



December 6, 2020

St. John's United Church of Christ

As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.

**Called by God
Sharing with the World**

December 6, 2020
Second Sunday of Advent

Gathering

Meditation

Keep awake!! You do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

Matthew 24:42

Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Daniel Young

Opening Hymn

O Little Town of Bethlehem

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 giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

Lifting up our Joys

Passing of the Peace

✠Call to Worship (*portions of psalm 95*)

Leader: Look up and raise your heads,
because your redemption is near.

People: Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and hope.

Leader: Look around and understand the signs of the times
for the kingdom of God is near.

People: Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and hope.

Leader: Look out; keep alert! The Son of Man is coming
at an hour you do not expect.

People: Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and hope.

✠Opening Prayer

“God of all hope, we come to you this morning as a grateful congregation. In this second Sunday of Advent, please give us regular reminders that this time, this season is a time for preparation and waiting for the Christ child. We ask Lord, for you to fill us with the wonderment and marvel that the shepherds witnessed and for the pure love that Mary and Joseph experienced. Amen.”

✠Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

**Holy God, we confess that it is not easy to wait for you.
Our world worships the power that acts quickly through force.
We take part in the ways of war, hatred, greed, and injustice.
We ignore the needy, defend our advantages
and neglect our prayers.
Forgive us and show us how to prepare for you.
Come to us in Christ; renew our lives;
and reveal your reign on earth. Amen.**

Silent pause for reflection

✠ Assurance of Forgiveness

Friends in Christ if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive Our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. This is God's gift to us and the world so that we can know abundant life.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Sarnes Family

Let us pray together the Advent Prayer.

God of all hope, at the beginning of creation you made the light that scatters all darkness. May Christ, the true light, shine on us and free us from the power of sin and death. Grant us peace as we welcome Jesus Christ; for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Bible Readings *1 Corinthians 2: 1-9 and Luke 1: 26-35*

Ethan Frantz

Children's Message and Blessing

Jamie Barton

Today's Message *"The Mystery of Christmas"*

Jamie Barton

✠ UCC Statement of Faith

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify: He calls the worlds into being, creates man in his own image and sets before him the ways of life and death. He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin. He judges men and nations by his righteous will declared through prophets and apostles. In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to himself. He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races. He calls us into

his church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory. He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Prayer of Our Savior (*unison*)

**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 debts, as we
forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us
from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory
forever. Amen**

✠ Giving our Gifts to God

✠ Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

✠ Sending Forth and Final Blessing

Closing Hymn

He is Born the Divine Christ Child

He is born, the divine Christ Child;
play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!
He is born, the divine Christ Child;
sing we all of the Savior mild.

1 Through long ages of the past,
prophets have foretold His coming;
through long ages of the past,
now the time has come at last!

He is born, the divine Christ Child;
play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!
He is born, the divine Christ Child;
sing we all of the Savior mild.

Jesus, Lord of all the world,
coming as a Child among us;
Jesus, Lord of all the world,
grant to us Thy heavenly peace.

He is born, the divine Christ Child;
play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!
He is born, the divine Christ Child;
sing we all of the Savior mild.

Postlude

Daniel Young

Worship Leader:

Jamie Barton

Blessings to you from St. John's United Church of Christ in Orwigsburg.

Make Handwashing a Time of Prayer: Washing our hands for 20 seconds is one of the ways to reduce the spread of the COVID virus. How long is 20 seconds? That is sometimes hard to track. However, there is a way that combines adequate handwashing and praising God. The Doxology that we sing during worship, (it starts with "Praise God from whom all blessings flow....") takes approximately 20 seconds to sing. By choosing to sing the Doxology each time we wash our hands we mentally shift our focus from the challenge of living within a pandemic to thoughts of gratitude and the blessings God has bestowed. Focusing on these positives in the midst of our challenges improves our health and wellbeing. Thanks be to God.

The Bible Study for women: "Tis well: walking away from anxiety and into God's world" will now be done as an email study. We will post some readings and reflections once a week and people can respond to all on the email list for discussion. We have heard from a number of people who do not do zoom but who are interested. Please email Kay Jones at kjones8022@aol.com to participate. The day and time will be set by those who join.