Emmanuel United Church of Christ
A Congregation of the United Church of Christ
We Welcome You on this First Sunday after Christmas
Service of the Word – December 26, 2021
9:30 AM

The Gathering
Ringing of the Church Tower Bell
Our Life Together
The Solemn Declaration
Prelude
Call to Worship
Sung Response

Love comes to us at Christmas
Love comes to heal our souls.
Love brings an invitation
that our hearts might be made whole.
As we gather at the stable
in the darkness, glad and grateful
for the sacred in our midst,
for wonder and delight,
Christ is born in us this night.

*The Peace
Leader: The Hope of Christ be with you!
All: And also with you!

(As we rise in body or spirit for our opening hymn, we invite you to pass a “wave” of peace to the people around you!)

*Opening Hymn            “Go Tell It on the Mountain”                #154 (NCH)

Call to Confession
Unison Prayer of Confession
How patient You are with us, Loving Creator, and how hard we find it to put up with the foolishness of others. In humility, You became one of us, and we keep wanting everything to be about us. You model a life of meekness in service to others, and we are convinced life is all about power and success. All creation sings of Your kindness, while we hurl angry words at those we say we care about the most.

Yet, rather than becoming frustrated with us, Joy of Christmas, You continue to forgive us. Clothe us with Your love, so we might be more compassionate towards others. Touch us with Your grace, so we might become more gentle people. Fill us with that peace which longs to reside in our hearts, even as we seek to continue our journey with the Child of Bethlehem, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

(Silence is kept for personal reflection and prayer)

Assurance of Pardon
Leader: In these moments, let God’s peace dwell in your hearts. For God gives us hope, gives us peace, and gives us new life in the forgiveness of God’s grace.

All: We will be thankful, for in receiving God’s forgiveness, we are enabled to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Choral Response                       “Gloria Patri”                            #759 (NCH)
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Listening for the Word

A Time with the Children

Hymn of Preparation          “Spirit of the Living God”                        #283(NCH)
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me; Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

First Reading                   Colossians 3: 12-17
Second Reading                  Luke 2: 41-52
Sermon                          “Tender Love”                Jim Cope

*Sung Response

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Responding to the Word

Prayers of the People *“Make of My Heart a Stable”*  
(If the refrain is played through once, then the people sing. Please join in the response when indicated by the pastor praying.)

Choral Response

Make of my (heart, life, church) a stable,  
A house for the holy,  
A warm and sturdy place  
For hope to live and grow.

The Prayer of Jesus (debts and debtors)

Call to Offering

Offertory

*Offertory Response*  
“Angel’s Gloria”  
#125 refrain (NCH)

*Prayer of Dedication*

You bless us with an abundance of gifts, God of this holy season, not as a reward for doing good, but as a means to reach out with healing to the broken, to clothe those who shiver in winter, and to bless others with the hope which has been ours. As we offer our gifts to you, we do so in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Bearing the Word into the World

*Hymn of Mission*  
“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”  
#129 (NCH)  
(additional verse)

“In sweet jubilation  
Now sing and be joyful!  
The joy of our hearts  
Lies in a manger  
And shine like the sun  
In the lap of his mother  
Alpha and Omega (beginning and end)!”

*Benediction*

*Postlude*

*Indicates that all who are able. Please stand. Bold print indicates unison reading. Notice Someone Missing? If so, give them a call and let them know they are missed.*