

FOUNDED 1716  
*North Haven*  
*Congregational Church*  
United Church of Christ

*Christmas Eve*



North Haven, Connecticut  
*An Open & Affirming Congregation*

**NORTH HAVEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Sunday, December 24, 2023**

**7:00PM**

**Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols**

**PRELUDE:** *Lullaby* Solveig Paulsen Russell and Keith D. Rowley  
Assorted carols for flute and organ

**\*OPENING HYMN:** “O Come, All Ye Faithful” **P132**

**\*THE CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Leader: Holy people, beloved of God, come. Come to follow the way prepared for you.

**PEOPLE: Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth.**

Leader: Once again the earth is surprised at a manger, as the glory of God transforms the commonplace.

**PEOPLE: Let us go to Bethlehem and see what God has made known to us.**

Leader: Experience the wonder of God’s ways. Kneel in awe before life newly born.

**ALL: Let us bring glory and praise to God for all that we have seen and heard!\*\***

**HYMN:** “Angels We Have Heard On High” **P117**

**PRAYER OF INVOCATION:**~*unison*

Gracious God, we pray this evening for all who have come with us to Bethlehem. We pray for all who are poor and cold and hungry like the shepherds, that they may hear good news. We pray for all who are wandering and searching like the magi, that they may find the place to leave their gifts and their burdens. We pray for all who are busy, hurried and preoccupied like the innkeeper, that they may know the peace that comes from genuine acts of hospitality. We pray for all like Herod who have power, that they may use it with good will. We pray for ourselves -- we who need comfort, peace and joy, even in this starlit season, and all the days of our lives. <sup>##</sup> Amen.

**A WORD OF WELCOME**

**A GIFT OF MUSIC:** *See Amid the Winter’s Snow*

Text: Edward Caswall

Music by John Goss

Sung by the Chancel Choir

Tune: Humility

## THE PASTORAL PRAYER AND OUR LORD'S PRAYER

(trespasses)

Choral Amen

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

**A GIFT OF MUSIC:** *Still, Still, Still*

Trad. Austrian lullaby

Sung by the Chancel Choir

Gabriella DeLuca, soloist Joshua Peiffer, flute

## OUR CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Offertory

\*Doxology Advent Doxology (Once in Royal David's City)

arr. R.G. Huff

Praise to God, the One who made us.

Praise to Christ, the newborn Son.

Praise the Spirit ever with us.

Praise the Godhead, Three in One.

Clear a path! Prepare the way!

Advent leads to Christmas Day!

\*Prayer of Dedication

## THE CHRISTMAS STORY - LESSONS AND CAROLS

**A GIFT OF MUSIC:** *Away in a Manger*

James R. Murray

The NHCC Chime Choir

arr. Patricia Sanders

**THE ANNUNCIATION TO MARY:** Luke 1:26-38 p. 1201

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He 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. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The 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. And 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. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Then 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.

HERE ENDS THE READING. THANKS BE TO GOD.

**Hymn:** “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear” (vs. 1,2) **P 129**

**THE PROCLAMATION TO JOSEPH:** Matthew 1:18-25 p. 1147

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. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss 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 conceive and bear 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 borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

HERE ENDS THE READING. THANKS BE TO GOD.

**Hymn:** “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (vs. 1,2) **P 134**

**THE BIRTH OF JESUS:** Luke 2:1-7 p. 1203

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

HERE ENDS THE READING. THANKS BE TO GOD.

**A GIFT OF MUSIC:** *A Festive Noel*

Words and Music by Victor C. Johnson

Sung by the Chancel Choir

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE**

Brianna Etter-Speaker and Karlee Etter

Scripture: Isaiah 9:6-7

For 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.  
Great will be his authority,  
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.

Prayer *unison*

Eternal God, in Jesus Christ your light shines in our darkness, giving joy in our sorrow and presence in our loneliness. Fill us with the mystery of your Word made flesh, until our hearts overflow with praise and joy, for he is the beginning and end of all that exists, living forevermore. Amen.

**Hymn:** “Away in a Manger”

P137

**THE SHEPHERDS:** Luke 2:8-20

p. 1203

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the

Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

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.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HERE ENDS THE READING. THANKS BE TO GOD.

**Hymn:** “The First Nowell” v.1.2

P141

**THE FUTURE’S HOPE:** John 1:1-14

p. 1236

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

HERE ENDS THE READING. THANKS BE TO GOD.

