



**Christmas Eve 2020**

**Worship in the Grove**

**4pm & 6 pm**

*“Raise your voice... do not be afraid.” —  
The Messenger*

**We Believe, Even Now**

**GUESTS,** Welcome to worship. To learn more about us, please visit our website at [www.unionucc.org](http://www.unionucc.org) or like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/unionneffs](https://www.facebook.com/unionneffs) . If you would like us to follow up with you contact Pastor Kris at 610-767-6961, [pastorkris@unionucc.org](mailto:pastorkris@unionucc.org)

**NEW MEMBERS:** For more information email Pastor Kris. [pastorkris@unionucc.org](mailto:pastorkris@unionucc.org) or call the church office to speak to her.

*We believe in extravagant welcome. We believe in God’s inclusive love. We start worship with a greeting that reflects that welcome and love.*

**No matter you are or where you are on life’s journey,  
You are welcome here.**

**Welcome to Union UCC.  
Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!**

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**Thank you for wearing a mask and practicing at least 6 feet of social distancing.**

**As you arrive, please visit the welcome tables to:**

- 1. Sign In – we will verify your name and phone number.**
- 2. Get a paper bulletin of the service or you can view it on your phone at :**



- 3. Share your offerings.** We will not be collecting your offerings during the service. Please plan to share them at the welcome table as you arrive. Thank you for being the church wherever you are.
- 4. Pick up a candle and a bag of communion elements. 1 for each person.**

**NOTE: If you stay in your car, please do not leave your car running. Tune your FM Radio to 102.3 FM to listen to the service.**

## **PRELUDE**

**4pm:**

God Rest You Merry Gentlemen Arr. Ruth L. Zimmerman  
**Brittany and Kelsey Gelb**

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas Blane & Martin  
**Brittany Gelb**

Angels We Have Heard on High  
**Instrumental Ensemble**

**Mitchell Roth, Cameron Kuntz, Abby Hill, Alex Hill ,  
Andy Hill, Garet Hill, Naomi Henninger, Justin Bower  
Director: Mitchell Roth**

Gloucestershire Wassail  
**Mike Baer**

Noel Chris Tomlin  
**Julie Wehr**

**6pm:**

The First Noel & Silent Night      Arr. Ruth L. Zimmerman

**Brittany and Kelsey Gelb**

A Christmas Celebration      Arr. Philip Keveren

**Garet Hill**

Angels We Have Heard on High

**Instrumental Ensemble**

**Mitchell Roth, Cameron Kuntz, Abby Hill, Alex Hill ,  
Andy Hill, Garet Hill, Naomi Henninger, Justin**

**Bower Director: Mitchell Roth**

Happy Xmas      John Lennon

**Ben Anderson**

Gloucestershire Wassail

**Mike Baer**

Noel Chris Tomlin

**Julie Wehr**

## **WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Directions for Communion: Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace.**

**In the grove: Please pick up your bag of Communion elements at the sign in tables.**

**At Home: Since we are worshipping virtually we invite you to take communion virtually.**

**Please find a cracker, piece of bread or something to represent the body of Christ. And please find some juice, wine or water to represent the blood of Christ.**

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

**1** In this season leading up to this night, we have been hearing the Good News from all the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John because we have *needed* good news and that's what "Gospel" actually means. We have heard stories of courage all along our journey—of people who have sung out songs of hope, love, joy, and peace. Our luminaries have been a witness to the light we believe has come, and is coming.

Tonight we return to the story of Jesus' birth as it is told in the Gospel of Luke. This account is the narrative we read again and again on this holy night, for this author gives us the most beloved detail. We yearn to see the scene play out, to hear the music of the angels, to feel the rush to the manger to see what this star that pierces the night sky has come to proclaim. We so desire to believe the Good News of the messengers that is the culmination of humanity's pain of birth: "don't be afraid" for unto us a sign has come that will be to all people... "on earth, peace."

4pm and 6pm: **Abigail Kern**

Solo:

I believe in the sun, I believe in the sun,  
even when, even when it's not shining.

