

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
3 Gray Road, North Yarmouth, Maine 04097
Organized in 1806



Christmas Eve
December 24, 2021 ~ 11:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve

11:00 pm

Music for Gathering

Call to Worship John 1:1-5, 14

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” #148 vs 1

Words: John F. Wade, 1743; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841 and others

Music: John F. Wade, 1743; desc. David Willcocks, 1961

**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;
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

Opening Prayer

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The four Advent candles are lit before the service begins.

One: Because God so loves the world,

Many: This beautiful and broken world,

One: This divided and distanced world,

Many: This warming and burning world,

One: This lost and hurting world,

Many: God’s love is made flesh.

One: For such a time as this,

Many: A child is born unto us.

One: For such a time as this,

Many: The light of Christ shines upon us.

One: In a stinky stable turned birthing room,

Many: New visions of family and community are born.

One: By the surprising subversion of God’s in-breaking love,

Many: The burden of injustice is thrown off.

One: Through the ages-old song of angels and shepherds,

Many: God's glory is proclaimed.

One: On this holy night, the one we've been watching for is here.

Many: On this holy night, the time we've been waiting for is now.

One: Let us rejoice together!

Many: Glory to God in the highest, and peace and goodwill to all!

The Christ candle is lit. Silence is kept.

ALL: FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS, THE CHRIST CHILD COMES TO US.

FOR SUCH AS TIME AS THIS, GOD'S LOVE IS BORN IN US.

JOY TO THE WORLD!

First Gospel Reading Luke 2:2-6

2 In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. **2** This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. **3** All went to their own towns to be registered. **4** 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.

CAROL "O Little Town of Bethlehem" 144 vs 1 and 4

Words: Phillips Brooks, 1868, alt. Music: Lewis H. Redner, 1868

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 shin-eth the ever-lasting Light;

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

Luke 2:7

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 for them in the inn.

CAROL "Away in a Manger" #147

Words: Anonymous (19th century)

Music: Attr. James R. Murray, 1887; harm. LBW, 1978

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.

Second Gospel Reading Luke 2: 8-12

⁸ In that 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."

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

Words: Edmund H. Sears, 1849 Music: Richard S. Willis, 1850

**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 all,
from heaven's all gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**

Luke 2: 13-14

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!"

CAROL "Angels We Have Heard on High" #155 vs 1, 2 and 3

Words: Traditional French carol; tr. Crown of Jesus, 1862, alt.

Music: French carol medlody; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937

Harm. Austin C. Lovelace, 1964, alt.; desc. Richard E. Gerig, 1956

**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!**

Third Gospel Reading Luke 2: 15-20

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 But 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, as it had been told them.

CAROL "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" #150

Words: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt. Music: Felix Medelssohn, 1840;
arr. William H. Cummings, 1856; desc. Paul Liljestr and

**Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem."
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!**

Fourth Gospel Reading Matthew 2:1-6

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.”

CAROL “We Three Kings of Orient Are” #172 vs 1 and 5

Words and Music: John H. Hopkins, Jr., 1857

**We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
west-ward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

Fifth Gospel Reading Matthew 2: 7-12

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation Song “Joy to the World”

Words: Isaac Watts, 1719 Music Attr. George F. Handel, 1741; arr. Lowell Mason, 1848

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!

Holy Living God, creator of all heaven and nature,

in the same way you came in the first loud cry of a baby in a stable, your breath filled us on the day we were born. You inhabit our very being, and even when we turn away, you are there, part of us, breath by breath, heartbeat by heartbeat.

You have drawn us to your love time and again, reminding us that we are made for joy.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.

In the midst of healing, feeding and teaching, he brought a spark of something so special that people would tell his story over and over until it got to us.

He promised that this spark, this light, this joy, Would be with us always.

We remember this night that Jesus' birth was the beginning of a world-altering story.

How could Mary and Joseph have known that the babe that learned to eat just like the rest of us would someday sit at tables and show us all how to eat of the banquet that really matters—the banquet of love and grace, life and love?

Just as this babe cried for his first sustaining milk, on a night thirty-three years later, he reached for the bread and cup on the table of his last meal, and reminded his disciples—and now us—that we must cry out for justice and joy for all living things.

He gave thanks to you, Holy God, broke the bread, and told them, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me.”

And then when the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you;
this is my love,
poured out for love of all people.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.”

And so, with joy we offer ourselves in service,
in union with Christ’s offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

All: Christ has died, yet Christ still lives
Christ will ever come again!

Like the heaven’s light from above on that night,
pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, O God,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the coming of
newly born hope, love, joy and peace
so that we may be for the world these things,
strengthened by your presence within us.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ
with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God,
now and forever.

Sharing the Bread and Juice

The Lord's Prayer

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.

“Silent Night”

Words: Joseph Mohr, 1818; tr. John F. Young, 1863
Music: Franz Gruber, 1818

**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 Al-le-lu-ia
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.**

Benediction

Go now in peace and be messengers of God's love and joy in our world!

Staff

Pastor: Rev. Nancy J. White
Administrative Assistant: Lyn Glassock
Organist: Peter Dickson*
Organist: Linda Lambrides
Choir Director: David Myers, Jr.
Sexton: Mark R.H. Heath
Treasurer: Liz McGlinn, CPA, CGMA

Church Phone: 829-3644
Church e-mail: nyarmouthccucc@gmail.com

Rev. Nancy J. White phone: 207-504-6289
Rev. Nancy J. White email: nyccevnancy@gmail.com

Church Website: <http://nyccucc.com>
Maine Conference Website: www.maineucc.org
YouTube: youtube.com/c/nyccucc

Due to the Corona Virus-Covid-19, this service was held in-person and live streamed on YouTube with all CDC protocols in place.

If you are not receiving church emails and would like to, please send an email to nyarmouthccucc@gmail.com asking to be added to the list. Like the NYCC FB page and you will be notified of what is happening there, too!

Offering can also be made online through Tithely at <https://tithe.ly/give?c=1301940>



Christmas Stars

Donations made to the Cumberland/North Yarmouth Food Pantry or the Pet Place Pantry

In Celebration of

Jennifer Lyn Strattard
Our NYCC Family
Our wonderful musicians and Choir

Donated by

Gail Strattard
Anonymous
Anonymous

In Loving Memory Of

John & Beth Ames
Diana Candage
Richard Brobst
Loved ones
Loved ones
Dick Maddox
Quentin McConnell
Cathy McGlinn
Edna Rosengren
Joyce Morin
Eileen Murphy
Those we have loved and lost
John "Jake" Strattard
Our Mothers

Donated by

Pam & John Ames
Pam & John Ames
Priscilla Brobst & Family
Priscilla Brobst & Family
Lois Knight
Judy Maddox
Martha McConnell & Family
Mcglinn Family
Mcglinn Family
Mcglinn Family
Mcglinn Family
Norm & Donna Smith
Gail Strattard
Rev. White &
Sandra & Vince Golonka

Pet Place Pantry

In Memory of Tim

Jeanne Chadbourne