

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 25, 2017

Christmas Day

9:00 AM

Welcome to Trinity United Church of Christ. We seek to offer a warm greeting to our visitors, whether you are visiting the area or seeking a church family. To assist you as you worship, we have large print bulletins and hearing assistance devices available. Please see an usher for assistance. We would be happy for you to sign the guest book in the gathering area while you are with us this morning. Whoever you are, wherever you are in life's journey, we are glad that you have come, and pray that you will be blessed by your worship experience. Come and see what God is doing!

denotes the congregation standing as you are able; congregational responses in **bold print*

Once, during the hours of a quiet, starlit night above the hills of Bethlehem, a strange voice announced news that this world will never forget. To a few shepherds then -- and to all the world eventually -- that voice said, "Behold! I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be to all people..." It is because of this good news that we are gathered here -- think about it again, ponder it anew, give thanks for it and rejoice in it -- and prepare to share with all others wherever you can.

PRELUDE -- "O Little Town of Bethlehem" -- *R. Hobby*

TIME OF SHARING

PREPARING OUR HEARTS AND MINDS FOR WORSHIP

CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us arise, let us shine, for our light has come;
the glory of God has risen upon us.

Although darkness covers the earth and its peoples,
our God has come among us and glory surrounds us.

Nations are coming to God's light,
and even the rulers acknowledge the dawn.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Let your face shine on us, mighty God.

Break through the obstacles that keep us from seeing your way.

Melt down the barriers that keep us from knowing the embrace of your love.

**Remove from us the low self-esteem that keeps us
from valuing the overwhelming gift of life that you entrust to us.**

Speak to us here in life-changing ways.

Carol # 8 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

TIME OF CONFESSION

As we gather this morning, we are aware of the great love that God has shown us.
Yet, we also know that our prayers have sometimes been just lip service to God,
we have focused much of our attention on material things rather than spiritual things,
and we have limited our compassion.

God understands our failure to become the people we are intended to be.

Let us be open to the wisdom and forgiveness of our loving Creator.

Merciful God, you love us in spite of ourselves.

The abundance you have given us has made us proud more than thankful.

We act as if our accomplishments were all our own doing.

We try to keep you at a safe distance.

**We fill our lives with seeking the admiration of others,
rather than following your call to us.**

O God, we need to change.

Now let us silently reflect on the personal struggles and fears that keep us from being fully free.

WE PRAY FOR GOD'S MERCY

Kyrie, Kyrie, Kyrie eleison

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

After those days, says the Lord,

I will put my laws in their hearts,

and I will also write them in their minds....

I will remember their sins no more.

Thanks be to God for this magnificent gift of love.

***Carol Response # 12 "What Child is This?" (verses 1 and 2)**

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

And now, experiencing once again the forgiving power of our
loving God, let us say what we believe, using the 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 Ghost,
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 on 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 Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of
saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THE GIVING OF OURSELVES AND OUR OFFERINGS

During this season of giving and receiving,
let us consider how much we have received from God
and also consider how we should respond by sharing with others.

*To our visitors - - the finances of the church are the responsibility of our church members.
As our guests, we ask visitors to simply pass the offering plate to the person sitting next to you in the pew*

Please sign the Registration Booklet at the end of each pew, then pass it to the next person. Thank you!

OFFERTORY – Lullaby on “the First Nowell” – *J. Nixon*

Offertory Response # 12 “What Child is This?” (verse 3)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Loving God, like Mary and Joseph,
who trusted in your grace despite their fear, their poverty, their lack of certainty,
we offer ourselves and our tithes and offerings to you.
Bless them and hallow our every thought and action,
that Christ may be born in us and through us
and be revealed to those who yet walk in darkness.**

ANTHEM

Senior Choir

THE WORD OF GOD

Isaiah 52: 7-10 Psalm 98 Hebrews 1: 1-12
John 1: 1-14

Carol # 1 “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

SERMON

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

May God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the God.

Let us give thanks to God Almighty.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is indeed proper, good and right, O God our Creator, that in this morning our hearts should be raised up in highest praise, and our thoughts be lifted to the wonder of your gracious mercy. You alone are God, living and true. Through all of time you have been the source of life and blessing, filling all your creation with goodness, and leading your people by your light. Countless hosts of angels stand before you and do your will; they look upon your majesty and praise you. United with them and in the name of every creature in the universe,

we too praise your majesty, singing:

795 – Seraphic Hymn

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of the heavenly host;
heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of your glory.**

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

Blessed the one who comes in the name of our God.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Holy God, we acknowledge your glory and power.

You loved us so much that you sent your Only Child into the world to be here for us. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, born in a humble manger of the Blessed Virgin Mary, lived on earth in obedience to you, and was like us in all things except that He resisted the power of evil at work in the world. He proclaimed the Good News of your saving grace.

In order to fulfil your will, He gave Himself up to death; the cruel death on the cross.

Yet death could not hold Jesus, and your mighty power raised Him to be our Savior.

By rising from death, death was destroyed, and eternal life assured.

Jesus always loved those in the world.

When the time came for Him to be glorified by you, He showed the depth of that love.

While He and the disciples were at supper,

Jesus took bread, broke it, gave thanks to you, and then, giving it to the disciples, said,

"Take this, all of you, and eat it; this is my body which is given for you."

In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the cup, filled with wine, and giving it to the disciples, said,

"Take this, all of you, and drink from it;

this is the cup of my Blood, the Blood of the everlasting covenant.

It will be shed for you and for all people, so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me."

Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ's death, O God, we proclaim.

Christ's resurrection, O God, we declare.

Christ's coming, O God, we await.

Glory be to you, O God.

Dying you destroyed our death.

Rising, you restored our life.

Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

We ask you to send your Holy Spirit upon this bread and wine and upon us. Strengthen your universal Church that it may be your instrument at work in the world.

Restore the earth with your grace that is able to make all things new.

Keep us faithful to that vision of the day when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none.

May we remain your people always in love and hope,
until we feast at the perfect feast prepared in the joy of your realm with our exalted Savior.

**By whom, with whom, in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory be to you,
O God, now and forever. Amen.**

BREAKING OF BREAD AND POURING OF WINE

This is the assurance of God's great love for us,
a love that calls us to respond by serving God with joy and commitment;
God sent Jesus to be with us. This is the gift of God for the people of God.
Happy are those who are called to feast on the presence of the Holy One.
Give thanks and praise to God who sent us the Christ Child in Bethlehem,
the Child who grew to be our Savior.

In humble and joyous thanksgiving we will receive the body and blood of our Savior.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*THE SACRAMENTAL BLESSING

*THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**We give you thanks, O God, that you have come to us through Jesus Christ,
both in the midst of time and history in the city of Bethlehem,
and in the timeless presence of Christ's Body and Blood made present with us now.
Send us out into the world rejoicing, ready to share your love with the people we meet,
for we ask it in the Name of the One who is indeed our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.**

*Carol # 2 "Angels We Have Heard on High"

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

In this we have confidence,
that at the name of Jesus every knee will bend
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

POSTLUDE – "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" – *C. Callahan*

Ushers: Annabelle & Bill Swisher

Communion Assistants: Roberta Weiant, and Speros Marinos

Organist: Jane Eiker