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North Haven
Congregational Church
United Church of Christ



North Haven, Connecticut
An Open & Affirming Congregation

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

Sunday, December 22, 2024

9:30 a.m.

**Fourth Sunday of Advent
The Christmas Pageant**

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE: *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

based on the melody by Richard S. Willis
arr. Morton Manus

CHORAL INTROIT: *There's A Star In The East*

Trad. American Spiritual
Sung by the Chancel & Children's Choirs

There's a Star in the East on Christmas
morn, rise up, shepherd, and follow;
it will lead to the place where the Christ was born;
rise up, shepherd, and follow.

Refrain: Follow, follow,
rise up, shepherd, and follow,
follow the Star of Bethlehem,
rise up, shepherd, and follow

If you take good heed to the angel's words, rise up,
shepherd, and follow. you'll forget your flocks, you'll
forget your herds, rise up, shepherd, and follow.

[Refrain]

***OPENING HYMN:** "Once in Royal David's City "

V62

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Leader: Let us rejoice in God our Savior, who has done great
things for us,

PEOPLE: who fills the hungry with good things!

Leader: Let us open ourselves to the Spirit of life and new birth!

ALL: Let us worship God!**

***LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF PEACE ~unison**

O Everlasting God, Wonderful Counselor, Prince of Peace,
You are the Joy of Christmas. Let us bring Joy to the world!
You are the Good News. Let us speak good news to the world
You are the promise of peace. Let us work for peace in the world.***
Amen.##

***AN ADVENT SONG OF PRAISE**

V882

Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.
O blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:~unison

We sing "O Come, All Ye Faithful," God, but we confess we are not always faithful. We could have shown love this past week, but we kept ourselves busy with other things. We spoke without thinking and hurt someone. We treated the gifts and greetings and meals as chores, leaving out the most important ingredient – caring. We are sorry. Please forgive us, and accept our worship.

Amid the bright colors that surround us this season – the red the green, the gold – send the light of your Christ, that all that is good may be revealed more clearly, and all that is wrong may be exposed and changed.

We pray in the name of Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem, who lived and died for our sakes, and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.** Amen.

** Amen.

~ *silence* ~

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ALL: Thanks be to God

THE 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.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Scripture: Luke 2:8-14 p. 1203

Dot Pierce and Kathy Harple

Now in that same 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!”

Lighting the **ANGEL** Candle

Hanging the **ANGEL** Ornament

Prayer *unison*

O Father, who has declared your love by the birth of Jesus Christ at Bethlehem, help us to welcome him with gladness and to make room for him in our common days, so that we may live at peace with one another and in good will with all people everywhere. Amen.

Sung Response: “Angels We Have Heard on High ” v. 1-2 V38

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains,
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

PASTORAL CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS
PASTORAL PRAYER

THE OFFERTORY

*Advent Doxology

Tune: Irby

Praise to God, the one_ who made us. Praise to Christ, God's on - ly_

4
son. Praise the Spi - rit, ev - er_ with us. Praise the God - head, Three in_

8
One. Clear a path! Pre - pare the way! Ad - vent leads to Christ - mas Day!

*Prayer of Dedication

THE FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON: Luke 1:39-55 Page 1202

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name; indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

HERE ENDS THE READING. **THANKS BE TO GOD.**

* **HYMN:** "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

V58

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Carol: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" v. 1

V 1

Unison Em Am Em

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el,

D Bm C Bm Em

and ran - som cap - tive Is - ra - el

Am Em Bm

that mourns in low - ly ex - ile here

Em D G Am Em

un - til the Son of God ap - pear.

Refrain G D Em Bm G Am Bm Em G Em Am Bm Em

Re-joice! Re-joice! Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

Carol: "What Child Is This" v. 1

Em D G D

1 What child is this, who laid to rest, on

Em Am B Em D G

Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with

D Em Am B Em

an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?

Refrain Bm G D Em Am B

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;

Bm G D Em Am B Em

haste, haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the Son of Ma - ry!

Carol: "The First Nowell" vs. 1,3

V 91

1 The first Now - ell the an - gel did say
3 And by the light of that same star

was to cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay;
three wise men came from coun - try far;

in fields where they lay a - keep - ing their sheep
to seek for a king was their in - tent,

on a cold win - ter's night that was so deep.
and to fol - low the star wher - ev - er it went.

Refrain

Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell,

born is the King of Is - ra - el.

In unison

1 We three kings of O-ri-ent are, Bear-ing gifts we trav-erse a - far

Field and foun-tain, moor and moun-tain, Fol-low-ing yon-der star.

REFRAIN

O star of won-der, star of night, Star with roy-al beau-ty bright,

West-ward lead-ing, still pro-ceed-ing, Guide us to thy per-fect light.

