



December 25, 2021, 10:00am

Christmas Day Service

St. James United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor

Organist: Randy Sohn

Choir Director: Cindy Sohn

PLEASE KNOW OUR COMMUNION TABLE IS AN OPEN TABLE - THIS MEANS COMMUNION IS SERVED FOR ALL WHO WISH TO TAKE OF IT, WHETHER OR NOT YOU ARE A CHURCH MEMBER, OF THE UCC DENOMINATION; OR ARE TRYING TO FIND YOUR WAY IN A MIXED UP, TROUBLED WORLD.

AS CHRIST IN HIS MINISTRY DID, WE WELCOME ALL PEOPLE

Meditative Music

Bells Ring

Prelude Gathering for Worship

The Joy of Christmas

Call to Worship: (responsively)

L: We are a people who have walked in deep darkness.

P: We come this day, seeking to be a people who have seen a great light.

L: Light comes to us on this holiest of days.

P: The light of a small babe, the light of a bright star

L: The light of God's love

P: Shining for all the earth. Come and see... the child has been born! Lights are shining!

Opening Prayer

Holy God, we pray for your brightness to shine upon our hearts this day. May we know your grace as it appears for us in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ Jesus. Help us to live lives that are joyous and just, godly and righteous. As we await the blessed hope of your glory to shine on our world forever, we come this day to rejoice in the blessed hope of your glory that already shines in our lives. Shine on us, dear Child, that we may see you not only in the manger but in our hearts as well! Amen.

Prayer:

Not Only on Christmas Day

Emma Russert

Lord, this is my prayer
Not only on Christmas Day,
But until I see you face to face
May I live my life this way:

Just like the baby Jesus
I ever hope to be,
Resting in Your arms
Trusting in Your sovereignty.

And like the growing Christ child
In wisdom daily learning,
May I ever seek to know
With my mind and spirit yearning.

Like the Son so faithful
Let me follow in your light,
Meek and bold, humble and strong
Not afraid to face the night.

Nor cowardly to suffer
And stand for truth alone,
Knowing that Your kingdom
Awaits my going home.

Not afraid to sacrifice
Though great may be the cost,
Mindful how You rescued me
From broken-hearted loss.

Like my risen Savior
The babe, the child, the Son,
May my life forever speak
Of who you are and all you've done.

So while this world rejoices
and celebrates your birth,
I treasure you, the greatest gift
Unequaled in your worth.

I long to hear the same words
That welcomed home your Son,
Come, good and faithful servant
Your Master says, "Well done"

And may heaven welcome others
Who will join with me in praise
Because I lived for Jesus Christ
Not only Christmas Day.

Reading and lighting of the Candles: Everit Gumm, Williem Langenhahn

Today is Christmas Day the day on which we celebrate the gift to us of the birth of Jesus and recall the hope we have in Christ.

Today we light again the Candles of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy.

First Candle We speak of hope because God keeps his promises to us.

Second Candle We work for peace - because Jesus is the 'Prince of Peace' and he calls his children to work for peace in his name.

Third Candle We show love - because Jesus gave everything for us and led us to know the forgiveness of God.

Fourth Candle We share joy - because the Holy Spirit fills our hearts and minds with the presence the God

Christ Candle Now we light our last candle to remember the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ which we celebrate this Christmas Day.

Hymn of Praise:

JAMES MONTGOMERY, 1816

8. 7. 8. 7. 8. 7.

REGENT SQUARE
HENRY SMART, 1867

Joyfully

1. An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry Wing your flight o'er
2. Shep - herds in the fields, a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your
3. Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, Bright - er vi - sions
4. Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, Watch - ing long in

all the earth; Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
flocks by night; God with man is now re - sid - ing,
beam a - far; Seek the great De - sire of na - tions,
hope and fear, Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,

Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth: Come and wor - ship,
Yon - der shines the in - fant Light: Come and wor - ship,
Ye have seen His na - tal star: Come and wor - ship,
In His tem - ple shall ap - pear: Come and wor - ship,

come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.
come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.
come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.
come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King. A-MEN.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

*"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"*

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



Message: *In Through the Backdoor*

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

Prayer of Confession:

O God, you search us out and know us, and all that we are is open to you. We confess that we have sinned. When we make no room for Christ, and fail to welcome him into our lives, we turn away from you Lord. When we follow shooting stars and squander our gifts in Herod's court, we sin against you, Lord. When we seek to cut down those who might rise above us, we sin against one another. When we erase from our thoughts the poor, the hungry, and the displaced, we sin against one another and you Lord.

