

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.

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2011

4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

* Those who wish are invited to stand as they are able.

PRELUDE

"The Snow Lay on the Ground"

Traditional Carol

*HYMN

“O Come, All You Faithful”

O come, all you faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come now, O come now to Bethlehem. Come and behold the ruler of all angels.

Refrain: O come in adoration, O come in adoration, O come in adoration, Christ is Lord!

God of true God, Light of true Light. Born of the Virgin’s womb in human form. Truly our God, begotten, not created. **Refrain**

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all you messengers of heavenly love. “Glory to God, all glory in the highest.” **Refrain**

Part 1: No Place for them in the Inn

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Chris Patton, 4 p.m. — Talia Gilmour, 7 p.m.

One: Merry Christmas!

Many: Merry Christmas!

One: The time for waiting and for preparing is past. Christmas is here.

Ready or not, the baby has been born. This world, *our* world, is changed forever!

Many: In our hearts and minds, let us go and see this thing that has taken place.

Let us recall Mary’s little baby, and marvel at all this birth portends.

One: The world and our lives have been touched by heavenly love.

God is with us. We are not alone. This is the gift of Christmas.

Many: God is with us – surrounding us with love, offering us hope and healing,

And encouraging us to make heaven’s ways our way,

All: May the light of Christmas warm our hearts, brighten our days,

And show us the way, that Christmas Joy can be known, now and always.

ANTHEM "The Holly and the Ivy" Chancel Choir
arr. R. Boughton

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE The Xavier Family, 4 p.m.
The Salerno Family, 7 p.m.

Tonight, we hear the story of Christ's birth, and we light the Christ candle.

HYMN "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, great news of joy we bring."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing."

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
And every o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

READING: LUKE 2:1-7 The Xavier Family, 4 p.m. — The Salerno Family, 7 p.m.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

***HYMN:** "Away in a Manger"

Women: Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

Men: The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus, protect me, I pray, and stay by my side until night turns to day.

All: Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with you there.

***UNISON PRAYER** Chris Patton, 4 p.m. — Talia Gilmour, 7 p.m.

One: Please pray with me.

All: Ever Present God,
We thank you for your abiding presence, and for the comfort and joy we know through the child of Bethlehem. As we bask in the warm glow of Christmas light, help our hearts and minds to be illuminated by heavenly love. May our encounter with the Christ child renew our faith, inspiring us to know love and hope, and to share them on heaven's behalf. This we ask in Christ's name. Amen.

ANTHEM "a La Nanita Nana" Good Shepherd Singers
arr. Davison

CHILDREN'S TIME Rev. William D. Ingraham

JOYFUL NOISE BELL CHOIR "Let Our Gladness Have No End"
arr. by Tyleen Stults

Part 2: Shepherds, Living in the Field

READING: LUKE 2:8-12 Chris Patton, 4 p.m. — Talia Gilmour, 7 p.m.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

HYMN "The First Nowell"

The first Nowell, the angel did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell, born in a manger, Emmanuel.

READING: LUKE 2:13-14 Chris Patton, 4 p.m. — Talia Gilmour, 7 p.m.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

HYMN "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be, which inspire your heavenly song.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing.
Come adore on bended knee, God, our world now entering.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

SERMON "Sore Afraid" Rev. William D. Ingraham

Part 3: Pondered in the Heart

READING: LUKE 2:15 Chris Patton, 4 p.m. — Talia Gilmour, 7 p.m.

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

HYMN: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see you lie.
Above your deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in your dark streets shines forth the everlasting light,
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in you tonight.

READING: LUKE 2:16-20 Chris Patton, 4 p.m. — Talia Gilmour, 7 p.m.

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HYMN "Born in the Night, Mary's Child"

Born in the night, Mary's Child, a long way from your home;
Coming in need, Mary's Child, born in a borrowed room.

Clear shining light, Mary's Child, your face lights up our way,
Light of the world, Mary's Child, dawn on our shadowed day.

Hope of the world, Mary's Child, you're coming soon to reign;
Sovereign of earth, Mary's Child, walk in our streets again.

ANTHEM "Candlelight Carol" Chancel Choir
by John Rutter

OFFERING

Invitation to Offering

Offertory Solo "O, Holy Night" Karah Williams, soloist
by Placide Cappeau and Adolphe Charles Adams

***SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS** "Silent Night"

As "Silent Night" is sung, the congregation is invited to move to the front or back, receive a lighted candle, and form a circle around the outside of the sanctuary.

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.
Glory streams from heaven afar. Heavenly hosts sing alleluia.
Christ the savior is born. Christ the savior is born.

Silent night, holy night. Child of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace;
Jesus Christ at your birth, Jesus Christ at your birth.

***BENEDICTION**

***GREETING ONE ANOTHER IN THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS**

(continued on reverse)

Please join us tomorrow morning
at 10:45 a.m. for an informal
Christmas worship service.

Feel free to wear
your pajamas!

MERRY CHRISTMAS