

Emmanuel United Church of Christ
Welcomes You to this Christmas Eve Service with Holy Communion
We are warmed by your presence among us this evening
Service Liturgy - December 24, 2020 7:00 PM

Christmas Eve Prelude
 The Entrance of God's Heavenly Light
 The Solemn Declaration **Jim**
 Call to Worship **Jim**

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

All: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Leader: Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

All: We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

Leader: To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

All: In the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.

Prayer of Invocation Jim

O God of the Baby of Bethlehem, we come into your presence with praise and thanksgiving. We hear the glad tidings of the angels' voices. We come to experience this good news of great joy for all the people. As the shepherds traveled to Bethlehem, we have traveled here – excited, expectant, and hopeful. Let the words of sacred scripture seep into our hearts to be treasured and pondered anew. We are here; we are ready, O God! Let the light of your love break forth! Amen.

Carol "O Come, All Ye Faithful" Organ

The Lighting of the Advent Candles **Jan**

Leader: Tonight is the night for which we have been waiting. The Advent wreath is completed with the Christ candle in the center. "For unto us a child is given, unto us a Savior is born and the order of the world will be upon his shoulders." With the birth of Christ our lives are centered, focused... turned toward God. We light this candle because Christ is the center of our lives.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Leader: *As we think about what Christ's coming means to each one of us, let us pray.*

All: O Holy God, thank you that the time of waiting and preparing is over and that the light of Christ shines so very clearly tonight. May our joy be full and our hearts rejoice for the world shall never be the same again. Truth and justice and righteousness have come to free all from the bondage of sin. Thank you, God, for this holy night of nights! Amen.

A Service of Lessons and Carols

Jim

First Lesson	The Prophet foretells the coming of the Savior	Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7
Carol	Go Tell it on the Mountain	Organ

Jan

Second Lesson	The Message of the Angel	Luke 1: 26-38
Carol	Angels We Have Heard on High	Organ

Jim

Third Lesson	The Birth of Jesus	Luke 2: 1-7
<i>Special Music</i>	<i>O Holy Night</i>	<i>Choir</i>
<i>A Christmas Message</i>		<i>Pastor Cope</i>

Jan

Fourth Lesson	The Shepherds go to See the Savior	Luke 2: 8-20
Carol	Joy to the World	Organ

Jim

Fifth Lesson	Jesus Receives His Name	Luke 2: 21-35
<i>Special Music</i>	<i>Gesu Bambino</i>	<i>Choir</i>

Holy Communion

Invitation to Communion **Jim**

Leader: May the God of silent nights be with you!

All: May the God of herald angels be with you!

Leader: Open your hearts to the One born in the little town of Bethlehem.

All: May Emmanuel come to abide in our hearts.

Leader: Join all believers in singing of our joy this night.

All: May our voices blend with those of the angels and shepherds.

Communion Prayer **Jim**

Communion Hymn	Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne	Solo
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Christmas Words of Institution **Jim**

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Christmas Prayer and Our Lord's Prayer **Jan**

Christmas Eve Candle-Lighting Service

Hymn

What Child is This?

Solo

The Gospel Jim

Leader: The Holy Gospel according to St. John the first chapter.

All: Praise to you, O Christ

Leader: John 1: 1-14 **Jim**

Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

Jim

Leader: We come to a special portion of tonight' service. As Christ comes bringing the light of God's love, we light our individual candles to signify our individual and collective commitment to live as Christ's faithful in the world.

Carol

Silent Night! Holy Night!

Solo

Jim

*Leader: One candle is but a flicker, but together, we create a bright flame of Christ's light in the world. Consider the beauty of our lights shining together. Jesus is the light of the world! Jesus is the hope of all our tomorrows! May we be witnesses of the light Christ brings. As you gently extinguish your candle, carry the light of Jesus' love with you.

Benediction

Jim

Carol

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Organ

Postlude

Bold print indicates unison reading.