SILENT NIGHT
Holy Night
Welcome to worship with Open Table United Church of Christ. It is a privilege to have you join with us tonight. In the birth of Jesus the Christ and his life among us, we experience God's unconditional love for every one of us and all creation. Perfect love abides in the simple and amazing, ordinary and astounding gift of a baby, and invites us both to worship and to likewise open ourselves to be the presence of Love to others.

After four weeks of waiting and preparing for Christ’s coming, we will complete the expectation of the Advent wreath with the lighting of the Christ candle. An array of scripture selections and music will then retell the story of Jesus’ birth, beginning with the hope of ancient prophets for the time of God’s reign. May you hear in this familiar story something that reaches within you with a fresh touch of grace.

We will share in the sacrament of Holy Communion, another ancient way of experiencing Christ’s presence with us in a very real and special way. This ritual meal is open to all who wish to partake, no restriction of age, membership, or creed. Note that we use grape juice rather than wine, and gluten-free bread in in-house worship. Those worshiping on Zoom, please provide yourself with communion elements of some kind.

Finally, as we end our time of worship, those in-house will be invited to light the candle that was given to you before worship. Please receive the flame from the person next to you by tilting your unlit candle into their flame. Once your candle is lit, please keep it straight. Zoom worshipers may dim lights and use a candle at home. “Silent Night” will be played as we light our candles, then everyone will be invited to join in singing it together.

May God be with you as we worship and as you celebrate the miracle of Christmas.

We are an open table where all are welcome.
We celebrate diversity,
nourish and serve others,
work for justice,
and grow together in faith
through the teachings of Jesus Christ
and the voice of the still-speaking God.

Congregation is invited to respond as indicated by bold
*Please stand as you are able
The Fulfillment of Advent

Prelude

Mary, Did You Know? (arr. Jack Schrader)

Welcome

Prayer of Invocation (a reworking of Jan Richardson’s “How the Light Comes”)

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.”

How is it that your Light comes, more ancient than imagining, traveling across an astounding expanse to reach us?

It loves searching out what is hidden, what is lost, what is forgotten or in peril or pain.

It has a fondness for finding its way toward flesh, tracing the edges of form, and shining forth through eyes, hand, heart.

Just how it comes, we cannot say. But it does. It does, and it will, working its way into the deepest dark that enfolds us, though it may seem ages in coming, or arrive in a shape we did not foresee.

This night, we turn ourselves toward it. We lift our faces, to let it find us. We bend our bodies to follow its arc. Come, Lord Jesus, blessed Light. Amen.

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!
O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels! Sing in exaltation! O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

A Time With Kids – Lighting of the Christ Candle

Service of Lessons and Carols

The First Lesson

Isaiah 12:2-6

Carol

“With Joy Draw Water”

With joy draw water from the spring; salvation’s living well.
With love the poor will be received; the proud will turn aside;
The wolf shall lie down with the lamb; the calf and lion play.

The Holy One is in your midst; glad praises sing and tell!
And faithfulness will be a path, and righteousness the guide!
God’s peace shall dwell within the land; a child shall show the way!
The Second Lesson

Luke 3:1-8a

“Return, My People”

Return, my people, Israel, with penitential tear;
Then to the faithful of the earth the call of God rings clear:
just as the prophet did foretell the advent of Emmanuel,
“Return, my people, claim your worth, preparing for your Savior’s birth;
God’s reign on earth is near! God’s reign on earth is near!
my reign on earth is near. My reign on earth is near.”

The Third Lesson

Luke 1:26-38

“What Child Is This”

What child is this, who, laid to rest on Mary’s lap, is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!
Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spears shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary.

Another Time With Kids

The Fourth Lesson

Matthew 1:18-25

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

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 shineth the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of God’s heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

The Fifth Lesson

Luke 2:1-7

“Joy to the World”

Joy to the world! the Lord is come; let earth receive its King;
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and heaven and nature sing.
Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns; let all their songs employ
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
The Sixth Lesson
Carol

Luke 2:8-14
“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!”

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

The Seventh Lesson
Another Time with Kids
Anthem

Luke 2:15-20

He Is Born with Pat-a-Pan

Greg Gilpin

An Offering to the Christ Child

Invitation to Give
Offertory
An Offering of Prayer

“God, in your grace,”
“You hear our prayer.”

Christmas – The Feast of Christ

Invitation
Communion Prayer
God be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to God.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

… On this holy night, we join our praise with the songs of the angels and the hallelujahs of shepherds:

Holy, holy, holy God of love and wonder,
all the universe declares your glory!
Blessed indeed is the one who comes in your name;
Hosanna in the highest!

… And we put into words, laden with power, the wonder of our faith:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come at the last.

… All this we pray, wrapped in the prayer Christ taught us with these words:

Our Father, who is in heaven: hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.
Blessing the Bread and Cup
Sharing the Meal
Prayer of Thanksgiving

Candle-Lighting Ceremony

Invitation

Candlelight 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; 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.

Closing Prayer and Benediction

Postlude

Joy to the World

arr. Martha Kelsey

Scripture selections are from the New Revised Standard Version.
“With Joy Draw Water” text © 1986 Anne McKinstry, rev. 1993; tune ST. COLUMBA.
“Return, My People” text © 1993 James D. Martin; tune REPTON C. Hubert H. Perry 1888.
“What Child Is This” text William C. Dix, 1865; tune GREENSLEEVES.
“O Little Town of Bethlehem” text Phillips Brooks 1868; tune St. Louis Lewis H. Redner 1868.
“Joy to the World” text Isaac Watts 1719; tune Antioch from Georg Friedrich Handel 1742.
“Hark! the Herald Angels Sing” text Charles Wesley 1739; tune Mendelssohn Felix Mendelssohn 1956.
“Silent Night” text Joseph Mohr 1818; tune Stille Nacht attr. Franz Gruber 1818.
CCLI License #1198096, OneLicense License#541260-L.
Those assisting with worship tonight:
Rev. Jennifer Amy-Dressler, Worship Leader
Sharon Karasti, Reader
Dave McClure, Reader
Pam Simon, Reader
Sam Barber, Reader
Terri Damas, Reader
Ken Brown, Reader
Jennifer Martin Olsen, Reader
Sarah Reckmeyer, Piano
Donna Martin, Choir Director
Natalie-Anne Lindig, Flute
Corinne Francis, Percussion
Dee Dressler, Mary Malinsky, Sharon Karasti, Tech Team

Poinsettias present are
In Memory of:
Rev. Kurt Simon,
from Janet and Pamela Simon

Catherine McClure,
from Dave and Colleen McClure

Lucile and Harold Lischmann, Viro and George Ilgen,
from Judy and Lee Ilgen

Jack Breslin,
from John and Peg Breslin

Rev. Dr. William O. Amy,
from Rev. Jennifer Amy-Dressler
Office Hours: Mon. and Fri. 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Tues. – Thurs. 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Phone: 815-433-0771
Email: office@opentableottawa.org
Address: 910 Columbus St., Ottawa, IL 61350
OTUCC Website: www.uccottawa.org
Facebook: Open Table UCC Ottawa
Pastor’s Office Hours:
  Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
  Wednesdays 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
pastor@opentableottawa.org

Join us Sundays for hybrid worship at 10:00 a.m.
  Zoom only worship the last Sunday of the month at 10:00 a.m.
We offer a free community meal the second Sunday of the month at noon.
  All are welcome!