

The Federated Church

United Church of Christ + Unitarian Universalist Association



**AND THE
SOUL FELT
ITS WORTH**

Christmas

Merry Christmas!

Welcome to Worship at Federated Church

“Every Year”

by Rev. Sarah Speed

My heart and I have an agreement.
Every year we show up here—
here in the sanctuary,
here with the candles and tall ceilings,
here with the creaky church pews
and the songs of silent nights.
My heart and I have an agreement.
Every year we show up here—
At the end of the year,
After another 12 months of humanity, of me
Trying to keep it all together,
Trying to keep my head above water,
Trying to keep up the appearances.
Every year we show up here.
We drop it all. We leave it at the door.
We come into this space, and I could swear it feels different.
Maybe it's God. Maybe it's hope. Maybe it's love.
But whatever it is, I need it every year, so we show up here.
Tell us again the story of tonight.
My heart needs it.

Dear Christmas worshippers,
Welcome on this holiest of nights. Whatever it is that has drawn you here, welcome. Wherever this last year has taken you; whatever hopes, fears, loves, and longings you carry here tonight, we're glad you're here. May Emmanuel—the “God-who-is-with-us”—meet you here in this place and amidst it all as you enter once again into this sacred story. For God's life-altering promises are for you and for our world. May your soul feel its worth; may our weary world rejoice!

Wishing you a blessed Christmas,
Pastor Eric

Order of Worship | December 31, 2023
*All music can be found at the back of the bulletin.
Please join in reading those parts printed in **bold**.*

Prelude “Rise Up Shepherd and Follow”

Welcome & *Passing the Peace

Gathering Carols “O Come, All Ye Faithful” vv. 1 & 2 (p. 3)
“Joy to the World” vv. 1 & 2 (p. 4)

After singing, children will gather with Miss Janis in the back for “Children’s Church”

Centering Our Hearts

Prayers of the People

Silent Christmas Reflection

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings have returned home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
Then the work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost, to heal the broken, and feed the hungry;
To release the prisoner, rebuild the nations, and bring peace to all,
For this is the music of God’s heart.*

“The Work of Christmas” by Howard Thurman

How might you—and how might you help us at Federated—live out this Christmas invitation in the days and year ahead? What are your intentions for this year?

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father who art 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.

Christmas Affirmation

Friends, hear the Good News of Christmas: The Light of the World is come. So, let us light candles to shine in every darkness.

Wherever despair keeps watch, we will light candles of Hope.

Wherever fear crowds in, we will light candles of Peace.

Wherever grief overwhelms, we will light candles of Joy.

To inspire all our living, we will light candles of Love.

Sung Response

“One Candle is Lit” (p. 5)

Scripture

[Luke 2:21-38](#)

Mini-Reflection

“Birthing God, Raising Jesus”

Choir Anthem

“These Precious Gifts”

L.M. Nash / Gary Mattin

Carol Sing

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” vv. 1 & 4 (p. 6)

“While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks” vv. 1-4 (p. 7)

“Away in a Manger” vv. 1 & 3 (p. 8)

“The First Noel” vv. 1 & 2 (p. 8)

Our Shared Life & Offering

Offering Opportunities

Offertory

“Good Christian Friends Rejoice”

*Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God for all that Love has done.

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

Sending Carols

“Hark! the Herald Angels Sing” vv. 1 & 3 (p. 9)

“Go Tell it On the Mountain” *All verses* (p. 10)

Benediction

Postlude

“O Come Little Children”

Thank you for joining us for worship.

† † †

WORSHIP NOTES

Serving us this morning are:

Pastor: Rev. Eric J. Ogi | **Ministers:** All of us! | **Music Director:** Gary Mattin

Children’s Coordinator: Janis Schnurr-Trebe | **Liturgist:**

Ushers: Alice Whitney, and Skip & Bev Schramer

Ushers for Sunday, Jan. 7: Pam Wagener, Chris Borresen, and Skip Schramer

All hymns this morning come from *Chalice Carols* unless noted otherwise, and are used with permission: CCLI License #3234671

O Come, All Ye Faithful

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful, and tri - um - phant,
2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,

O come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!

come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;

Refrain
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

The musical score is written for a single voice part in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff contains two verses of the opening line. The second staff continues the melody with a repeat sign and a fermata. The third staff continues the melody. The fourth staff is the start of the refrain, marked with a 'Refrain' label. The fifth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line.

