

Bulletin December 25, 2022
Christmas Morning

Prelude and Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

***Call to Worship**

Leader: Sing a new song to the Holy One! Emmanuel reigns!!

People: Mighty God, we gather to consider your marvelous works.

Leader: Sing a new song to the Holy One! Emmanuel reigns!!

People: Wonderful Counselor, we gather to delight in your revelation.

Leader: Sing a new song to the Holy One! Emmanuel reigns!!

People: Prince of Peace, we gather to become messengers of your good news.

***Hymn #129:** "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

***Invocation**

God with us, we open our hearts and souls to the beauty of your kingdom. We seek to hear the precious news once again that we might be continually renewed, transformed, and awed by your abundant love, everlasting peace, miraculous hope, and quenchless joy. May our praise and prayers be pleasing to you. May our lives reflect the beauty you have birthed in us. Amen.

Christmas Day in Scripture, Story, and Song

(Scripture verses are printed and anyone present is invited to come up the microphone and read the scripture for the hymn)

The Story Behind: "Lo, How A Rose is Blooming"

Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-2

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
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.

Story of the song

Hymn #127: "Lo, How A Rose Is Blooming"

The Story Behind: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Scripture: Micah 5:2

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
 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.

Scripture: Luke 2:4-7

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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ 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 in the guest room.

Story of the song

Hymn #3: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

(Green Book)

The Story Behind: “Silent Night, Holy Night”

Scripture: Luke 2:8-20

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ 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: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”¹³ And 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!”

¹⁵ 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.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹ and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Story of the Song

Hymn #2: “Silent Night, Holy Night”

(Green Book)

The Story Behind: “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing”

Scripture: Isaiah 60:19-20

The sun shall no longer be
your light by day,
nor for brightness shall the moon
give light to you by night,
but the Lord will be your everlasting light,
and your God will be your glory.
²⁰ Your sun shall no more go down
or your moon withdraw itself,
for the Lord will be your everlasting light,
and your days of mourning shall be ended.

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Story of the Song

Hymn #5: “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

(Green Book)

The Story Behind: “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”

Scripture: Luke 2: 12-14

¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And 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!

Story of the Song

Hymn #98: “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”

(printed at the back of the bulletin)

***Christmas Day Unison Prayer**

Emmanuel, God promised and God with us: Give us peace as we need peace; give us courage to live in times without peace. Awaken us to the hope of your

reign, but restrain us from vain hopes in the dominions around us. Free us to claim our own welling-up joy, and sustain us where joy seems far. Lead us to service in your world; strengthen our feeble attempts to serve. Spirit of holiness and good tidings, we come through Advent again, and again we learn the meaning of incarnation. Form and receive our words of praise, prayer and prophecy, for we magnify your name and rejoice in your salvation in the Christmas moment and the journey of our years and lives.

Lord's Prayer

Invitation to the Offering

On this day that has become synonymous with gift giving, let us reflect on the gifts of love, hope, joy, and peace. Let us respond to the generosity of the Giver of all things beautiful. Let us give generously to share God's beauty in our community.

***Doxology**

***Prayer of Dedication**

Generous God, we give thanks for all the beautiful resources you have given to us. Let these gifts bring glory and honor to you and beauty and peace to your creation. Amen.

***Hymn #154: "Go Tell It On the Mountain"**

***Commissioning and Blessing**

"The Work of Christmas" by Howard Thurman

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.

Go in hope, peace, joy, and love...to spread the beauty of Christmas.

***Postlude**

Worship resources: ***Beauty: Service Prayers for Christmas Eve/Day*** was written by The Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ.