



December 21, 2025

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 21, 2025
4th Sunday of Advent

Meditation

“I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.”

Charles Dickens

Chimes

Prelude

The First Nowell - arranged by Josie Merlino

Welcome and Announcements

✠Opening Hymn #185 *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King:
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”

Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King.”

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin’s womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th’incarnate Deity,
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King.”

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born the we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King.”

Lifting up our Joys

Passing of the Peace

✠ **Call to Worship** (Congregation reads **bold** print)

We have been looking for a sign.

Emmanuel—God with us.

We have been waiting for a savior.

Emmanuel—God with us.

The time is near—can it be?

Emmanuel—God with us.

Come let us worship the God of sign, wonder, and promise.

✠ **Opening Prayer**

Pastor Jeff

✠ **Prayer of Confession** (*Pastor Only*)

Have mercy on us, O God according to your unfailing love, according to your great compassion blot out our transgressions.

(Let us take a few moments of silence to think about our need for God's mercy and forgiveness.)

Amen.

✠ **Assurance of Forgiveness**

Hear the good news: In the name of Jesus, Savior-from-our-sin, our compassionate God forgives us, and gives us the grace to start over. **Thanks be to God!**

Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Stone 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. Fill us with hope, peace, joy, and love as we welcome Jesus Christ; for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Scripture Readings

Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 2:8-14, 16

Curt Welsh

✠ *All who are able shall stand*

Matthew 1:18-23

¹⁸ 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 pregnant from the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ 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.

²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,”
which means, “God is with us.”

Luke 2:8-14, 16

⁸ 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!”

¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger.

Choir Anthem

Who Would Send a Baby

Children's Christmas Program

"Just A Little Christmas"

Participants:

Calmina Kukta

Demetri Kukta

Jacob Kunkle

Christian Machamer

Austin Marrongelle

Gianna Marrongelle

Chloe Moore

Kinley Moore

Macie Stone

Ultan Stone

Arlo Stone

Thanks very much to our Sunday school leaders:

Lori Moore, Irma Johnson

Thanks to all our parents and families that helped make this happen!

Songs

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 hope and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger no crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Angels We Have Heard on High
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

Jingle Bells (Children Only)

We Wish You a Merry Christmas (Children Only)

✝ An Advent Creed

We believe in one God, who is Creator, maker of all we see and all we don't see. Who is Ruler of the universe: Source of all creation!

We believe in one God, who is Jesus Christ, God from God, Light from Light, true God and true human. He is one with the Creator; the Word made flesh, our Messiah: Savior of all creation!

We believe in one God, who is Holy Spirit, breath of God moving among us; who is one with the Creator; one with the Christ; our Comforter and our Guide: Mentor of all creation!

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Giving our Gifts to God

Offertory

The Birthday of a King - arranged by Josie Merlino

✠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.

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer *(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

✠Closing Hymn #218 “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo! Above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth.

Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.

✠ Sending Forth and Final Blessing

✠ Chimes/Meditation

Postlude

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming



***The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of
God, in Honor of Our Parents, Carol &
Richard Cole and Sue & William Holler.
Presented by the Holler Family***