Joy to the World



1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2. Joy to the world, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their

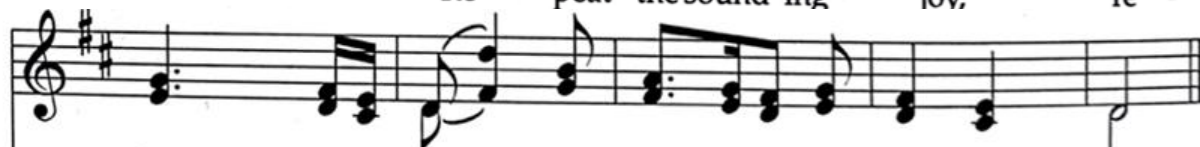


ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 songs em - ploy; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains



and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing

And heaven and na - ture sing, and
 Re - peat the sound-ing ioy, re -



sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound-ing joy.

"One Candle is Lit"

Mary Anne Parrott

Unison



1. Come sure - ly, Lord Je - sus, as dawn fol - lows night,
2. Come quick - ly, sha - lom, teach us how to pre - pare
3. Come, fes - tive - ly sing while a - wait - ing the birth,
4. Come, wan - der where li - on and lamb gent - ly play,



1. our hearts long to greet you, as ros - es, the light.
2. for a gift that com - pels us with jus - tice to care.
3. join an - gels in danc - ing from heav - en to earth.
4. where e - vil is ban - ished and faith takes the day,



1. Sal - va - tion, draw near us, our vi - sion en - gage.
2. Our spir - its are rest - less till sin and war cease.
3. Wave ban - ners of good news, lift high thank - ful praise.
4. a babe in a man - ger to fool the world's eyes.



1. One can - dle is lit for the hope of the age.
2. One can - dle is lit for the reign of God's peace.
3. One can - dle is lit for the joy of these days.
4. One can - dle is lit for God's lov - ing sur - prise.

O Little Town of Bethlehem



1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
cast out our sin, and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light:
We hear the Christ-mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
O come to us, a - bide with us, our God, Em - man - u - el.

While Shepherds Watch Their Flocks



1. While shep - herds watch their flocks by night, all
2. "Fear not," the an - gel said— for dread had
3. "To you, in Da - vid's town this day, is
4. "The heaven - ly Babe you there shall find to




1. seat - ed on the ground, the mes - sen - ger of God came down,
2. seized their trou - bled mind, "Glad ti - dings of great joy I bring
3. born of Da - vid's line, a Sav - ior, who is Christ, the Lord,
4. hu - man view dis - played, all mean - ly wrapped in swath - ing bands,




1. and glo - ry shone a - round, and glo - ry shone a - round.
2. to all of hu - man - kind, to all of hu - man - kind.
3. and this shall be the sign: and this shall be the sign:
4. and in a man - ger laid, and in a man - ger laid."

Away in a Manger


Unison



1. A - way in a man-ger, no crib for a bed, the lit-tle Lord
 3. Be near me, Lord Je - sus, I ask thee to stay close by me for-



Je - sus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky looked
 ev - er, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil-dren in



down where he lay, the lit-tle Lord Je-sus, a - sleep on the hay.
 thy ten - der care, and fit us for heav-en to live with thee there.

The First Noel



1. The first No - el, the an - gel did say, was to
 2. They look - ed up and saw a star shin-ing



1. cer-tain poor shep-herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
 2. in the east, be - yond them far, and to the



1. they lay keep-ing their sheep, on a cold win-ter's
 2. earth it gave great light, and so it con -

Refrain




1. night that was so deep.
 2. tin-ued both day and night. No - el, No - el, No -




el, No - el, born is the King of Is - ra - el.