I believe in the sun, I believe in the sun,  
even when, even when it's not shining.

Leader: Over the last four weeks, our theme song has helped us remember that we can believe that God is with us, even and especially in the midst of hard times.

Leader: Even when the sun is hidden from sight

Leader: Even when the sun is hidden from sight

Leader: Even when love feels so remote

Leader: Even when love feels so remote

Leader: Even when God is silent

Leader: Even when God is silent

Leader: Even then...

Leader: Even then...

Leader: We believe

Leader: We believe

Leader: We believe in the presence of Emmanuel—God with us. This is the night we celebrate that the Holy came in human form to be light in our lives... to speak to us, touch us, comfort us, and call us.

**ALL (SPOKEN):**

**I believe in the sun, I believe in the sun,  
even when, even when it's not shining.**

### **MUSIC OFFERING**

I Believe                      Anonymous Jewish poem Mark A. Miller  
High School Choir :

**Emily Bachl, George DeNardo, Naomi Henninger, Abby Hill, Amanda Lane, Olivia Rice, Jacob Roth**

### **Prayer**

Leader:

Holy One,

we thank you for the glimpse of heaven on earth

In the faces and the light of those around us.

Even in the midst of fear,

of challenge, of struggle—

even when our view is obscured

by clouds of doubt,

You have ignited the flame of hope, love, joy, and peace  
within us.

**ALL: Let us glow with its brilliance  
from the inside out. Amen.**

O Come All Ye Faithful    (recording)

**Jacob Roth, Organ**

**Mitchell Roth, Trumpet**

**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!**

### **CHORUS:**

**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 exultation!  
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!**

**CHORUS**

**Hail! Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning,  
O Jesus! for evermore be Thy name adored.  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;**

**CHORUS**

**Isaiah Reading**

*Isaiah 52: 7-10 (CEB)*

How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of a messenger  
who proclaims peace,  
who brings good news,  
who proclaims salvation,  
who says to Zion, "Your God rules!"

Listen! Your lookouts lift their voice;  
they sing out together!  
Right before their eyes they see the Lord  
returning to Zion.

Break into song together, you ruins of  
Jerusalem!  
The Lord has comforted his people and has  
redeemed Jerusalem.

The Lord has bared his holy arm in view of all  
the nations;  
all the ends of the earth have seen our  
God's victory.

**Gospel Reading**

*Luke 2: 1-20 (CEB)*

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant.

4pm Music Offering

O Come, O Come                      Emmanuel Traditional

**Ben Anderson**

6pm Music Offering

Patiently      from Saint-Saëns Christmas Oratorio

**Alison Dyszel**

While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

4pm Music Offering

Winter Snow                      Audrey Assad

**Julie Lane**

6pm Music Offering

Advent Hymn      Christy Nockels

**Abby Hill**

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel

praising God. They said, “Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors.”

4pm Music Offering

In the Bleak Midwinter                      Gustav Theodore Holst

**Matt & Ronda Gerry, Todd & Karla Bachl**

6pm Music Offering

O Come O Come Emmanuel      Thomas Helmore

**Jacob Roth**

When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go right now to Bethlehem and see what’s happened. Let’s confirm what the Lord has revealed to us.” They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them.

4pm Music Offering

Come On Ring Those Bells                      Andrew Culverwell

**Kids Choir: Siera Adcock, Lucas Bastidas,  
Brooklyn Hoppes, Lincoln Hoppes, Connor Maxwell,  
Lucas Maxwell, Raegan Minnich, Cael Vermuelen,  
Hunter Vermuelen**

**Directors: Judy Stubbmann, Blake Hoppes**

6pm Music Offering

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing      Charles Wesley, Felix Mendelssohn

**Quartet - Matt & Ronda Gerry, Todd & Karla Bachl**

Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.

