

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (CONGREGATIONAL)

13740 Pearl Road, Strongsville, Ohio 44136

Rev. Rebecca Stephenson, Pastor **Church** (440) 238-6697

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December 24, 2015 7:30 P.M. Christmas Eve

** Those who are able may stand.*

PRELUDE

Carol of the Bells

WELCOME

OPENING SONG from *The Celebration Hymnal*

277 Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

Liturgist: It is the night before Christmas, and we have gathered to celebrate.

People: We have come in the quietness of this hour to celebrate the birth of a small child.

Liturgist: Let us gather in silence, as we would around the crib of a sleeping infant.

People: We gather in awe at the beauty of this child born of Mary and Joseph, and yet the Son of God.

Liturgist: May our hearts be open to receive him, and our spirits warmed by his presence among us.

SONG from *The Celebration Hymnal*

278 Angels We Have Heard on High

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH The Hawk / Hayes Family

Leader: Can you feel it? There is a wonderful anticipation in the air. Let us light the candles of Advent: the Prophet Candle, the Angel Candle, the Bethlehem Candle, and the Shepherds' Candle. *(Light the four advent candles.)*

People: The hour is coming. We can feel God moving! The promise of God is coming true. Unto us a child shall be born, a son given, and he shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

SPECIAL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

PASSING OF THE PEACE

GATHERING SONG *655 Sanctuary* (Sing 3 times.)

*Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, Pure and holy, tried and true;
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for You.*

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (in unison)

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. Amen.

RESPONSE

Native American Flute

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:6-7

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

INSTRUMENTAL OFFERTORY

Mary, Did You Know?

BRING GIFTS FORWARD

from *The Celebration Hymnal* **263** *What Can I Give Him?*

SCRIPTURES

Luke 2:1-7

MEDITATION

"Did You Know?"

SPECIAL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

A SERVICE OF CANDLE LIGHTING

CLOSING SONGS from *The Celebration Hymnal*

253 *Silent Night*

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, Wondrous star, lend thy light.
With the angels let us sing Alleluia to our King.
Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth. Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

270 *Joy to the World*

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 sin and sorrow 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.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love, And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

* BENEDICTION

* INSTRUMENTAL RESPONSE *Go, Tell It On the Mountain*

* POSTLUDE *Emmanuel*