

CHRISTMAS EVE



Thursday, December 24, 2009, 6:00 pm

Central Congregational Church
hope church

CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE

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GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome

Gathering Music

“O Come O Come Emmanuel”

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's deep shadows put to flight.

O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

Lighting the Christ Candle at Christmas

One: The Advent time of waiting and preparing is over!
We have lit four candles that remind us about
waiting in hope and peace and joy and love.
(Together light the four Advent candles.)

Two: These candles remind us that God promises to be with us,
to comfort us, to help us rejoice, and to teach us to love.

One: Today we celebrate that God has come to be with us
in the baby called Jesus.

Two: Today we light one more candle, and we call it the Christ candle.
(Light white candle.)
This candle reminds us of all God has done for us.
God fills us with good things, like hope and peace and joy and love.
God is faithful to us.
God is with us, now and always.

**All: Come, holy God, lead us through our lives.
Give us courage to spread your light in the world. Amen.**

Candle Hymn

“What Child Is This”

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this the angels sing,
Is Christ, God's holy offering;
Haste, haste your praise to bring
The babe, the son of Mary!

Prayer of Invocation

Offering

Invitation

Offertory Anthem

Prayer of Dedication

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

First Reading

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

Gabriel and Mary are invited to come forward.

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!

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest:

Second Reading

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
Of Jesse's lineage coming by faithful prophets sung;
It came a flow'ret 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.

Third Reading

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Joseph and the baby are invited to come forward.

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.

Fourth Reading

“Away in a Manger”

All animals are invited to come forward and take their places around the stable.

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

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.

Fifth Reading**“The First Noel”**

All stars and angels are invited to come forward.

The first Noel, the angel did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night

Sixth Reading**“Angels We Have Heard on High”**

Shepherds and any remaining animals are invited to come forward and take their places around the family.

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: 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'nly song?

Seventh Reading**“We Three Kings”**

The Magi may come forward during this hymn and kneel before the cradle.

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Refrain: O star of wonder, star of light,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.

Eighth Reading

“Joy to the World”

Everyone is invited to return to their seats.

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing (repeat 2x).

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 2x).

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And make the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness,
And wonders of his love (repeat 2x).

COMMUNION

This is an open feast; everyone is welcome.

Communion Prayer

Lord's Prayer - *You are encouraged to pray this prayer in your own tradition.*

Sharing the Meal

You are invited to find your way to a bowl of grape juice or a chalice of wine and receive both elements by dipping a piece of bread.

Then you are asked to proceed towards the outside of the sanctuary, collect a candle from one of the baskets and form a circle for the sharing of the Christmas Light.

SENDING

Sharing the Light

*We will share the light of Christ throughout the sanctuary;
and ask that children under age 12 share with a parent.
Please keep burning candles upright and turn the unlit candle sideways.*

Closing Hymn

“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.

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

Worship Leadership

The Congregations of Central Congregational Church and Hope Church

**Rev. Michael McSherry, Pastor
Central Congregational Church**

**Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade
Interim Pastor, Hope Church**

**Bruce Baker, Piano
Robert Hall, Drums
Angela Letizia, Cello**

Welcome

Welcome to all who have no church home, need strength,
want to follow Christ, have doubts, or do not believe.

Welcome to new visitors and to old friends.
Welcome to grandparents, to mothers, fathers,
and single people.

Welcome to people of all colors, cultures,
abilities, and sexual orientations, to old and young,
to believers and questioners –
and welcome to questioning believers.

Welcome to everyone!

Central Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Hope Church

United Church of Christ &
Disciples of Christ

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hope church
· open minds ·
· open hands ·
· open hearts ·

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