And 6pm Music Offering



O Holy Child of Bethlehem A Medley of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" "Silent Night! Holy Night!" & "Emmanuel, God with Us" Words and Music by Nathan & Christy Nockels Choral Setting by Lloyd Larson

**Adult Choir: Todd Bachl, Lucy Boyer, Ronda Gerry, Susan Glosan, Stephen Kareha, Jason Klinger, Karl Klinger, Carol Pope, Julie Wehr**

**Christmas Message    Rev. Kris Snyder-Samuelson**

### **The Witness of Music**

📍 For all of Advent, we have called on the power of music that inspires those who hear it to a brighter tomorrow. It has been a difficult time in this pandemic for singing to be restricted. In its absence, we have been reminded just how important it is to sing together. Indeed, music has often been the soundtrack of hope. We enjoyed a season of music *appreciation*—as well as reflection on the power of music. We watched documentaries that told courageous stories of people singing as witness to light in the midst of poverty, death camps, protests, disasters, and the oppressive bonds of enslavement. We have filled the night of loss and discouragement with music and light—by taking our singing outside in socially-distanced ways.

We have also been presented with Carols of Resistance that have been sung as commentary on injustice. Tonight we bring you another. It is a song you will no doubt have heard on other Christmas Eve nights. But this time, listen with a new appreciation. Written in France by Placide Cappeau with melody by Adolphe Adams, the song was banned from church services when Cappeau's theology was deemed heretical (some called him an atheist) and Adams' music was labeled as "Jewish" (the ultimate insult in Christian circles at a time when Gregorian chant was having a resurgence). Further, the song's message of humility and shared humanity went against the late 19th century idea that

slaves did not have souls. Even though the church in France tried to kill the song, the American abolitionist and Unitarian minister, John Sullivan Dwight, made it popular in the Civil War era with its third verse proclaiming a radical message:

*“Truly he taught us to love one another;  
his law is love and his gospel is peace.  
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother;  
and in his name all oppression shall cease.”*

Someday, we will once again be able to join our full voices in song in our sanctuary. We will sing as never before. For now we allow this song to be a prayer of hope that we will destroy the inequity that still haunts us.

O Holy Night     Adolphe Adam  
4pm and 6pm:   **Ronda Gerry**

### **A Celebration of Communion**

**Directions for Communion: Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace.**

**In the grove: Please pick up your bag of Communion elements at the sign in tables.**

**At Home: Since we are worshipping virtually we invite you to take communion virtually.**

**Please find a cracker, piece of bread or something to represent the body of Christ. And please find some juice, wine or water to represent the blood of Christ.**

**Ⓛ** On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:  
“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
poured out for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.”

### **Blessing**

**L** Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,  
and on these gifts of bread and fruit of the vine.  
Make them be for us your love and light  
so that our hearts may be broken open for the world  
and our lives poured out in service.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,  
one with each other,  
and one in ministry to all the world.  
Mix our voices in harmony with each other  
until we sit at the same table  
and sing in the same choir  
in your Kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven.

### **\*The LORD’S PRAYER**

**Our Father, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from  
evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the  
glory, Forever and ever. Amen.**

### **SHARING THE BREAD and CUP**

**L** The gifts of God for the people of God. Take and eat,  
take and drink.

**4pm and 6pm Music Offering:** When You Believe,  
from The Prince of Egypt Stephen Schwartz and Ken  
Edmonds  
**Abigail Kern**

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**ALL:** We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

### *Introduction to the Carol:*

🔊 We come to the classic moment of every Christmas Eve... the moment to light our candles and sing, "Silent Night." We have wondered this year how we could possibly recreate a sense of normalcy in this moment. We wondered how we could get through it with the joy we usually feel on this night, having lost so much this year.

No, it is not the same. And we know that because of the people we have lost, the jobs and security we have lost, that it will likely not ever be the same. Surely every year, we will remember this moment when we thought perhaps light and song would elude us. But here we are. We will light our lights and we will have our song. Just like those soldiers in World War I sang across enemy lines. Everything stopped for a short while as the message that all is calm and bright prevailed above the violence and dark night of the world. We have been sorely divided on many things. We are devastated by our losses. We are tired and we are not so calm. But for this moment, this night, let us remember that we are not alone. And that we believe that the music and light of God's promises come again and again: hope for a better tomorrow, love that works for a more equitable world, joy that wells from a place deep within us, and peace that offers us the assurance we need.

