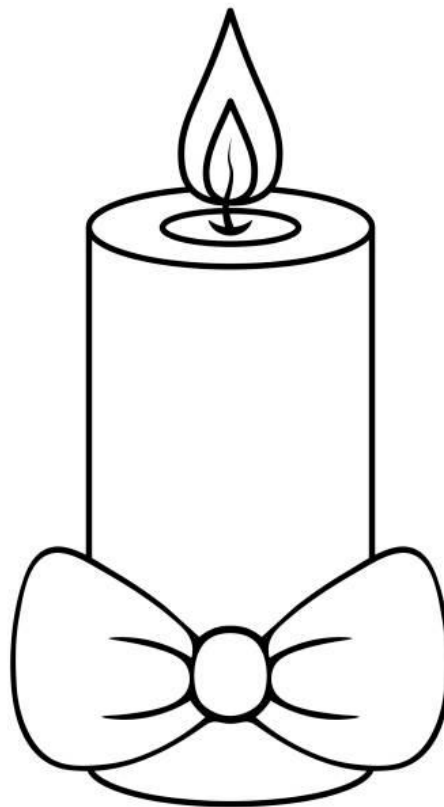
C: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness shall not overcome it!

L: As we share the light of Christ, let us lift our voices together in the carol that has carried this promise through generations—

***HYMN OF LIGHT** (see next page)

Silent Night, Holy Night

*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.*



*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Silent Night

Franz Gruber, 1818

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$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano

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,

4

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,

7

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

10

peace,	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**

L: The night grows bright, and the story bursts open! The baby in the manger is no longer sleeping—the light of Christ is awake in the world!

C: Joy to the world! The Lord is come!

P: The quiet of the night turns to songs of gladness, the stillness to ringing and rejoicing—for God’s love has come to dwell with us!

C: Joy to the world! The Lord is come!

L: So let every heart prepare Him room, and let heaven and nature sing!

C: Let heaven and nature sing!

P: I invite you to blow out your candles as light fills the room, and lift your bells high and ring them with joy, as together we sing of the light and love that now shine for all the world—

***SENDING HYMN** (see next page)

Joy to the World

***BENEDICTION & SENDING**

P: On this night when light has shone in the darkness, and songs of joy have filled the air, we go now as people who have heard good news—news too wonderful to keep quiet.

L: Wherever you go, may the light of hope guide you, the peace of Christ surround you, the joy of the Spirit overflow in you, and the love of God hold you close.

P: And now, with hearts full and bells ready, let’s end where the angels began—by giving all glory to the One who has come among us.

L: Ring your bells, church, and say it with me—

C: Glory to God in the highest! God’s light has come!

L: Again!

C: Glory to God in the highest! God’s light has come!

L: One more time—so all the world can hear!

C: Glory to God in the highest— God’s light has come!

P: Merry Christmas, beloved children of God. Go forth and let God’s light shine through you! Amen.

POSTLUDE

Joy to the World

Traditional

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Joy to the World

Isaac Watts

George Handel

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$\text{♩} = 80$

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.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Merry Christmas to All!

Welcome Team & Communion Servers: Hayden, Katelyn, & Macey McCarthy, Cassidy & Nova Ramsey

Guest Preacher: Rev. Susan Emmons

Liturgist: Deb Herlocker

Tech Team: Jack Herlocker

Thank you to Elliot, Maggie, & Melody Stine for creating our bulletin cover!

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 Olivia Abbott, Jack Bicher, Addie Bickleman, Caitlin Damon, Hayden McCarthy, Daniel McCracken, Sean McCracken, Nova Ramsey, Elliot Stine, the Holy Dingalings, and the Children's Choir for enhancing tonight's worship with their talents.

Thank you to Patsy & Lee Brown, of Brown's Tree Farm, for donating our Christmas tree and wreaths.

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, with both a live feed (during the actual service) and a version you can watch later.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.