**P: Home we shall come
To an older place than Eden
And a taller town than Rome.**

**To the end of the way of the wandering star;
To the things that cannot be and that are,
To the place where God was homeless
And all - we are at home. (GK Chesterton, *The House of Christmas*)**

Holy Communion:

May the Lord be with you, not only now and in this moment, but now and always. As we gather together we open our hearts and invite the Lord into our lives. We give thanks to the many, common and daily ways the Lord touches us as well as the mysterious and miraculous.

God brought light and life out of darkness; formed us in his image and breathed into us the breath of life. And even when we turned from God in sin and separation, his love remained constant and unyielding.

In time, God the Creator gave God the Redeemer to us in the form of Jesus, our savior. At his birth the angles sang glory to the Father in the highest and peace to your people on earth.

With all your people on earth and the company of the angels and saints, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem and found no room in the inn, so Jesus was born in the poverty of a stable, witnessed that night by the shepherds of the hills who then went forth telling everyone they met of the newborn child.

As Word became flesh, born of a woman, on that night long ago, so Jesus gave himself up for all of us: taking bread, giving thanks, breaking it and giving it to the disciples saying, "*Take, eat; this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.*"

When the supper was over he took the cup, again giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples saying: "*Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and all in the forgiveness of your sins. As often as you drink of this cup, remember me.*"

Pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread, juice and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ; Bless us O Lord, that we may become the body of Christ in your name - lifting the Gospel, sharing the Good News and building the Kingdom of God here on earth.

Let us, with the confidence of God's children pray together:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors and

lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

St. James Choir

Christmas Communion Song

Affirming our Faith:

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell: The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead:

I believe in the Holy Spirit: The One Holy Universal Christian Church: the communion of saints: The forgiveness of sins: The resurrection of the body: And the life everlasting. *Amen.*

Offering

Offering, tithes and gifts can be made before or after worship in the offering baskets/plates at the welcome area of the church. St. James is also set up to take on-line offerings through the website (stmstjucc.org).

Offertory Music:

Mary, Did You Know?

Daniel and Katie Kleinhans

~ The offering is brought to the altar ~

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving (all together)

Thank you, God for giving to us your own special love. Thank you for all the other gifts that are present in these people around me. Together we are a gifted people - your people. May we use these gifts to serve the needs of others. Give us courage, Lord, and the confidence too, to further your kingdom here on earth. *Amen.*

Hymn of Joy:

108

Traditional English Carol

The First Nowell

Traditional English Melody

Harm. from *Christmas Carols New and Old*, 1871

1. The first Now - ell, the an - gel did say, Was to
2. They look - ed up and saw a star Shin - ing
3. And by the light of that same star Three
4. This star drew nigh to the north - west, O'er
5. Then en - tered in those wise men three, Full
6. Then let us all with one ac - cord Sing

cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; In
in the east, be - yond them far, And
wise men came from coun - try far; To
Beth - le - hem it took its rest, And
rev - 'rent - ly up - on their knee, And
prais - es to our heav - 'nly Lord; Who

fields where they lay keep - ing their sheep, On a
to the earth it gave great light, And a
seek for a king was their in - tent, And to
there it did both stop and stay, Right
of - fered there, in His pres - ence, Their
with the Fa - ther we a - dore And

THE FIRST NOWELL
Irregular with Refrain

cold win-ter's night that was so deep.
 so it con-tin-ued both day and night.
 fol-low the star where-ev-er it went.
 o-ver the place where Je-sus lay.
 gold and myrrh and frank-in-cense.
 Spir-it blest for ev-er-more.