Silent Night  
4pm: **Abigail Kern**  
6pm: **Abby Hill**

## Light Your Candles

### Benediction

**❶ I invite you to raise your candle high for the benediction.**

We wait for justice  
but we do not wait to work for change;

We wait for restored health  
but we do not wait to work to heal;

We wait for wholeness  
but we do not wait to work at binding brokenness;

We wait for peace  
but we do not wait to work to eliminate hatred.

And so, my friends, like bells ringing out the news  
that Christ is born among us,  
fill the night left by sadness with messages of hope,  
love, joy, and peace.

Go into your lives humming the tunes that keep that light  
alive in you  
and that spur you on in your work of justice and  
reconciliation.

Raise your voices and repeat after me...  
“do not be afraid!”

**ALL: “do not be afraid!”**  
**Amen!**

Joy To The World (recording)  
**Jacob Roth, Organ**  
**Mitchell Roth, Trumpet**

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come:  
Let earth receive her 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 world! The Savior reigns:  
Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as the curse is found.**

**Merry Christmas!**  
**Enjoy the Lights in the Grove, they will be on every  
night until the end of December.**

### **Postlude**

I Believe                      Handchime Benediction    Mark A. Miller/  
Stephanie Rhoades

**Chimers: Sandy Daumer, Veronica Fabian, Susan  
Glosan, Dan Haftl, Bonnie Herzog, Carol Pope, Ron  
Pope, Debbie Romig and Tami Wassum.  
Director: Edie Fella**

## **Worship Notes**

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[www.worshipdesignstudio.com](http://www.worshipdesignstudio.com).

**Thank you** to all who helped to make our Advent and Christmas so meaningful. Thank you to everyone who helped clean and decorate our sanctuary, church, and grove. Thank you to those who served as choir members, musicians, acolytes, ushers, and worship participants. Thank you to our staff, Consistory, and leaders for giving your time and talents so generously. Merry Christmas!

**Decorations:** Thank you Claire Kern, Kathy Bonsell, Deb Wenner, Deb Topp, Pastors Kris and Kayli, The Worship Committee: Edie Fella, Susan Glosan, Ron Pope, Julie Wehr.

## **Thank you to our Poinsettias sponsors:**

Bonnie Herzog

Carolyn Barry

Sharon Reph

Carolyn George in memory of Allen MM and Ethel M

Schneck George, William D George II, Allen MM George Jr.,

Ruth Roberts, Paul and Mabel Kleckner Kern

George & Valerie Borman in memory of parents

Tom&Linda Anderson in memory of Gloria Beltz

Rich & Barbara Carinci in memory of Departed loved ones.

Diane Pesola in memory of grandparents and great-

grandparents from Dengler/Pesola Family

White poinsettias: Robert and Jean Heintzelman and Family

## **Donate to God's Mission and Ministry at UNION UCC**

### **Christmas Mission Offering**

**Our special offering this season is for Miller Keystone Blood Center and the Penn Northeast Conference's Disaster Response Ministry.**

**Please use your envelope marked "Christmas Mission" or put "Christmas Mission" in the memo line of your checks to Union UCC or give online at [www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give](http://www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give). Choose Donate Online.**

**OFFERING ENVELOPES** you can mail your envelopes to the church. The church address is on one side, just add a stamp.

**ELECTRONIC GIVING** This is a great time to try **e-giving!** Choose a weekly, semi-monthly or monthly donation to be transferred electronically. Fill out the form at <http://www.unionucc.org/egive.pdf> and return it to the church office. [financialmanager@unionucc.org](mailto:financialmanager@unionucc.org)

**DONATE ONLINE with your Credit or Debit Card**  
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