



**Sunday, December 19, 2021**

***Fourth Sunday of Advent***

**St. Mark's United Church of Christ**

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor

Organist: Kathy Jurk      Reader: Lori Roelse

**Meditative Music**

**Bells Ring**

**Prelude Gathering for Worship:**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem (Forest Green verison)*

**Call to Worship: (responsively)**

L: Come, joy, lighten our spirits.

P: **Come, hope, lift us from despair.**

L: Come, peace, ease our frantic worry.

P: **Come, love, shine in all we do.**

L: Come, Jesus, be born in us.

P: **Come, Lord, set us free.**

L: Come, God,

P: **Rule in our hearts and teach us to sing with joy!**

**Opening Prayer: (all together)**

**On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we declare our awe of you and our love for you, Lord Jesus. Open the eyes of our hearts to behold even more of your beauty; expand the chambers of our hearts to make even more room for your grace and glory. Free us to be generous and joyful as the Magi. Free us to love as you love us; to forgive as you have forgiven us; and to pursue others as you so faithfully seek us. In your trustworthy and worship-worthy name, *Amen.***

**Hymn of Praise: (#112 Hymnal)**

*O Come All Ye Faithful*

**Advent Candle Lighting (The candle of Love)**

**Young At Heart:**



**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***

**Pastor:** Heavenly Father, the whole meaning of Christmas can be explained in one little four-letter word...LOVE. You sent your gift of pure love to us that first Christmas. Love descended from heaven to be born of a virgin. Love lay in the scratchy hay of a manger in a meager barn in Bethlehem. All of your love, God,

was robed in the delicate skin of a baby and wrapped in swaddling clothes. This greatest gift of all came wrapped in the flesh of baby Jesus and laid in the rough wood of a manger. Our perfect gift would later be rewrapped in the scars of our sin and nailed to the rugged wood of a cross on Calvary, all because of love.

Father, this final week of Advent, fill our hearts and minds with the significance of this truth. Thank you, Lord, for loving us enough to send Jesus.

**People:** Your love overwhelms us, dear Lord. It lifts us in moments of despair. It brightens our darkest days. It is the promise of hope, delivered in love. An answer to the prayer, "Stay close by me for ever, and love me, I pray."

**Hymn of Assurance:** (Insert)

*What Child Is This*

**Scripture Reading:**

Micah 5:2-5a

**Message:** *O Little Town of Bethlehem of Ephrathah* Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

**Hymn of Faith:** (#107 Hymnal)

*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*

**People's Prayer / the Lord's Prayer:**

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.*

**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:**

*Love Came Down at Christmas*

~ *The offering is brought to the altar* ~

**Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:** (all together)

Magnificent God, when we consider Mary, the mother of Jesus, we are reminded that you do great wonders and signs through the most humble and obedient of your children. As we give our gifts to you this day, give us ears to hear the whispers of the angels speaking to us; give us eyes to see the needy and the unloved all around us; and give us faith to offer our lives to your plan of saving love. In Christ, our redeemer, we pray. *Amen.*

**Hymn of Sending:** (#8 Binder)

*Go Tell It on the Mountain*

**Benediction:**

... To love and serve the Lord. *Amen.*

**Postlude**

*Fling Wide the Door*



*Micah 5:2-5a*

*But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to be ruler in Israel,  
whose coming forth is from of old,  
from ancient days.*

*Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labor has given birth;  
then the rest of his brothers shall return  
to the people of Israel.*

*And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.*

*And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth.  
And he shall be their peace.*

*When the Assyrian comes into our land  
and treads in our palaces,  
then we will raise against him seven shepherds  
and eight princes of men;*



**Celebrations for this week & next:**

**BIRTHDAYS:**

December 22<sup>nd</sup> – Mike Scharl  
24<sup>th</sup> – Jenny Riesterer, Lee Sixel  
25<sup>th</sup> – Raymond Henschel, Noel Wippermann  
27<sup>th</sup> – Ethen Lutzke  
28<sup>th</sup> – Tim Russart  
31<sup>st</sup> – McKenna Jo Fitzgerald, Galen LaDuke

**ANNIVERSARIES:**

December 28<sup>th</sup> – Mike & Amy Summers  
31<sup>st</sup> – Jeremy & Karie Ladwig

**LOOKING AHEAD.....**

**ST. MARK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM – TODAY – 5:00pm**

**ST. JAMES ADULT CHOIR PRACTICE – 6:30pm, Tues., Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>**

**ST. MARK'S CHOIR PRACTICE – 7:00pm. Wed., Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP, Friday, Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>:**

Both Services at St. Mark's, with communion  
Family-Oriented Service, 4:00pm  
Traditional Christmas Eve Worship, 7:00pm

**CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP, Saturday, Dec., 25<sup>th</sup>:**

with communion, 10:00am, at St. James

**Sunday, Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>: No Worship Services OR Sunday School today! Wishing you a most blessed Christmas**

**FINANCIAL BOOKS CLOSE AT BOTH CHURCHES ON MONDAY, DEC. 27<sup>TH</sup>.** Any contributions received after that date will be entered for 2022.



Website: [www.stmstjucc.org](http://www.stmstjucc.org) email: [stmstjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stmstjoffice@gmail.com)  
phone: 920.693.8361

Send an email to be added to our prayer chain.  
Messages are uploaded to YouTube: St. Mark's & St. James UCC