

**DENNIS UNION CHURCH, UCC**  
an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

**December 24, 2024**

**7:30 p.m.**

*In essentials, unity. In nonessentials, liberty. In all things, charity.  
(Early disciples' motto, attributed to Rupertus Melonius)*

Bells Toll the Hour

Prelude

"Pastoral 'Gesú Bambino' "

Pietro Yon

Christmas Greeting

\*Call to Worship<sup>1</sup>

Sing a new song to the Holy One! Emmanuel reigns!!

**Mighty God, we gather to consider your marvelous works.**

Sing a new song to the Holy One! Emmanuel reigns!!

**Wonderful Counselor, we gather to delight in your revelation.**

Sing a new song to the Holy One! Emmanuel reigns!!

**Prince of Peace, we gather to become messengers of your good news.**

\*Carol

"Joy to the World"

Hymn #143

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.*

*Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.*

\*Invocation

**Eternal God, in the birth of Jesus you have come to us in grace.**

**You have made a place among us to accompany us,**

**to save us, to re-create us in your image.**

**Grant that, being born in our hearts, Christ may give us life by  
the power of your Spirit, so that we may always live according  
to your delight. Amen.**

Because injustice and despair threaten to overwhelm us, we pray for hope...  
**Because so many swords have not yet been remade into ploughshares,  
 we pray for peace...**

Because grief and loss weigh so heavily, we pray for joy...  
**Because hatred is still so strong, and because people  
 all over the world are suffering, we pray for love.**

God has come to us as a child, to dwell with us, and to walk with us.

Choral Response "Christ, Be Our Light"

*Choir: Many the gifts, many the people,  
 many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
 Let us be servants to one another,  
 making your kingdom come.*

**Congregation:**  
*Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.  
 Shine through the darkness.  
 Christ, be our light!  
 Shine in your church gathered today.*

Melody

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the dark - ness.

G Dsus4 D Em Em7/D C Am7 D G Am7/G G

Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gath-ered to - day.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major. The first staff is the melody with lyrics: "Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the dark - ness." The second staff shows the guitar accompaniment with chords: G, Dsus4, D, Em, Em7/D, C, Am7, D, G, Am7/G, G. The lyrics for the second staff are: "Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gath-ered to - day." There is a fermata over the final G chord.

May the light and the fire from these candles burn away whatever would prevent the God of hope and peace and joy and love from being born within and among us tonight.

**Friends, on this night we remember, Christ is our light that shines in our hearts and shines through the darkness. The darkness will not overcome it. Thanks be to God!**

**Festival of Lessons and Carols**

Anthem

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

G. Holst

Hebrew Scripture

Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7  
*God's Faithfulness Redeemed*

Patti Goyette

Contemporary Reading

“Blessed are you who bear the light” by Jan Richardson<sup>2</sup>

Carol

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

Hymn #148

***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; O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!***

***Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all you citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!***

Hebrew Scripture

Micah 5:2, 4-5a

Jim Sherman

*The Ruler from Bethlehem*

Carol

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Hymn #144

***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.***

***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 God, Emmanuel.***

Anthem

“Wither’s Rocking Hymn”

R. V. Williams

First Gospel Reading

Luke 1: 26-38

Shannon Goheen

*Mary’s Encounter*

Contemporary Reading

“Gabriel’s Annunciation” by Jan Richardson

Carol

“When God Is a Child”

Hymn #132

***Hope is a star that shines in the night, leading us on till the morning is bright.  
When God is a child there’s joy in our song. The last shall be first  
and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be afraid.***

***Love is a flame that burns in our heart. Jesus has come and will never depart.  
When God is a child there’s joy in our song. The last shall be first  
and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be afraid.***

Second Gospel Reading

Matthew 1: 18-24

Joe Hesse

*Joseph’s Dream*

Contemporary Reading

“Joseph’s Dream” by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Anthem

“Gentle Mary”  
From “Carols of the Manger” in “Canticle of Joy”

Joseph Martin

Third Gospel Reading

Luke 2: 1-20  
*The Glory of the Lord Revealed*

Mary Czajkowski

\*Carol

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Hymn #155

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

***Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav’mly song?  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!***

Christmas Offering

Anthem

“Sleeps Judea Fair”

H. MacKinnon

Christmas Prayer and Proclamation

The Distribution of the Light

\*Carol:

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Choir: *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.*

Congregation:

***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.***

***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!***

\*Benediction

Postlude

“In Dulci Jubilo”

J.S. Bach

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**\*Please stand in body or spirit.**

Music reproduced with permission: *One License #8-730116*. Candle lighting liturgy adapted from [saltproject.org](http://saltproject.org).<sup>1</sup> Written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister of Worship & Theology, United Church of Christ; <sup>2</sup>From *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessing for the Seasons*, [www.janrichardson.com](http://www.janrichardson.com); <sup>3</sup>From [www.journeywithjesus.net](http://www.journeywithjesus.net); also [www.janrichardson.com](http://www.janrichardson.com); <sup>4</sup> [www.unfoldinglight.com](http://www.unfoldinglight.com).

### **We welcome everyone to worship on this Christmas Eve!**

Visitors, please fill out a guest card from the pew rack and place it in our offering plate so we can acknowledge your visit.

We hope you will join us again for Sunday worship at 10 am each week, either in-person or online at [www.duchurch.org](http://www.duchurch.org).

Please feel free to contact the church at 508-385-3543 if you have any concerns, prayer requests or desire a pastoral call.

Deacon: Earl Springer      Ushers: Dennis & Patti Goyette

Thanks to our readers, candlelighters and choir members for their participation in tonight's service.

**Our Christmas offering tonight will be allocated to the Christmas Fund, a program of the United Church of Christ that assists active and retired clergy and lay employees and to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund to provide for local requests for aid and assistance.**

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### *Donations for Christmas poinsettias*

In memory of William N. Bacon and Jane H. Bacon  
With love, Carol, Megan, Christ, Julia, Willa and Punky

In memory of our parents Helen & Gordon Berrien and Edith & Edward Derby  
Judy & Peter Berrien

In honor of family and friends  
Renny & Dottie Damon

In memory of Edna M. and Robert C. Eldred  
Mary Ann Eldred

In memory of our parents  
Dennis & Patti Goyette

In memory of Rev. Ken Landall  
from his family

In memory of Helen McHugh, Gene & Jeanette Wright and John Wright  
Nancy & Mike McHugh

In honor of the amazing leadership and staff of our beloved DUC congregation  
Cal & Karen Mutti

In memory of David and Gayle Williams  
Elaine & Peter Simoneau

In memory of our parents  
Geoffrey & Jane Wilson

Honoring the Ministry and Life of Reverend Lyle Ashby  
Emily Woudenberg

*Additional gifts from Marilyn Archibald, George & Glenna Cappola and the Flower Committee*

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