



Living by Faith, Known by Love, A Voice of Hope



First Church in Windsor, UCC

**The First Sunday after Christmas
Lessons and Carols**

December 26, 2021, at 10 a.m.

Prelude

Welcome

*** Lighting the Advent and Christ Candles**

Leader: Developed in the 14th century, the word “dwell” became known as a “lingering” or “abiding.” It had connections to “in-habit”—another word developed at that time. After an Advent/Christmas season of focusing on housing the holy, how will we linger and abide in this habit of hospitality? What habits did you invite into your heart in this season that you desire to take with you into the new year? How might we sustain the dwelling places that feed, house, clothe those who need it most?

Response

Love Comes to Us at Christmas
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.**

One: Today we light the Christ Candle once again that illumines the Door of Welcome.

Two: May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our church.

One: May Christ’s Light awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater hospitality.

Two: There IS room in this Inn, a House for the Holy

The Peace

The Light 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

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Words by James Montgomery

Music by Henry Smart

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**Angels from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
As you sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

**Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant light.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

**Sages, leave your contemplations,
brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations,
guided by Christ's natal star:
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

Prayer of Invocation

Holy God, even as the heavenly host sang of your glory in the skies over Bethlehem; even as the star shone in the heavens, and sheep and cattle gathered in that light, so we gather—young and old together, to recount all that you have done for us. No one can destroy the dreams and visions you have placed with us, for you have drawn us close. In the name of Jesus, our Emmanuel, we pray. 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

First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2, 6–7

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Solo

O Wonder as I Wander

American traditional
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Second Lesson: Micah 5:2–4

The prophet Micah foretells the importance of little Bethlehem.

But you, O Bethlehem, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; ⁵and he shall be the one of peace.

Hymn

Once in Royal David's City

Words by Cecil Frances Alexander
Music by Henry J. Gauntlett

**Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for a bed.
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.**

**Jesus came to earth from heaven, who is God and Head of all,
sheltered in a rustic stable, cradled in a common stall;
with the poor and meek and lowly lived on earth the Savior holy.**

**We at last shall meet our Savior, fount of God's redeeming grace,
for that child so dear and gentle reigns within a glorious place;
leading all God's children on to the heaven where saints have gone.**

Third Lesson: Luke 1:26–38

The angel Gabriel visits the Virgin Mary.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Hymn

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

By Michael Praetorius

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**Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem has sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming as saints of old have sung.
It came a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.**

**Isaiah had foretold it, the Rose I have in mind.
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a savior,
When half spent was the night.**

Fourth Lesson: Matthew 1:18–23

Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.

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 with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But 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. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."

Duet

Born on Earth, the Divine Christ Child

French traditional

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Fifth Lesson: Luke 2:8–16

The shepherds go to the manger.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" ¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Hymn

What Child Is This
Traditional English carol
Public domain

**What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

**Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

Prayers of the People

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Response

Emmanuel
Words and music by Bob McGee
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**Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
his name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us.
His name is called Emmanuel.**

Announcements

Offering Plates are on the tables back of the church. We encourage you to give online [here](#).

Hymn

God Rest You Merry, Gentlefriends
Traditional English
Public domain

**God rest you merry, gentlefriends, let nothing you dismay,
remember Christ our savior was born on Christmas Day,
to save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy.
O tidings of comfort and joy!**

From God, our heavenly maker, a blessed angel came,
and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same,
how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy.
O tidings of comfort and joy!

Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place,
and with true love and charity each other now embrace.
This holy tide of Christmas doth bring redeeming grace.
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy.
O tidings of comfort and joy!

***Benediction**

May God's Door of Welcome
swing open in your heart and in your life.

May Christ's humble first dwelling
remind you of the plenty you already know.

And may the Spirit lead you into
more possibility and hospitality than you can imagine,
making room in The Inn for all.

May it be so for you.
May it be so for us.

Postlude

Postludio Pastoral
By L. Bottazzo
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*Please stand as you are able
Bolded Font to be read by all