Carol: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" vs. 1,2 V 44

1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious
2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful
song of old, from an - gels bend - ing near the earth
wings un - furled; and still their heaven - ly mu - sic floats
to touch their harps of gold, "Peace on the earth, good
o'er all the wea - ry world; a - bove its sad and
will to all, from heaven's all - gra - cious King!"
low - ly plains they bend on hover - ing wing,
The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.

GREETING OF PEACE ~unison

May the peace of God in Jesus Christ be with you always!

***CLOSING HYMN: "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"**

V43

***THE BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE: *Angels We Have Heard on High* 19th c French Carol
arr. Willard A. Palmer

*Those who are able, please stand.

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Deacon is Peter Hall. **Greeter** is Patience Benassi. **Scripture Reader** is David Nottingham. **Fellowship Hour** is immediately following Service. **Poinsettias** decorate the Sanctuary for the Christmas Season.

In Our Prayers This Week are: Linda Rankin, Linda Shannon, Marlene Bellonio, Shirley Ryan, Joyce Bellonio, Meg Adams, Herb & Ann Schneider, and Sarah.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Poinsettias

The poinsettias decorating the sanctuary during the Advent season will be distributed to our homebound members. Please look for the special envelopes that are in the pews. Contributions may be placed in the offering plates or left in the church office. Checks should be made payable to the “North Haven Congregational Church” and marked “Poinsettia Fund”. The contributions that exceed the cost of the poinsettias will be donated to Outreach for urgent community needs. Please mark the envelope with your dedication or email churchoffice@northhavenucc.org.

Special Offering for the Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund is a special offering of the United Church of Christ which has provided assistance to UCC clergy and lay employees for more than 100 years. The Christmas Fund provides pension supplementation of pension and health insurance to lower-income retired clergy and lay employees, as well as a modest Christmas “thank-you” gift check and emergency assistance grants to a small number of active clergy and lay employees. This offering will be received on Sunday, Dec. 22nd, and at the services on Christmas Eve. Please give prayerfully and generously!

Urgent Need: Clothing Items for Columbus House.

We continue to collect the socks and underwear through the month of December. The Ministry Leadership Board thanks everyone who has contributed during this season of generosity. Jesus taught us to care for our brothers and sisters and our Congregation and Rotary Club Members have given to those less fortunate.

Special Music Collection For Musicians At Christmas

We are very grateful to those church folks who have given to our holiday special music collections in the past. This money goes directly toward funding guest musicians such as trumpeters, flutists, and string players on Christmas and Easter. We are hoping to hire a flutist and a cellist to augment the beauty of this year's 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service. If you can donate regularly to this ministry, we are most grateful, as it is a year round collection. The pink music collection envelopes will be in the pews during Advent. It is important that we compensate our guest musicians fairly and at current professional rates. Thanks again to all who have made this possible over the years.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS*

Sunday	12/22	9:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m.	WORSHIP: Fourth Sunday of Advent (Christmas Pageant) CONFIRMATION (K)
Monday	12/23		
Tuesday	12/24	7:00 p.m.	CHRISTMAS EVE: LESSONS & CAROLS
Wednesday	12/25		CHRISTMAS: OFFICE CLOSED
Thursday	12/26		OFFICE CLOSED
Friday	12/27		
Saturday	12/28	3:00 p.m.	Tibetan American (K, CR)
Sunday	12/29	9:30 a.m.	WORSHIP: First Sunday After Advent

*Small print indicates non-Church function

Bold print starts new day.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: Rich Gallagher 12/22, Saydee Baldino 12/24, Stephen Simonson 12/26, John Tibor 12/27, Edward Collett 12/29.

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, Sexton

*OPENING HYMN: "Once in Royal David's City"

Descant

4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci - ty stood a
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who, with
 3 For he is our life - long pat - tern; dai - ly,
 4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his

own re - deem - ing love; for that child who seemed so

low - ly cat - tle - shed, where a moth - er laid her
 God, is ov - er all, and his shel - ter was a
 when on earth he grew, he was temp - ted, scorned, re -
 own re - deem - ing love; for that child who seemed so

help - less is our Lord in heaven a - bove; and he

ba - by in a man - ger for his bed. Ma - ry
 sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall. There a -
 jec - ted, tears and smiles like us he knew. Thus he
 help - less is our Lord in heaven a - bove; and he

leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.

was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
 mong the poor and low - ly lived on earth our Sav - iour ho - ly.
 feels for all our sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
 leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;
2 Flocks were sleep - ing; shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the babe is Lord of all.
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift are wing - ing an - gels sing - ing, no - els ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing greet the mor - row:



Christ the babe is born for all. Christ the babe is born for all!
Christ the babe was born for you. Christ the babe was born for you!



*CLOSING HYMN: "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

Refrain (Unison)

G D G Am7 D

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

G Cmaj7 G Em C G D7 G Fine

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

Harmony

G D G

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 lone - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,

G A A7 D/D7 D.C.

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



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.