**Hymn:** “Love Came Down at Christmas”

**insert**

**Anthem:** *Rocking Carol*

trad. Czeck nativity carol

Sung by the Chancel Choir

arr. Percy Dearmer

## **THE LIGHT GOES OUT AMONG US**

**Hymn:** “Silent Night, Holy Night”

**P 138**

**\* CLOSING HYMN:** “Joy to the World”

**P 130**

## **\*THE BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE:** Sonata No. 2 *The Song of Christmas*

Arranged by Willard A. Palmer

Based on the melody by Karl P. Harrington

\*Those who are able, please stand.

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**Special thanks to** Joshua Peiffer for his musical contributions to our worship tonight!

**Church Staff:** All the Members, Ministers to the World

The Reverend Scott G. Morrow, Senior Pastor

Karlee Etter, Ministry Coordinator for Children

Jeffrey Hutchins, Director of Music

Heather Meachen, Organist

Julie Schweickert, Office Manager

Dave Nelson, Interim Sexton

**In Our Prayers This Week are:** Linda Rankin, Linda Shannon, Marlene Bellonio, Shirley Ryan, Joyce Bellonio, Meg Adams, David Gould, and Sarah.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:** Saydee Baldino 12/24, Stephen Simonson 12/26, John Tibor 12/27, Heather Tolisano 12/29 Edward Collett 12/29, Sandy Mayhew 12/29, Elfie Hummel 12/30, Tanner DiVito 12/30, Alec DiVito 12/30, Bill Rose 12/31.

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY:** Bill & Robin Rose 12/26.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Tonight we receive the all-church special offering for **The Christmas Fund**. This fund aids clergy and lay church workers in the United Church of Christ who have underfunded pensions or emergency situations. Please give prayerfully and generously.

**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED** Monday and Tuesday, December 25 and 26. If you should have an urgent pastoral need, please leave a message at the church in the “Pastoral Emergency” voice-mail box which is checked regularly each day.



## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS\***

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>12/24</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>  7:00 p.m.	<b>WORSHIP (In-Person/Live Stream)</b> Christmas Pageant <b>WORSHIP (In-Person/Live Stream)</b> Lessons & Carols
<b>Monday</b>	<b>12/25</b>		<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>12/26</b>		<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>12/27</b>		
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>12/28</b>		
<b>Friday</b>	<b>12/29</b>		
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>12/30</b>		
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>12/31</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>WORSHIP (In-Person/Live Stream)</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>1/1</b>		<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>

\*Small print indicates non-Church function

**Bold print starts new day.**

### **MISSION**

Our church's mission is to bind ourselves with Jesus Christ in:

- Worship together;
- Nurture of Christian discipleship; and
- Compassionate service to our community and beyond.

### **VISION**

We are a hub for the larger community as a church of action:

- Conducting regular, robust worship in a responsible and relevant way in an ever changing and challenging world;
- Welcoming all people from different and diverse backgrounds to become a community of disciples together; and
- Involved in purposeful action and activities through the structure of self-directed Mission Teams.

