United Church on the Green
Candlelight Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols
December 24th, 2021
6:00PM (Musical Prelude at 5:30PM)
Welcome to United Church and to this Christmas Eve candlelight service.

In this season of long nights and short days, of cold air and busy schedules, we gather tonight to be reminded that it is into just such a context as this that God appears, dwelling in the vulnerability of a newborn baby, yet with the power to make all things new. In the presence of friends, may we find warmth. In the light of candles, may we find hope. In the familiarity of carols, may we find comfort. In the power of ancient story, may we find meaning and purpose for our lives.

No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are invited and welcome here.

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**PRELUDE**

*Nun komm der Heiden Heiland, variations*  
Hugo Distler  
*Caesar Storlazzi, organ*

*Veni, Veni Emmanuel*  
arr. Todd Marchand

*What Is This Lovely Fragrance?*  
trad. French Carol, arr. Todd Marchand  
*Colonial Brass Quintet*

*Trio Sonata*  
George Frideric Handel  
*Olav van Hezewijk and Marta Boratgis, oboes*

*In Dulci Jubilo*  
Johann Sebastian Bach  
*Caesar Storlazzi, organ*

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**WORDS OF WELCOME**  
Rev. Kevin Ewing

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**CAROL**  
ADESTE FIDELES

*O Come All Ye Faithful*

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O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come, ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold him, born the King of Angels:  

*Refrain*

O come, let us adore him.  
O come, let us adore him.  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

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Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above.  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest:  

*Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,  
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;  
Word of creation, now in flesh appearing:  

*Refrain*
CALL TO WORSHIP
One: Light looked down and saw darkness.
Many: "I will go there," said Light.
One: Peace looked down and saw war.
Many: "I will go there," said Peace.
One: Love looked down and saw hatred.
Many: "I will go there," said Love.
One: And so the Lord of Light came down;
Many: The Prince of Peace crept in beside us;
One: The Soverign of Love made a home in our hearts.
Many: The Creator of Heaven and Earth set aside eternity and chose mortality;
One: The Almighty One came among us in the vulnerability of a newborn baby.
Many: Thanks and praise to our Emmanuel, God-with-us even now, making all things new!

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE
The Peterman Family
Voice 1: Love-shine, your moment has come. In the dark of the womb you waited. Bathed in the balm of the star, you rest. Into a world sorely in need of your light, you are born.
Voice 2: When you knock on our door looking for room, may we welcome you. Like the herald of your birth, call us to share your good news first with those who are poor, excluded, and afraid.
Both: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot put it out.
Voice 1: The love of heaven has come to Earth.
Voice 2: The call of Christ begins in a baby’s cry. Listen and respond.
Both: We light the Christ candle. May it light the way.

GATHERING PRAYER and THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR
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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE
The Prophecy
Alfred Forino, Reader
Isaiah 11:1-9

CHOIR
No Sad Thought (from Hodie)
Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

No sad thought his soul affright,
Sleep it is that maketh night;
Let no murmur nor rude wind
To his slumbers prove unkind:
But a quire of angels make
His dreams of heaven, and let him wake
To a joyful, peaceful earth
Given us upon this birth.

Promise fills the sky with light,
Stars and angels dance in flight;
Joy of heaven shall now unbind
Evil’s chains from humankind,
Love and joy their power shall break,
And for a new born prince’s sake;
Never since the world began
Such a light such dark did span.
CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O Little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
as those of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.

For Christ is born of Mary;
and gather'd all above,
while mortals sleep the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars together
proclaim the Holy Birth;
And praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

ST. LOUIS

TRIO

Sheep May Safely Graze
Johann Sebastian Bach
Olav van Hezewijk and Marta Boratgis, oboes

CAROL

Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming
ES IST EIN ROS

SCRIPTURE

The Annunciation
Kathryn Thomas, Reader

TRIO

Sheep May Safely Graze
Johann Sebastian Bach
Olav van Hezewijk and Marta Boratgis, oboes

SCRIPTURE

Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming
ES IST EIN ROS

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
as those of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the Rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,
the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.

SCRIPTURE

The Birth
George Peterman, Reader

Luke 2:1-7
CHOIR  

A Maiden Most Gentle  

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing;  
Of Mary the mother of Jesus our King.  
Ave Maria.  

Ave Maria.  

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing;  
Of Mary the mother of Jesus our King.  
Ave Maria.  

Three kings came to worship with gifts rich and rare,  
And marvelled in awe at the babe in her care.  
Ave Maria.  

Three kings came to worship with gifts rich and rare,  
And marvelled in awe at the babe in her care.  
Ave Maria.  

Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray;  
Sing praise to the Saviour, sing endless ‘Ave’.  
Ave Maria.  

Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray;  
Sing praise to the Saviour, sing endless ‘Ave’.  
Ave Maria.  

The Archangel Gabriel foretold by his call  
The Lord of Creation, and Saviour of all.  
Ave Maria.  

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The Lord of Creation, and Saviour of all.  
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The Archangel Gabriel foretold by his call  
The Lord of Creation, and Saviour of all.  
Ave Maria.  

CAROL  

Away in a Manger  

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
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.  

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
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.  

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.  

SCRIPTURE  

The Shepherds  

Leslie French, Reader  

Luke 2:8-20  

VOLUNTARY  

The Sussex Carol  

Colonial Brass Quintet  

arr. Richard Price  

CAROL  

Angels We Have Heard on High  

Angels we have heard on high  
sweetly singing o’er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply  
echo back their joyous strains.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be,  
which inspire your heavenly song.  
Refrain  

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be,  
which inspire your heavenly song.  
Refrain  

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Christ whose birth the angels sing;  
come adore on bended knee  
Christ, the Lord, the new-born King.  
Refrain  

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Christ whose birth the angels sing;  
come adore on bended knee  
Christ, the Lord, the new-born King.  
Refrain
CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Continuing United’s long-standing tradition of designating our Christmas Eve offering to community groups whose work reflects our mission priorities, the Service and Justice Ministry Team has selected IRIS- Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services of New Haven, to receive this year’s Christmas offering. IRIS is our new partner in outreach to our community as they now occupy many of the spaces previously used by the United Community Nursery School. Please consider sending a donation to this special offering by going to: http://unitednewhaven.org/donate-to-our-church

Thank you for supporting the families of IRIS. For more information about IRIS and their programs, go to www.IRISCT.org

CHOIR

The Blessed Son of God

R. Vaughan Williams

The blessed son of God only
In a crib full poor did lie;
With our poor flesh and our poor blood
Was clothed that everlasting good.
Kyrieleison. (Lord have mercy.)

The Lord Christ Jesu, God's son dear,
Was a guest and a stranger here;
Us for to bring from misery,
That we might live eternally.

Text by Miles Coverdale (1488-1568) after Martin Luther

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

As the glowsticks are distributed, please pass them along your row so that everyone may share the light.
**CHOIR**

*The Wexford Carol*

Brian Robinson, solo

arr. John Rutter

(b. 1945)

Good people all, this Christmas time,
Consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us has done
In sending his beloved son
With Mary holy we should pray,
To God with love this Christmas Day
In Bethlehem upon that morn,
There was a blessed Messiah born.

The night before that happy tide,
The noble Virgin and her guide
Were long time seeking up and down
To find a lodging in the town.
But mark right well what came to pass
From every door repelled, alas,
As was foretold, their refuge all
Was but a humble ox's stall.

Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep
Their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep
To whom God's angel did appear
Which put the shepherds in great fear

PRAYER

Rev. Kevin Ewing

**CAROL**

*Silent 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.
BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE  Comfort, Comfort Ye My People
Colonial Brass Quintet
arr. Todd Marchand

Go in peace. Merry Christmas!

WORSHIP LEADERS

The Rev. Kevin Ewing, interim pastor
Caesar T. Storlazzi, director of music

THE UNITED CHURCH CHOIR

SOPRANO
Anneliese Klenetsky*
Kathryn Thomas

ALTO
Judith Carlson
Cindy Du
Julia Blue Raspe*

TENOR
Jane Jervis
Dennis Titley
Lawrence Zukoff

BASS
Daniel Rausch
Brian Robinson*

*denotes section leader

COLONIAL BRASS QUINTET

Steven Perrett, trumpet
Jens Larsen, trumpet
Kathy Morse, French horn
George Sanders, trombone
David Raposo, tuba

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Marta Boratgis, oboe
Olav van Hezewijk, oboe

CHRISTMAS EVE READERS

Miranda Bailey-Russomano, Alfred Forino, Leslie French, Scott Hawkins,
George Peterman, and Kathryn Thomas

United Church on the Green is a theologically progressive, justice seeking, LGBTQ affirming, racially diverse, spiritually eclectic, extravagantly welcoming Christian community seeking to love God and love our neighbors. Our congregation has been living this mission together since 1742, including the Amistad incident, the abolitionist movement, the Black Panther trials, divestment in South Africa, the Occupy movement, and more. We have been Open and Affirming of LGBTQ folks since 1989. We believe that God is still speaking, and we bring both our faith and our questions as we seek to listen for God's voice and follow in Jesus' way of peace, justice, mercy, compassion, and joy.

We worship every Sunday at 10:00 am in our historic meeting house at the corner of Temple & Elm. Church school and child care provided.

Find sermon videos and more online: www.unitednewhaven.org or Facebook @unitednewhaven