

First Church in Windsor, UCC

**Christmas Eve**  
December 24, 2021, at 9 p.m.

*The Inn*



**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

**Response**

*Love Waits for Us at Advent*  
Words and music by Amanda Udis-Kessler  
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**Love comes to us at Christmas  
Love comes to heal our souls.  
Love brings an invitation  
that our hearts might be made whole.  
As we gather at the stable  
in the darkness, glad and grateful  
for the sacred in our midst,  
for wonder and delight,  
Christ is born in us this night.**

**The Peace**

The Peace of Christ be with you!  
**And also with you!**

*As we rise in body or spirit for our opening hymn, I invite you to pass a “wave” of peace to the people around you (and the people worshipping at home)!*

**\*Hymn**

*O Come All Ye Faithful*

By John F. Wade

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**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;  
O come let us adore him O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;  
O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,  
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;  
O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**Prayer of Invocation**

Living God, on this holy night we gather—  
to stand with shepherds, amazed at your glory;  
to sing with the angels, rejoicing in your work;  
to wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise;  
to sit with Mary, cradling your love.

May the good news of this night inspire us to tell the world of our great joy: for unto us is born a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord. Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

**Prayer of our Savior**

**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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen**

**Choir Anthem**

*Bring a Torch*

Traditional French tune

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**Sharing the Word Through Lessons and Carols**

**First Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-11**

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. <sup>2</sup>The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. <sup>3</sup>His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not

judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; <sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. <sup>5</sup>Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. <sup>6</sup>The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup>They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

<sup>10</sup>On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious. <sup>11</sup>On that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that is left of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Ethiopia, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

### \*Hymn

#### *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

By Richard S. Willis  
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**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.  
“Peace on the earth, good will to all, great news of joy we bring.”  
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world.  
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**

**For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,  
when with the evercircling years comes round the age of gold,  
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
and all the world send back the song which now the angels sing.**

### Second Lesson: Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>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.

### Video

#### *Remembering that it Happened Once*

By Wendell Berry

### Anthem

#### *In the Bleak Midwinter*

By Gustav Holst  
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### Third Lesson: Luke 2: 8-20

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” <sup>15</sup>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.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

#### Anthem

*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

Traditional English tune

Public domain

### Fourth Lesson: Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup>“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.”” <sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”

<sup>9</sup>When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

#### Solo

Rich Thornburg

*What Child Is This*

Traditional English tune

Public domain

#### Homily

Pastor Nicole

“Living in the House of the Holy”

**\*Hymn**

*The First Nowell*  
Traditional English carol  
Public domain

**The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, born is the king of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star,  
shining in the east beyond them far,  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night.  
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, born is the king of Israel.**

**And by the light of that same star  
three wise ones came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went.  
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, born is the king of Israel.**

**Mission Moment**

Veterans of the Cross (The Christmas Fund)  
Windsor Refugee Resettlement Community

**Christmas Prayer**

**\*Hymn**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*  
Words and music by Lewis H. Redner  
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**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts the glorious love of heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.**

**\*Candle Lighting**

John 1:1-5

**\*Hymn**

*Silent Night*

Music by Franz Gruber

Words by Joseph Mohr

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**Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,  
glories stream from heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing alleluia.  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**

**Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light.  
Radiant beams from thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth!**

**\*Closing Hymn**

*Joy to the World*

Words by Isaac Watts

Music by G.F Handel

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**Joy to the world! The Lord is come:  
let earth receive her King!  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing!**

**Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns:  
let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy!**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

**Postlude**

*In Dulci Jubilo*

By Johann Michael Bach

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\*Please stand as you are able  
**Bolded Font** to be read by all