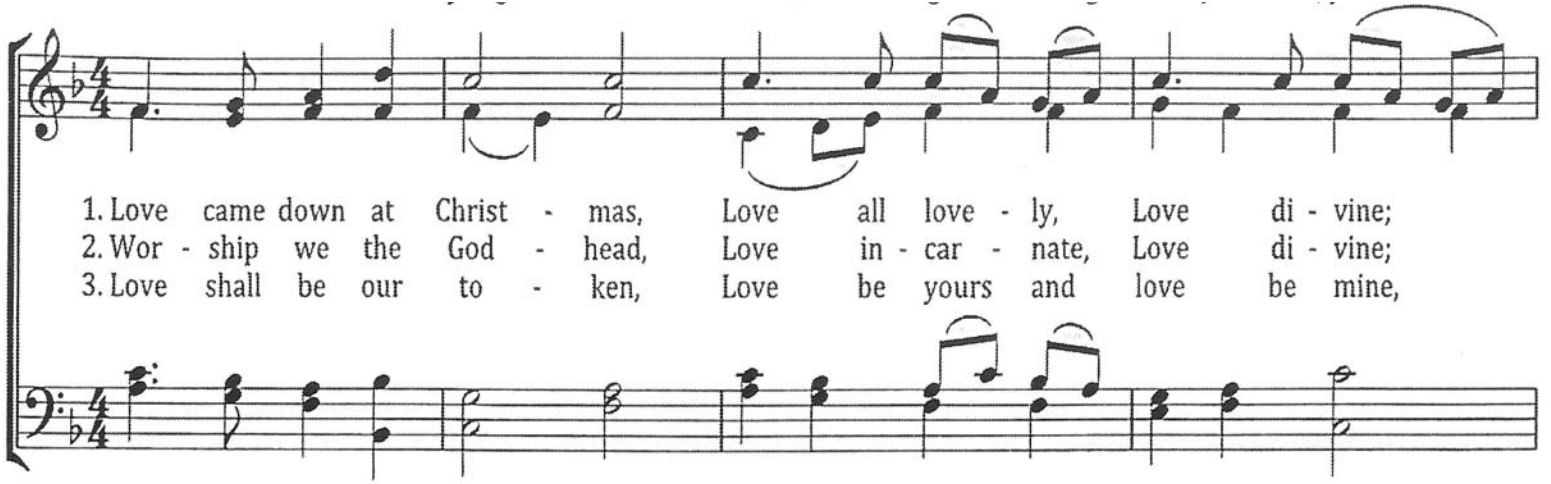
### **VALUES**

We:

- Pray together, encourage each other, and trust one another;
- Take personal responsibility for fellowship and our community; and
- Celebrate with honored traditions.

# Hymn: "Love Came Down at Christmas"

insert



1. Love came down at Christ - mas, Love all love - ly, Love di - vine;  
2. Wor - ship we the God - head, Love in - car - nate, Love di - vine;  
3. Love shall be our to - ken, Love be yours and love be mine,



Love was born at Christ - mas, Star and an - gels gave the sign.  
Wor - ship we our Je - sus: But where with for sa - cred sign?  
Love to God and neigh - bor Love for plea and gift and sign.

insert

## **2023 POINSETTIA FUND**

**Barbara Massey:** In loving memory of David & Gert Diana.

**Dot Pierce:** In loving memory of Greg & Stephen Pierce.

**Carla Hill:** In memory of my parents: Mrs. Cynthia James & Mr. Phillip James, my bother: Mr. Brian James, my maternal uncle: Mr. Charles Gedney, my paternal aunt: Mrs. Marcia (James) Carthaus, my in-laws: Mr. Paul Hill & Mrs. Barbara Hill.

**Scott Morrow and Carol Amico:** In loving memory of Robert & Marylou Morrow, Anthony & Frances Amico and Robert Amico.

**Cheryl Bogert:** In loving memory of my parents, Joan & Albert Bogert and Edward Hazen.

**Kathy & Ellie Harple:** In loving memory of Warren & David Harple.

**Linda Lacobelli:** In loving memory of Anthony Lacobelli (husband), Tony Lacobelli (son), Mr. & Mrs. Frank Prentice and Mr. & Mrs. Lucien Lacobelli.

**Ed & Mary Ellen Collett:** In loving memory of Charles & Barbara Collett.

**Joyce Bellonio:** In loving memory of Anthony & David Bellonio, Edith & Frank Prentice and Eugene & Berha Allen.

**Bernie and Elfie Hummel:** In loving memory of Bernie and Elfie's parents, Paul & Irmgard Hummel and Martin & Adelheid Dimmlich.

**Jim and Joan Bennett:** In loving memory of Jean Bennett and E. Roger & Ethel Flynn.

**Susan Guckert:** In loving memory of my husband, Gary Heffernan, and my parents George & Agatha Guckert.

**Sandy Carter:** In loving memory of my grandson Jack Viele, my parents Richard & Carmel DeCola, and my Niece Cindy Henniger.

**Mike & Lori Murphy:** In loving memory of Brian Gallagher, Albert Aponte Gallagher, and Marie & Jack Murphy.

**Merrilee Gladkosky:** In loving memory of Wilmer & Jean Taylor.

**Wendy & Tom Glynn:** In loving memory of Tom's parents, Thomas & Helga Glynn, Wendy's dad Richard Jahoda, and Wendy's brother Tom Jahoda.

**Mastracchio Family:** In loving memory of Marcia Federico & Gioser Feliz.

**Lillian and Carl Flodquist:** In loving memory of David Thomas Flodquist (Son).

**Beth Anderson:** In loving memory of my husband Philip DiPeri and parents Robert & Catherine Anderson

**Mabel & Stephen Peterson:** In loving memory of Charlotte and Byron Liske (Mabel's sister and brother-in-law), and Stewart LaRocque (Mabel's brother-in-law).

**Sara & Bryant Munson:** In loving memory of Philip Munson.

**Catherine Welch:** In loving memory of my beloved husband Ken Welch, parents Henry & Martha Griffis, Betty & Max Welch, and brother David Griffis.

**Carol Mitchell:** In loving memory of Jörn & Mary Berg-Johnsen and William S. Dawless.

**Billy, Jeanne, Christina & Nikki Mecca:** In loving memory of Maria Mecca, Marylou Lampe & Susan Gooley.

**Wendy Civitello:** In loving memory of Nina & Papa Collett.

**Donations from:**  
**Joann Barber**

