

**CHRISTMAS EVE  
CANDLELIGHT AND CAROLS SERVICE AT  
CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

December 24, 2017

7:00 and 9:00 P.M.

PRELUDE

"Ding dong Merrily on High"	arr. Valerie W. Stephenson	<i>CUMC Adult Handbells</i>
"Carillon on a Ukrainian Carol"	Gerald Near	<i>Tom Bara, organ</i>
"Joy to the World"	Traditional, arr. John A. Behnk	<i>CUMC Adult Handbells</i>

BRASS FANFARE "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" arr. David Willcocks

\*ENTRY INTO CELEBRATION

One: Welcome to this night that is unlike all other nights. Tonight we are both here, and on a lonely hillside outside of Bethlehem.

**All: Tonight, we are with each other, friends and family, neighbors and guests from far away, and we are also with the Magi, on a journey to the Christ child.**

One: There is a way that the story we tell tonight is always happening - birth and death and taxes, weary travelers with no place to stay, babies born, sudden signs of grace and glory and surprising generosity.

**All: The past and the present spill into each other tonight, and we sense the connection of our own eternal with our everyday selves tonight.**

One: And when, at this evening's end, we pass the light of a candle, from hand to hand, we will see the brightness of God's Spirit in and between us, as time stands still for an instant.

**All: Come, it is Christmas Eve, let us worship together.**

\*PROCESSIONAL CAROL "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

*O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem. Come and behold him, born the King of angels; REFRAIN: O come, let us adore him, O Come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

*True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal, lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb; Glory to God, Son of the Father, begotten, not created; REFRAIN*

*Sing, choir of angels, sing in exultation; O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God, all glory in the highest;*

*REFRAIN*

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning, Jesus, to thee be all glory given.*

*Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:*

*REFRAIN*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

*The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior*

CAROL

"Love Came Down At Christmas"  
Chancel Choir

Howard Helvey

SECOND LESSON

Luke 1: 26-35, 38

*The angel Gabriel salutes the blessed Virgin Mary*

CAROL

"Lo! In the Cold of Winter Deep" arr. Gordon Thornett  
Chancel Choir

THIRD LESSON

Luke 2: 1, 3-6

*St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus*

CAROL

"Almost There " Michael W. Smith, Amy Grant  
The WELL Band

FOURTH LESSON

Luke 2: 8-16

*The shepherds go to the manger*

CAROL

"All Is Well"  
The WELL Band

Michael W. Smith

FIFTH LESSON

Matthew 2: 1-11

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

CAROL

"O Holy Night"  
The WELL Band and the Chancel Choir

arr. Jeffrey Cobb

MEDITATION

"Mary Knew"

CAROLS OF CHRISTMAS AND GIVING OUR GIFTS

**Congregational Carol Sing (see last page at the bottom)**

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

"Joy to the World"

"Away in a Manger"

"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

"The First Noel"

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

Voice 1: One candle to remind us of the prophets, the second for John the Baptizer, the third for Mary, and the fourth for us. Now, the central candle for Jesus, born this night. Jesus is the light of the world.

Voice 2: Mary gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in strips of cloth, and laid him in a manger for his bed, for there was no room for them to stay in the inn. (Luke 2:7)

**All: Lord, you come as a tiny, fragile baby; yet we know that you are our strong God, always with us. May the flame of these candles remind us that you are the light of the world, and that when we follow you, we never walk alone in darkness, but walk surrounded in light.**

*When passing the flame, please hold your lighted candle upright while the person next to you lights his/her candle from yours. Please keep a safe distance between candles, hair and clothing.*

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL

"Silent Night"

**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, 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.**

*\*(Please stand for the last verse)*

**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!**

*(Please hum a final stanza)*

\*BLESSING

\*POSTLUDE

"Go Tell It On The Mountain" arr. Jeffrey Cobb  
The WELL Band

## CONGREGATIONAL CAROL SING

### 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!

### It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth,  
to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all gracious  
King." The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

### Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;  
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and heaven, and nature sing.

### Away in the Manger

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

### 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!"

### The First Noel

The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; in fields  
where they lay keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

### **A Christmas Eve prayer for the part of us that is spiritual but not religious -**

*Lord, I don't go to church much. I don't go at all...Well, I go at Christmas. I'm home then. I feel drawn to it. I like the Christmas Eve service, the coolness of the air. I feel like a child again...it's surreal. I know folks make fun of people like me. What can I say? I've drifted...but there is a pull back. Are You speaking to me? I hear something in the sermon, sometimes, but mostly it's the music and the candles. What is it about those candles? And the darkness? The darkness...or maybe it's the light, I suppose. Light and darkness. I know about light and darkness. I live in both. I've got some of both in me. I'm basically a good person, I think, but I struggle...I know about light and darkness. But I want to be closer to the light. I want to light that candle and sing those words: "And in the dark street shineth, the everlasting light..." I would like to live in that light, Lord. I would like to come home. I would like to discover you nearby, even with my doubts.*