



St. John's United Church of Christ  
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**JOY**  
**Love**  
*Peace*  
**FORGIVENESS**  
*Hope*  
**MERCY FAITH**  
*Faithfulness*  
**GOODNES**  
*Believe in Jesus*  
**CELEBRATE**  
**FOR GOD SO**  
*loved the world*  
**THAT HE GAVE...**



**St. John's  
United Church of Christ  
December 24, 2021  
Christmas Eve**



[\* = Those who are able may stand, L = Leader, P = People and A = All]

**Angels Among Us: #DoNotBeAfraid**

**RINGING OF THE BELL**

**PRELUDE**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**RITUAL OF FELLOWSHIP**

**\*INTROIT** "Emmanuel, Emmanuel" No. 134  
Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel. God with us,  
revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

L. Tonight, the earth is once again surprised at a manger, as the glory of God transforms the commonplace.  
**P. Let us go to Bethlehem to see what God has made known to us.**  
L. Experience anew the wonder of God's ways as we turn our hearts in awe before life that is fresh and new.  
**P. Let us glorify and praise God for all that we have seen and heard!#**

**\*OPENING HYMN** "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" No. 149

**\*INVOCATION (In Unison)**  
God of light and love, shine upon us this Christmas Eve and in the year ahead. Guide us out of darkness and into your joyous light. May our lives reflect your glorious love, that others may see your Christmas Spirit in us, each and every day of our lives. Amen.<sup>MM</sup>

**\*GLORIA PATRI** No. 35  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world with out end. Amen. Amen.

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT AND CHRIST CANDLES**

**RESPONSE:** A Candle is Burning (Tune: Away in a Manger)

We honor Messiah with the CHRIST candle's flame.  
Our Christmas Eve candles glad tidings proclaim.  
O come, all ye faithful, rejoice in this night  
as God comes among us, the Christians' true light.

**ANTHEM** "Jesus Is Born" -Larson

**ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN**  
**THE SONG** "Away in a Manger" (words below)  
(Please join in singing as the children return to their seats.)

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

**PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

**THE CALL TO OFFERING**  
**\*DOXOLOGY** No. 46  
Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below; praise God above ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (In Unison)**  
Thank you God for the gifts we have the privilege of sharing on this holy night. Use this offering and us for the message of the Good News: scattering hope, bringing peace, rekindling joy, and expressing love to all the people. Amen.<sup>PB</sup>

**CHRISTMAS PRAYERS**

**THE STORY OF JESUS' BIRTH**

**SCRIPTURE** Selections from Luke 1, Matthew 1, and Luke 2:1-14  
**THE SONG** "While, Shepherds Watched Their Flocks" No. 154 (1, 2, 6)  
**SCRIPTURE** Luke 2:15-20  
**THE HYMN** "O Little Town of Bethlehem" No. 144 (1 & 4)  
**THE MEDITATION** "This Will Be a Sign: morelove"  
**THE SONG** "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" No. 153 (1 & 2)

**THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**THE INVITATION**  
**THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION [In Unison]**  
Light of the World: you gave us the transforming birth of the child Jesus as a light for our path. Yet, we confess, that too often we shut our eyes to the light and turn away from the gift you have given us. We acknowledge our reluctance to see and share our gifts with our sisters and brothers. There have been times when we have been dazzled by the glitter

and tinsel the world has made of Christ's birth. We ask that your Spirit be lit within us, that the light of peace and justice may shine through us. We seek to receive, and to share the gift of Christ's birth and death, again and again. Amen. <sup>#</sup> (...silent prayers of confession...)

#### THE ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

#### THE COMMUNION PRAYER AND WORDS OF INSTITUTION

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER (In 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.

#### THE SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

#### THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

##### The Candlelight Ceremony

*Please pass the light down each row, tipping the unlit candle into the lit candle.  
When the pastors raise their lighted candles, please raise the one you are holding.*

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child, holy infant so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,  
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia;  
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light  
radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;  
with the angels let us sing, alleluia to our King;  
Christ, the Savior, is born, Christ, the Savior, is born.

#### \*THE CHRISTMAS BLESSING

*Please extinguish the candles but continue to let the light of God's love,  
the compassion of Christ, and the grace of God's Spirit shine through your lives.*

#### \*CLOSING HYMN

"Joy to the World"

No. 143

#### POSTLUDE

*Please put your candle & holder in the available container as you leave the sanctuary.*

#### Worship Notes

<sup>#</sup>Reprinted with permission from Chalice Worship © 1997 by Chalice Press (Adapted)

<sup>MM</sup>Ministry Matters *Worship Elements* by Laura Jaquith Bartlett (Christmas Eve)

<sup>PB</sup>From "*The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund*"

Offering Guide 2021 (Adapted)

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Please consider supporting St. John's United Church of Christ so we can continue to do God's work and mission here and throughout the world. Offerings may be placed in the offering plate at the rear of the Sanctuary or delivered to the Church Office in person or by mail.

*The Church Board has voted to follow CDC recommendation. Everyone is asked to wear a mask inside the building regardless of vaccination status. Please remember that those who do not feel safe among people in public places are encouraged to remain home and worship virtually.*

Worship services will be found on the church website, [www.myucc.org](http://www.myucc.org), by clicking on the "sermons" tab. And on the church Facebook page, *St. John's United Church of Christ Vincennes*

***Many hearts. Many voices. One church.***