Hark the Herald




1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the
 2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er -
 3. Hail the heaven - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of




new-born King; peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners
 last - ing Lord! Late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the
 Righ-teous-ness! Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing



rec - on - ciled!" Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise,
 Vir - gin's womb. Veiled in flesh the God - head see;
 in his wings, mild he lays his glo - ry by,



join the tri - umph of the skies; with the an - gel - ic
 hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty, pleased in flesh with



host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
 from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! the her-ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King!"

Go Tell it on the Mountain

Refrain F B \flat F Dm C Dm C F Am C7

Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev-ery-where;

F B \flat F Dm F7 Gm F C7 F *Fine*

go, tell it on the moun-tain, that Je-sus Christ is born.

F B \flat F Dm C7 Dm C7 F

1. While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si-lent flocks by night,
2. The shep-herds feared and trem-bled, when lo! a-bove the earth,
3. Down in a low-ly man-ger the hum-ble Christ was born,

F B \flat F G G7 C7 D.C.

be-hold through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho-ly light.
rang out the an-gel cho-rus that hailed the Sav-ior's birth.
and God sent us sal-va-tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Eric's Parental Leave

Pastor Eric will be gone for the remaining four weeks of his parental leave this January (Jan 1-28) to care for baby Eliyas as Shrestha returns more fully to work. As during the first part of his leave over the summer, he will be unavailable for these four weeks.

As we bless Pastor Eric on his parental leave, we are grateful to welcome back *Rev. Joe Gastiger, who will once again be leading us in worship* during this time.

In addition, *in case of pastoral emergency, Rev. John Dorhauer*, the new pastor of First Congregational UCC in DeKalb, will be on call. He can be reached at: 602-402-6171.

Please contact church Moderator, Sharon McKee, with questions.

Holiday Office Hours

Please note, the church office will be closed New Year's Day, Monday, January 1.

December Love Offering: The Christmas Fund

With contributions from United Church of Christ congregations across the country, The Christmas Fund offering provides retired pastors and church leaders in need with direct assistance to supplement pensions, help with medical insurance costs, and grants to meet emergency needs. These are especially vital for those serving small churches in rural communities. Donate in the collection plate in back, online, or by mail to church

Weekly Enews

Scan this QR code with your phone camera to see the most recent Enews all these announcements and more! Subscribe tab is at the top.



Listen to Sermons Online

Pastor Eric's sermons are posted each week at our website:

www.fedsycamore.org/sermons, and are also available via podcast everywhere you listen (search "Federated Church Sycamore Sermon Podcast").

Congregational Cards

Cards are placed out to celebrate special birthdays and anniversaries or to let friends know we are thinking of them or to offer condolences. Be sure to check the counter in Dutton Hall for congregational cards to add your signature.

2023 Year-End Giving

Thank you for your generous and faithful giving in 2023! Final contributions for the year should be received by today, December 31, to ensure your gift will be included on your 2023 Year-End contribution report. Blessings in the New Year!



YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

A warm WELCOME to those visiting or checking out Federated Church!

We're glad you're here! Are you looking for more information about who we are, what we do, or how to get involved? Would you like to meet with Pastor Eric or get connected to others? Fill out our brief online [Connection Form here](#), and we will be in touch with you soon!

Federated Church is an Open & Affirming Community

In a time of deep division and vitriolic rhetoric around issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, and where the dignity of people living with disabilities or mental health issues are often ignored, demonized, or turned into a joke, we promise to:

Welcome all people of every age, gender, race, national origin, faith expression, marital status & family structure, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, physical ability, mental or emotional condition, economic and social status, and educational background to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our church family.

The Rainbow Flag: We proudly display a rainbow flag at the front of our sanctuary as a visual declaration of God's extravagant and inclusive love, as well as of our own "promise of welcome" to all people. Our prayer is that all can be their truest selves here. This flag serves as a particular signal that our church is a safe and affirming space for LGBTQ persons to be, to belong, to lead, to question, and to grow in faith.

“Welcoming Any, Loving All”

*The Federated Church is affiliated with two national denominations:
the United Church of Christ & the Unitarian Universalist Association*



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@FederatedChurchSycamore

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