

Trinity United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

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December 3, 2023

10:45 AM

Angels Among Us¹

Make Ready a People: More Hope

If you are a guest, thank you for worshipping with us today. We invite you and all present to sign the pew pads located at the end of each pew. We also invite you to sign your name in our guest book located in the back entrance of the sanctuary or at the bottom of the stairs that lead to the sanctuary. Please note, all doors to the building will be open until 11:00 AM. After that time, please use the handicap door in the narthex.

*We welcome infants and children and all their wiggles & voices in our worship! For your comfort, we also have a children's corner in the back narthex where your child can relax and play, and you can still participate in the worship experience. Nursery care (infant through 2nd grade) is also provided, should you desire it. ***Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.***

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

"Song of Hope"

Music by Richard Warner

Organ Solos for Advent and Christmas

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LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Advent Candlelighting Family: Jacob, Amber, and Aubree Dwyer

ALL SING: Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

DWYER FAMILY: We light the first Advent candle, the candle of hope, and ask that God would alight within us the flame of hope this day, granting us an openness to hearing the message of the angels, and courage to be messengers in the world, creating more hope in the midst of fear. And with the angel messengers above us, among us, and within us, we say:

ALL: Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid.

***OPENING HYMN**

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

NCH #125, vs. 1-4
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Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, echo back their joyous strains.

REFRAIN: Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be, which inspire your heavenly song.

REFRAIN

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;
Come adore on bended knee, God, our world now entering.

REFRAIN

See the babe in manger laid whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.

REFRAIN

TIME OF CONFESSION

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ALL: Loving and Merciful God, today we light the candle of hope, a beacon of light that shines in the darkness. Today, we confess the ways we have caused others to feel hopeless. Some feel the hopelessness of hunger because of our greed. Others feel the hopelessness of violence because of our apathy. Still others feel the hopelessness of discrimination because of our ignorance. Forgive us, gracious God. This we pray in the name of your son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PRAISE RESPONSE² *Sing Out, All God's People (tune: O Come All Ye Faithful)*

**ALL SING: O Lord, we're reminded in this holy season:
Though we may struggle we are never alone.
Christ is our joy, our hope and peace unending:
In Christ, we know your presence; You heal us and restore us,
You give us joy and bless us, Bringing us home.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

L: The Christ in me greets the Christ in you.

P: The Christ in me, greets in the Christ in you too.

A TIME FOR ALL AGES

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:5-25, 57-80

PARTICIPANTS: Mark Hollen (Narrator), Garrett Austin (Messenger),
Andrew Mowen (Zechariah), Kristen Adams (Elizabeth)

One: God is still speaking!

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

ANTHEM

"Bring Us Hope"

By Ruth Elaine Schram
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JOYS & CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERTORY

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY *"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People"*

Music by Robert Lau
Lo, He Comes!
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OFFERTORY RESPONSE *"Angels From the Realms of Glory"*

NCH #126, vs. 1
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**ALL SING: Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
As you sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth:**

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, give thanks and sing.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

ALL: God of peace and possibility, we offer these gifts so that they may be transformed into your good news for the sake of the world. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION & COMMUNION PRAYER

L: God be with you!

P: And also with you!

L: Lift up your hearts!

P: We lift them up to God!

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

L: In the beginning you set everything in motion, Creator of heaven and earth. With bold ingenuity you splashed the sky with light and stars, sun and moon, wind and clouds, rainbows and wing-ed ones. With a word you brought forth the waters, the waves, the mountains and valleys. You called for our lives from the dust and called it good. And so we proclaim this ancient song, with all of the saints and angels:

ALL: Holy, holy, holy God! God of power! God of might! Heaven and earth are full of your glory! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed are you! Blessed are you!

REMEMBERING THE STORY

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER (sins/sin against)

All: Our Father, (Creator, Mother, Friend), 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

SHARING OF THE ELEMENT

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

For the nourishment of spirit, mind, and body, For hope that we begin to see,
And for comfort from the Prince of Peace, We share our gratitude, Gracious God.
Encourage us this Advent season to live as your people. May your hope carry us as
we go from this place. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

"Come, O Long-Expected Jesus"

NCH #122, vs.1

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**Come, O long expected Jesus, born to set all people free;
From our fears and sins release us; grant us your true liberty.**

**Israel's strength and consolation, hope to all the earth impart;
Dear desire of every nation, enter every longing heart.**

**Born all people to deliver, born a child, you came to reign!
Born to rule on earth forever, come, be known to us again.**

**By your own eternal Spirit, come to claim us as your own;
By your all-sufficient merit, let us share your cross and crown.**

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

Trumpet Tune on: *"People Look East"*

Music by Grimoaldo Macchia
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References

¹The worship service is based on the series “Angels Among Us”, with much of the liturgy in the service written by Marcia McFee.

²The words to the praise response were written by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette and set to the tune of *O Come All Ye Faithful* and posted at https://carolynhymns.com/sing_out_all_gods_people.html and accessed on November 27, 2023.

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Danielle Neff, Pastor
Caleb Murray, Director of Faith Formation & Programming
Carol Ann Day, Organist
Gillian Austin, Director of Music
Kristen Adams, Communications Coordinator
John Mentzer, Custodian
Kim Lark, Secretary

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Media Team: Karen Adams, Hal Bitner, Mark Hollen,
Nick Mowen, Andrew Mowen, Joe Thompson
Usher Team: Sarie Dickey*, Jim Cooper, Teresa Needham,
Scott and Kathy Shaffer
Children’s Sermon: Karen Adams
Acolyte: Ray Schlotterbeck

OUR MISSION

Because of our love of God, who first loved us, we empower disciples to let their lights shine through love of neighbor, love of children, and love of creation.

OUR VISION

As Jesus modeled first for us, we are working to create a just world where all are welcomed, all are loved, and all are included.

OUR PURPOSE

Celebrating the Christ in all of us by joyfully serving our community.

