



*An Open & Affirming, A2A-Accessible to All
Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

21 December 2025 – 10:30 AM
Fourth Sunday of Advent

***indicates the congregation is invited to stand.
Please feel free to remain seated if you prefer.**

PRELUDE

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland
Vlada Volkova-Moran, organist

Dietrich Buxtehude

WELCOME

the Rev. David Pattee, pastor

INTROIT 121 (seated)

TAULE

**All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,
and open furrows, the sowing of our God.
All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.**

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF JOY

Jordan, SarahJoy, Jordan Jr, and Emmanuel Zell

*HYMN 110 [hymn sheet]

Now Bless the God of Israel

FOREST GREEN

*PRAYER IN THE SPIRIT OF JESUS

**Earth-Maker, Life-Giver, Pain-Bearer, Source of all that is and all that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all, Loving God in whom is Heaven:
May the hallowing of your name echo through the universe.
May your Heavenly will be done by all creatures great and small.
And may your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need this day, feed us. For the hurt we inflict on one another, forgive us.
Through times of temptation, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is Love.**

*GLORIA

**Glo---ri-a, in ex-cel-sis De-o,
Glo----ri-a, in ex-cel-sis De-o.**

*GREETING OF PEACE

WORD MADE PLAIN

children are invited to gather in front

Joline Wade Gatlin

CHILDREN'S BLESSING

May the peace of God surround you... **Like the trees towering in the forest!**
May the peace of God warm you all over... **Like the sun shining in the sky!**
May the peace of God rise and roll over you... **Like the waves rolling in the sea!**
May the peace of God fill you... **Like the wind stirring in your soul!**
May the peace of God surround you... [singing] **Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen...** [repeating]

ANTHEM

"O, Thou that Tellest Good Tidings" from *Messiah*
CHANCEL CHOIR • Cheryl Anderson, director

Georg F. Handel

GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-25

Tony Augimeri, liturgist

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do 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 as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

SERMON

Do not be afraid

Pastor Dave

RESPONSE

**O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide your heavenly home;
Make safe the path to endless day, to hell's destruction close the way.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH



OFFERTORY

Invitation

www.PeaceUnited.org/GivingOffertory Music "Then Shall a Star from Jacob Come Forth" from *Elijah* Felix Mendelssohn

*COVENANT

**We covenant with God and with each other:
to walk together in all God's ways as the Holy is revealed to us;
to give ourselves freely and without reserve to Jesus' ministry in this church;
to celebrate through worship God's amazing gifts of unity and diversity;
to take up Christ's mission around the world, striving for justice and peace;
to care for the earth and all her creatures, reconciling ourselves to them in love;
for God gives immeasurable grace into all life and every life.**

*HYMN 105 [hymn sheet]

Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear

JOSEPH LIEBER, JOSEPH MEIN

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Cold December Flies Away

Dale Wood

**Christmas Eve – Wednesday 24 December
5pm with Jazz on High • 8pm with Chancel Choir**

Join in a Spirit-filled evening of favorite hymns, anthems and scripture, with traditional lighting of the Christmas candles and a Christmas message from Pastor Dave.

100% of the Christmas Eve offering will be directed to relief and support of people in need: half to Monarch Services which provides temporary housing for survivors of domestic violence and half to Church World Service, a faith-based NGO and long-time UCC partner, providing disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development programs around the world.

Now Bless the God of Israel

*Luke 1:68-79; Ps. 18:1-3; Isa. 9:2-7**Ruth Duck, 1985*

1 Now bless the God of Is - ra - el, who comes in love and power,
 2 Re - mem-ber-ing the cov - e - nant, God res - cues us from fear,
 3 In ten - der mer-cy, God will send the day - spring from on high,

who rais - es from the roy - al house de - liv - erance in this hour.
 that we might serve in hol - i - ness and peace from year to year;
 our ris - ing sun, the light of life for those who sit and sigh.

Through ho - ly proph-ets God has sworn to free us from a - larm,
 And you, my child, shall go be - fore to preach, to proph-e - sy,
 God comes to guide our way to peace, that death shall reign no more.

to save us from the heav-y hand of all who wish us harm.
 that all may know the ten - der love, the grace of God most high.
 Sing prais-es to the Ho - ly One! O wor - ship and a - dore!

This text by United Church of Christ clergywoman Ruth Duck is a paraphrase of the "Benedictus," which is often sung at morning prayer. She came to appreciate daily prayer while studying at the University of Notre Dame.

Tune: FOREST GREEN C.M.D.
 Traditional English melody
 Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear

Matt. 1:18-25

German carol, 15th century
Paraphr. by Carol Birkland, 1993

Unison
Eb Bb/Eb Eb

1 "Gen - tle Jo - seph, Jo - seph dear, stay with me, for the
2 "Glad - ly Mar - y, Mar - y mine, I will cra - dle the
3 "Peace to all and God's good-will," heaven and earth with this

Bb/Eb Fm Fm7 Bb7

ba - by's near; God will sure - ly your good - ness hear, as
child di - vine; Here will heav - en and earth com - bine, for
song will fill; Soon will God, in the eve - ning still, be

Gm Cm Fm/Ab Bb Ab/Eb Eb

you will love this new - born child," says Mar - y.
you will bear God's child, O dear - est Mar - y."
born in Beth - le - hem, the child of Mar - y.

The German carol on which this is based appears in a mystery play, c. 1500. It is one of a group of related carols that also includes "In dulci jubilo"—"Good Christian friends, rejoice."

Tune: JOSEPH LIEBER, JOSEPH MEIN 7.8.8.11.

German carol, 15th century
Harm. The New Century Hymnal, 1993