

**Trinity United Church of Christ**  
**An Open and Affirming Congregation**

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December 24, 2023

10:45 AM

**Angels Among Us<sup>1</sup>**

**This Will Be a Sign: More Love.**

*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 giggles & 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**

*"Shepherd's Noel"*

Music by J. Wayne Kerr

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**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE**

*Advent Candlelighting Family: Russell & Marieann Long & Ray Schlotterback*

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

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE:** We light the fourth Advent candle, the candle of love, and ask that God would alight within us the flame of love this day, granting us an openness to hearing the message of the angels, and courage to be messengers in the world, creating more love 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**    *“Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn”*    NCH #107, vs.1-4

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**Awake! awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning,  
sing out your joy, for Jesus is born, behold! the Child of our longing.**

**Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,  
to open wide the heavenly door, and lives now inside us forever.**

**To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a singing,  
whose humble song is quiet and near yet fills the earth with its ringing.**

**Music to heal the broken soul and hymns of loving kindness,  
the thunder of the anthems roll to shatter all hate and injustice.**

**In deepest night Christ’s coming shall be, when all the world is despairing,  
as morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring.  
One without voice breaks forth in song, a lame one leaps in wonder, the weak  
are raised above the strong, and weapons are broken asunder.**

**Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though cold the winter and cheerless,  
the rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless;  
Love be our song and love our prayer, and love, our endless story,  
may God fill every day we share and bring us at last into glory.**

**\*TIME OF CONFESSION**

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION<sup>2</sup>

**ALL: Living God, Love Incarnate, we confess that we are not perfect. To You who is everything, we acknowledge that we are lacking. Child of the Manger, we admit that we prefer love to be sentimental rather than sacrificial. We confess our willingness to be loved, but our reluctance to offer it. We confess our resistance to following the path of your love. In this Advent time, forgive our failure to respond as we should. Come to us anew, and by your grace, assist us to receive you with joy, with gratitude, with obedience, and with love. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

**\*PRAISE RESPONSE<sup>2</sup>** *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.**

**\*THE LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE AND PRAYER FOR PEACE  
\*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 also.

**A TIME FOR ALL AGES**

**SCRIPTURE READING**

*Luke 2: 1-20*

*Participants: Carol Ann Day (Narrator 1), Hal Bitner (Narrator 2), Carol Mowen (Narrator 3),  
Molly Adams (Messenger), Men's Choir (Shepherds), Women's Choir (Angels)*

**HYMN**

*"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"*

NCH #144 vs.1  
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**Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the Christ-child bring;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinner reconciled!"  
Joyful, all you saints arise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angel host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the Christ-child bring!"**

**One:** God is still speaking!

**All:** *Thanks be to God.*

**ANTHEM**

*"Shepherd, Do You Sleep?"*

Words by John Parker  
Music by Larry Shackley  
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## WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

*Amber, Jacob & Aubree Dwyer,  
Matt McCann, John & Susie Menard,  
Alan, Dani, Sam, Liam & Grace Neff*

## JOYS & CONCERNS

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.*

## OFFERTORY

### CALL TO OFFERING

### OFFERTORY

*"Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus"*

Music by Robert J. Power  
Four Advent Pieces for Flute and Organ  
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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.**

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 in adoration, O come in adoration,  
O come in adoration: Christ the Lord!

God of true God... Light of true Light...  
Come now, O come now to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold the ruler of all angels:  
O come in adoration, O come in adoration,  
O come in adoration: Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
Glory to God, in the highest.  
O come in adoration, O come in adoration,  
O come in adoration: Christ the Lord!

Amen, Lord, we greet you, born this happy morning;  
Jesus to you shall all glory be given;  
Word of our God.... now in flesh appearing:  
O come in adoration, O come in adoration,  
O come in adoration: Christ the Lord!

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*POSTLUDE**

*“While By My Sheep”*

Music by Douglas E. Wagner

Carols A to Z

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## References

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

<sup>1</sup> The 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://carolynshymns.com/sing\\_out\\_all\\_gods\\_people.html](https://carolynshymns.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

**January’s Usher Team:** Molly Adams\*, Ben Adams, Charlie Clark,  
Bill and Sharon Rinker

**Children’s Sermon:** Pastor Dani

**Acolyte:** Cayden Leissler

*The flowers on the altar are in loving memory of Nichole Klipp by Pat Shew*

*Thank you to Sean Kline for sharing the gift of music with us by playing the flute.*

## 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.