

ORDER OF WORSHIP

DECEMBER 24, 2024

5:00 P.M.

Welcome to Worship at the Ellington Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. We're happy to have you with us this morning. If you are visiting and would like to receive more information about our church, please fill out an "I Wish" card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate during the Offertory time.

Our Church Mission Statement

*To be a dynamic and nurturing community
called by God's grace
to know Christ and make Him known
through worship, love, and service.*

Adopted September 15, 2019

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
CHILDREN'S MESSAGE
SENIOR CHOIR CANTATA
SENIOR BELL CHOIR
CANDLELIGHTING

"AND SHE GAVE BIRTH TO HER FIRSTBORN SON AND WRAPPED HIM IN SWADDLING CLOTHS, AND LAID HIM IN A MANGER ..." LUKE 2:7

PRELUDE Bell Choir
On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

WELCOME

One: The bells have pealed out the announcement of Jesus' birth.

All: Glory to God in the highest!

*All who are able, please stand.

GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP** adapted from Hymn # 146
From Heaven Above

One: Jesus came from heaven to earth to bring good news to everyone!

All: Jesus still brings glad tidings of great joy to all the world. Let the world respond with songs and endless music!

One: This night a child was born of Mary, God-chosen virgin.

All: This newborn child of lowly birth will be the joy and the hope of peace for all the earth!

One: He is Jesus, the Christ, God's beloved Son and our Savior.

All: We sing: "Glory to God in the highest heaven and a glad new year to all the earth." Let us worship Christ, the newborn king!

We are blessed to worship God with thanksgiving and joy!

*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

***OPENING HYMN** Chalice Hymnal #148
O Come All Ye Faithful

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

~ The Christ Candle Litany is being read and the Christ Candle lit by Lenora Williams and Amos Smith ~

One: We relight the Advent candles of hope, peace, joy, and love. *(Pause for the Relighting.)*

All: The Advent candles form a circle of light that reminds us of God's never-ending love.

One: The Advent waiting is over.

All: The dreaming has given birth to a new reality.

One: The source of our healing has come.

*All who are able, please stand.

All: God's promise has been fulfilled.

One: Now we light the Christ candle, remembering that Jesus is in our midst today and always.

(The Christ candle is lit.)

All: Thank you, God, for coming to be with us in the form of Jesus. We rejoice that he lived as one of us, knew our joys and sorrows, our pains and hopes and dreams. As he came to show your love to us, help us to show your love to others all the year through. Amen.

HYMN

Chalice Hymnal #128 (vs. 5)

One Candle Is Lit



***UNISON PRAYER**

All: On this Christmas Eve, Holy God, you reveal to us once again in the eyes of our children, in the hopes of our adults, and in the wisdom of our seniors, that the Word is continually made flesh to dwell among us. Your light shines in our midst. Grant us the grace to see it, perceive it, and celebrate it! All glory is yours, now and forever. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI**

Chalice Hymnal #153 (vs. 4)

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

**For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold;
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.**

*All who are able, please stand.

***GREETING ONE ANOTHER WITH THE PEACE AND LOVE OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST JESUS**

ENGAGING THE WORD

ANTHEM

Bell Choir

Manger Lullaby

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

MESSAGE IN SONG (see insert)

Senior Choir

Unto Us a Child is Born: A Christmas Journey

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

PASTORAL PRAYER and THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

**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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

CHRISTMAS CAROL RESPONSE

Chalice Hymnal #150

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

It has been our tradition to designate The Christmas Offering for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. This fund is used to meet the special needs of local individuals and families. We invite you to share the joy of Christ's love through your generous gifts.

OFFERTORY

*All who are able, please stand.

***DOXOLOGY**

Chalice Hymnal #162 (vs. 3)

What Child Is This

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
come, rich, and poor, to own him,
the King of kings salvation brings,
let loving hearts enthrone him.

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

***UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

All: Loving God, on this Christmas Eve night, we give you
our treasure and, in discipleship, will make sure that we use
these gifts to help one another and our neighbor. Thank
you for our many blessings and your eternal love. Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

THE ASSURANCE OF ETERNAL LIGHT

Pew Bible NT p. #91

LP Pew Bible NT p. #129

John 1:1-5

THE LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS

During the singing of ***Silent Night*** the light from the Christ
candle will gradually and gently illuminate the church. For
safety reasons at this 5:00 pm. service, children have been
given battery operated candles. Please remain seated while
we sing ***Silent Night***.

CAROL (seated)

Chalice Hymnal #145

(*Dave Robert ~ violin, Juliane LaRocca*)

Silent Night, Holy Night

*All who are able, please stand.

***UNISON CHRISTMAS PRAYER**

All: Glorious God, greater than all that we can imagine and
infinitely more vast than the universe you are still creating,
we ask that you come to us once more in the simplicity and
the splendor of a baby, the amazing wonder of new life. No
matter what our circumstances, we will strive to allow the
stirring of hope to work within us and among us so that the
world may be transformed in the image of Christ. May we
respond with amazement and eagerness to share the
wonder we experience here. In Christ Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

DEPARTING WITH THE SPLENDOR AND LOVE OF CHRISTMAS

***CAROL**

Chalice Hymnal #143

Joy to the World

EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES

CHORAL BENEDICTION (seated)

A Child is Born in Bethlehem

POSTLUDE

Juliane LaRocca

Fantasia on Joy to the World

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

THANKS

Deacons: Laurie Hazelton, Melissa Roland

Ushers: Cassie Miller, Sharon Senk, Jol Sprowles

Bell Choir Members

Senior Choir Members

Trumpet: Ken Bell

Violin: Dave Robert

*All who are able, please stand.

Candlelight Communion Service

10:00 pm. this evening

Please join us for a
Service of Lessons and Carols
Sunday, December 29, 2024
10:00 am.

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From Heaven Above

WORDS: Martin Luther, 1535; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, 1978, alt.

MUSIC: Valentin Shumann's *Geistliche Leier*, 1539

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O Come, All Ye Faithful

WORDS: John Francis Wade, 1743; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841, and others

MUSIC: John Francis Wade, 1743; desc. David Willcocks, 1961

Desc. ©1961, Oxford University Press

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One Candle Is Lit

WORDS: Mary Anne Parrott, 1988

MUSIC: William J. Kirkpatrick, 1895

Words © 1995 Chalice Press

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Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt.

MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. William H. Cummings, 1856; desc. Paul

Liljestrang

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