Now-ell, Now-ell, Now-ell, Now-ell,

Born is the King of Is-ra-el.

Benediction: (Prayer for Christmas)

L: In the midst of darkness, candles have shone.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: In the midst of darkness, we have seen the light of Christ.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: In the midst of darkness, we have been promised peace and good will.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: In the midst of darkness, we go forth to be the light of Christ.

P: Glory to God in the highest! Alleluia! Amen.

Closing Hymn:

120

From Psalm xcvi. ISAAC WATTS, 1719
With joy and dignity

C. M.

ANTIOCH
 GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL, 1742

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -
 2. Joy to the earth! the Sav - iour reigns: Let men their
 3. He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the

ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Him room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of His right - eous - ness,

And heaven and na - ture sing,
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy,
 And won - ders of His love,

And heaven and na - ture
 Re - peat the sound - ing
 And won - ders of His

And heaven and na - ture sing,
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy,
 And won - ders of His love,

And
 Re -
 And

sing,
 joy,
 love,

And heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 And won - ders, won - ders of His love. A - MEN.

And heaven and na - ture sing,
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy,
 And won - ders of His love,

The bright red flowers of the poinsettia were known as the 'Flores de Noche Buena', or 'Flowers of the Holy Night'. The shape of the poinsettia flower and leaves are sometimes thought as a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem which led the Wise Men to Jesus. The red colored leaves symbolize the blood of Christ, while the white leaves represent his purity.



Sharing poinsettias with our church family this Christmas are:

Brian & Shelia Hemb, in memory of Joan Hellmer

**Brian, Wendy, Morgan & Amanda,
in memory of Harvey, Norma, Jackie and Kevin Henschel**

Ron Henschel, in memory of Jackie, Kevin, Norma & Harvey Henschel

Cindy & Joe Klapperich, in memory of Alvin & Loretta Kracht

Charlie & Ruth Ann Kolb, for the joy of Christ's birth

The Frederick Krause Family, in memory of Delores Krause

Val Jean Marcoe, Brother, in memory of Alvin Lee Marcoe

Val Jean, Gavin, Colton Marcoe in memory of Dawn Angela Marcoe

**Julianne Luebke; Keith, Michelle & Bradley Mauk; Rowan & Katelynn Sibley,
in memory of David Luebke**

Dorothy Mueller, in memory of my twin brother Donald

Bill & Dorothy Mueller, in memory of my brother Henry

Dorothy Mueller, in memory of my parents

**Geraldine Scheffler,
in memory of Ron Scheffler and Walter & Orvilla Stoeckigt**

Tammy Serketich, for the joy of Ella and Ezra, and in memory of Wayne Vogel

Carlene Sohn, in memory of Myron Sohn

Carlene Sohn, in memory of Elmer & Leona Sohn and Carl & Elmyra Ohlrogge

**Katie & Daniel, Dan & Rachel, in memory of Grandma & Grandpas,
Virginia & Kenneth Kuether and Myron Sohn**

Cindy & Randy Sohn, in memory of Dad & Mom, Kenneth & Virginia Kuether

Randy & Cindy Sohn, in memory of Dad, Myron Sohn

**Doris & Dale Sprenger Family,
in memory of Brother & Sister-in-Law, Allen & Katherine Gabsch,
Brother-in-Laws, David Luebke and Edward Kretsch,
Nephew, Larry Kretsch, and Our Parents.**

Ellen Mae Surfus, in memory of William Surfus and Arthur & Hertha Lorfeld

Mary Ann Vogel, in memory of Wayne Vogel and Walter & Orvilla Stoeckigt

David & Tanya Wasmer, for the joy of Grandson – AJ

**Tanya, David, Abby, Andrew, AJ, Alley & Amanda,
in memory of Dad & Grandpa**

Judy & Al Wippermann, in memory of LeRoy & Dorothy Schad

