

First Sunday after Christmas
December 29, 2024
United Church of Christ - Neillsville
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger

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RINGING OF THE CARILLON

PRELUDE *"He is Born"* French Carol arr. Diane Bish
Karen Mohr

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

God is telling a story in our lives.

It's quite a story:

full of the promises God makes

and our struggles to trust;

full of mystery and angels

with surprising news;

full of hard endings

and unexpected new beginnings.

Come, hear the story

pay attention to the angels' message

in your heart, in this place and time.

Then join all creation

in worshipping God

who tells it full of grace and truth;

who comes in Jesus,

the Word made flesh,

and makes our story holy.

OPENING PRAYER (All)

Emmanuel, come to us, fill our hearts with joy in knowing this deeper truth that life contains, that because you come, all will be well. As we gather this joyful morning, let our Alleluias rise from willing lips, from lives opened to your gift, and from hearts filled with your love. Alleluia! Amen.

HYMN *O Come, All Ye Faithful" #89 Red UCC*

1 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!

2 Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation;

sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

"Glory to God, all glory in the highest!" [Refrain]

3 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;

Jesus, to thee be all glory given!

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! [Refrain]

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Jesus is born! Let us share the good news with all those around us!

One: The Peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

All are invited to greet one another with words such as

"The peace of Christ be with you,"

and the response: *"And also with you".*

RESPONSE: *"Glory to God"*

#756 NCH (sing twice)

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, gloria alleluia, alleluia!

CHILDREN'S TIME

LESSONS & CAROLS

Waiting & Preparing

Scripture: Isaiah 7:14, 9:2, 6-7a

¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel, which means "God With Us."

²The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

⁶For to us a child is born,

to us a son is given,

and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.

"Will the Christ Child Come?"

Hymn: "O Thou Joyful" #113 Red UCC

**1 O thou joyful, O thou wonderful,
Grace revealing Christmastide!
Jesus came to win us from all sin within us:
Glorify, glorify the holy child.**

**2 O thou joyful, O thou wonderful,
Love revealing Christmastide!
Loud hosannas singing and all praises bringing,
May thy love, may thy love with us abide.**

**3 O thou joyful, O thou wonderful,
Peace revealing Christmastide!
Darkness disappeareth, God's own light now neareth,
Peace and joy, peace and joy to all betide.**

Angel Appears to Mary

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

³⁴ "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be

unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail."

³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

"Christmas Comes"

Hymn: "What Child is This" #148 NCH (vs. 1,3)

**1 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 child of Mary!**

**3 Bring gifts of incense, gold and myrrh;
Come, join in jubilation;
The Holy Child, though meek and mild,
Has come with God's salvation.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The mother sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The babe, the child of Mary!**

Angel Appears to Joseph

Scripture: Matthew 1:18-23

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

"Getting to the Front of the Stable"

Hymn: "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

#91 RED (vs 1,5)

**1 Angels, from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

**5 All creation, join in praising
God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising,
To the Eternal Three-in-One:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

Birth of Christ

Scripture: Luke 2:1-7

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

"The Geese"

Hymn: "Carol at the Manger"

#199 W&R (vs. 1,3)

**1 Holy Child within the manger,
long ago yet ever near,
Come as friend to every stranger,
come as hope for every fear.
As you lived to heal the broken,
Greet the outcast, free the bound,
As you taught us love unspoken,
Teach us now where you are found.**

**3 Holy Child within the manger,
Lead us ever in your way,
So we see in every stranger
How you come to us today.
In our lives and in our living**

**Give us strength to live as you,
That our hearts might be forgiving
And our spirits strong and true.**

Angel Appears to Shepherds

Scripture: Luke 2:8-20

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

"The Christmas Guest"

Hymn: "The First Nowell"

#100 RED (verses 1-2)

**1 The first Nowell, 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.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell!
Born is the King of Israel.**

**2 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.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell!
Born is the King of Israel.**

Star Appears

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ "'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

"Star-Giving"

**Hymn: "As With Gladness Men of Old"
#118 RED (vs. 1,3)**

**1 As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious God, may we
Evermore be led to thee.**

**3 As they offered gifts most rare
At the manger rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy,
Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee, our heav'nly King.**

THE OFFERING SERVICE

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory *"Go Tell It on the Mountain"*

Doxology

**Praise God for gifts of hope and peace
Praise God for gifts of joy and love
Praise God for sending Christ to dwell
On earth for us – Emmanuel. Amen.**

MORNING PRAYERS

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

HYMN *"Joy to the World"* #313 Red UCC (vs. 1-2)

1 Joy to the world! The Lord is come:

**Let earth receive her king;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.**

2 Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns:

**Let men their songs employ;
While fields and flood, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

JOYS AND CONCERNS

HYMN *"Joy to the World"* #313 RED (vs. 3)

**3 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.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RADIO BROADCAST

**11 AM Sunday radio broadcast
on WCCN 98.5FM and 1370AM**

**This week's radio broadcast is sponsored
anonymously
"In Praise of Jesus Christ".**

YouTube link for Sunday, December 29, 2024
<https://youtube.com/live/N2qMjAttUqY>

WELCOME

We welcome you to our service of worship!
We are glad that you have joined us on site,
through the internet or on the radio.

We pray that you will hear God's call,
seek to follow Jesus, led by the Holy Spirit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, December 29th –

- 10 AM Deacon Host – Sally Sadowska
Greeter(s) – Jim & Rosie Repinski
Usher(s) – Paul Vine, Kelley Burch
PowerPoint – Crispin Hediger

Tuesday, December 31st – New Years Eve

~~- 1 PM Bible Study~~ **NO BIBLE STUDY**



**- 6 - 10 PM – fellowship
hall/game night
all ages welcome**

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

Dec 29 – Doris Bakker

Jan 5 –

Jan 12 -

We need people to sign up

Blessings to You in the New Year
May peace fill your world,
May love fill your home
With contentment and happiness, Too—
In wonderful ways
May This year of new days
Be filled with sweet blessings for you.
Happy New Year



by Monday,
December 30th for
the **JANUARY**
NEWSLETTER

2025 Radio Broadcast Sponsors Needed

Would you like to sponsor a radio
broadcast? You may choose to dedicate or
honor someone for a particular service date.

This is not a budget item in our church
operations, so we would appreciate if all
monies are in this year - 2024.

The cost remains the same - \$75
Please contact Janice in the office or phone
715-743-2147 to reserve a date.