

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD U.C.C.
AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

Progressive Christians
aspiring to diversity, engaging in service, and sincerely friendly

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The Reverend William D. Ingraham, Pastor and Teacher

Welcome!

We are delighted to have you worshiping with us today! The Church of the Good Shepherd (COGS) is a dynamic congregation with a rich history and an exciting ministry in the community.

Our church is a part of a blend of four major Protestant denominations that united together in 1957 to form the United Church of Christ. We claim the early Pilgrim and Puritan settlers of this country as part of our heritage, and celebrate the words of Pastor John Robinson, who in his farewell remarks to the Pilgrims as they were leaving for the “new world,” said,

“There is still more light and truth to break forth from God’s holy word.”

We are a church that:

- Takes the Bible seriously, but not literally.
- Worships God with joyful hearts and open minds.
- Includes children in the life and ministry of the church.
- Celebrates creativity and the arts.
- Seeks to be inclusive of ALL people.
- Believes that growth in wisdom and understanding happens at all stages of life.
- Is committed to work for justice for all people and for the environment.
- Cares for one another, laughs easily, and rests in God’s love.
- Looks to Jesus as teacher, prophet and Child of God.

PEACE

The Fourth Sunday of Advent *December 18, 2011*

** Those who wish are invited to stand as they are able.*
Nursery care is available for babies to age 3.

GATHERING SONG "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" (vs. 1 & 3) #126

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS Fred Chapman

JOYS and CONCERNS

INSTALLATION OF ASSOCIATE PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

Jeff Bunts – Judy Gilman, *Chair* – Renee Patton – Khris Puckett – Katrina Tracy

SHARING GOD’S LOVE and PEACE

(Please return to your seats when you hear the bells.)

PRELUDE (silent meditation) "Divinum Mysterium" *adapted from*
13th century Plainsong

*CALL TO WORSHIP Fred Chapman

One: In today’s scripture passage, the Angel Gabriel appears to young Mary.

Many: This is a peculiar occurrence, even for Biblical times.
Such direct communication from heavenly beings is hard to comprehend.

One: The angel said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.”

Many: Not surprisingly, such a greeting perplexed Mary. She is said to have pondered its meaning. One can only imagine what went through her mind.

One: “Do not be afraid,” the angel said, “for you have found favor with God.”

Many: With God’s favor came great responsibility – to bear a child of heaven’s purpose, and to offer her whole self to help fulfill God’s intentions for all the world.

One: Mary did not hesitate to accept the blessing and challenge the angel announced.

Many: May we learn to follow the example of young Mary of Nazareth, that when God calls us to serve, we will have courage and faith to say “Here I am!”

*OPENING HYMN "Of the Parent's Heart Begotten" (vs. 1, 2, & 5) #118

*LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES Ruth Randall & Richard Mitchell

Family: Today, we relight the first three candles of Advent:
The candle of Hope, the candle of Love, and the candle of Joy.
And we light this week's candle: the candle of Peace.
It reminds us of the peace Joseph received in accepting God's call,
and of the peace countless generations have found in the child of Bethlehem.
As we light the fourth candle, we proclaim God's desire for peace on earth,
And we set our sights on peace for all of earth's children –
a time when war, prejudice, violence and fear
will be little more than a distant memory.

The first, second, third, and fourth Advent candles are lit.

*MORNING PRAYER (in unison) Fred Chapman

One: Please pray with me.
All: God of Peace,
In every time and place, you have reached out in love
to all earth's children. Your boundless care is extended to each of us,
and to everyone, everywhere. We give you thanks.
Help us to discern your call, and to trust in your heavenly love.
Empower us to offer you our service, that through our very lives,
your Kingdom may come, and your will may be done, on earth.
This we ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ANTHEM "There Is No Rose" by Stroop
Women's Ensemble — Sara Carley, oboe

RITUAL OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP *see insert*
Jamie Jones – Brad Jones

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE Rev. Ingraham

"COUNTER YOURSELF BLESSED" Stewardship Moment Mercy
Martinez-Nunnally

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:26-38 Fred Chapman

SERMON "Greetings, Favored One!" Rev. Ingraham

SILENT PRAYER / PASTORAL PRAYER / OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER
Our Father, our Mother, who is in heaven, Holy 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.

SHARING OUR GIFTS
Offering Invitation Fred Chapman

Offertory "Lo, How a Rose" *16th century German melody*
arr. by Lani Smith

*Doxology
Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God the source of all our gifts.
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts.
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*Prayer of Dedication Fred Chapman

*PARTING HYMN "Mary, Woman of the Promise" (vs. 1, 3, & 5) #123

BENEDICTION Rev. Ingraham

(Please leave quietly, so those who wish to listen to the Postlude may do so.)

POSTLUDE *Dorenda Morse, piano*