

Christmas Worship
December, 2020
St. Mark's United Church of Christ
St. James United Church of Christ
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor

Prelude music: Carol Weiland, Jarod Urban (guitars)
Good Christian Friends Rejoice
It Came Upon a Midnight Clear
Angels We Have Heard on High
Away in the Manger - Cradle Song

Preparation of Worship: *O Come All Ye Faithful*
Kathryn Jaehnig (organ), Kathy Jurk (piano)

Call to Worship: (responsively) Luke Grunwald leading

L: The people who once lived in darkness have been given a great light!

P: Praise be to God who has heard our cries.

L: Our souls sing out God's praise!

P: God has brought us a light of Hope and Peace, Love and Joy!

L: On the night of his birth, may the Light of God's Love shine brightly upon us!

P: And we shall see that light and let it shine through our lives. Amen.

Opening Prayer Olivia Bramstedt
We come to adore you, little one. On bended knee, with hopeful heart, and eyes stretched wide with wonder and awe. The gentleness of your gaze draws us into the mystery of all that lies beyond, and in that place of falling into joy we yield all that we are to you.

And we pray. For those who are broken; those who seek; the trembling and the rumbling tummies; the haggard spirits and the ragged lives. For those who cling to the last best thing, and those whose hearts pine for love.

Bless us, O Lord, whom we adore, and turn our faces ever toward you. For peace, for mercy, for the sake of all that is holy. We come to adore you, O Christ.

(written by Anne Fraley, rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in South Windsor, CT.)

We Worship in Song: *The First Noel*
Brenda Schultz (flute), Grace Schultz (violin)

Prayer: *Not Only on Christmas Day* Confirmation Class

Reading and Lighting the Christ Candle: Owen Bramstedt and Mason Scharl

Scripture Readings:

Luke 1:26-38 Bruce Mansker
What Child Is This? Kathy Jurk (piano), Brenda Schultz (flute)

Luke 1:46-55 Heidi Belitz
The Star Kathy Jurk (piano), Brenda Schultz (flute)

Luke 2:1-20 Scott Siekman
Pastorale Symphony with Away in the Manger
Kathy Jurk (organ), Brenda Schultz (flute)

Message: *The Little Drummer Boy* 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.

In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us. We turn to you, O Christ, perfect union of Spirit and flesh; We renounce evil; We claim your love; We choose to be made whole.

(written by Nathan Nettleton)

Institution of Holy Communion:

Affirming our Faith: *Apostles Creed*

Offering, Tithes and Gifts can be made on-line through our website (St. James Only), or by mailing your offering to: St. James UCC, 13312 Pioneer Road, Newton, WI 53063 OR St. Mark's UCC, W1307 Orchard Road, Cleveland, WI 53015

Luke 2: 1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



Institution of 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.

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.

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.