

# ORDER OF VIRTUAL WORSHIP

**December 20, 2020**

**10:00 A.M.**

*Welcome to Worship at the virtual Ellington Congregational Church,  
United Church of Christ. We're happy to have you with us this morning.*

## **Our Church Mission Statement**

*To be a dynamic and nurturing community  
called by God's grace  
to know Christ and make Him known  
through worship, love, and service.*

Adopted September 15, 2019

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## **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

### **PRESENTATION OF**

### ***THE CHRISTMAS STORY***



(ECC ADVENT 2020)

## GATHERING FOR THE WORD

### WELCOME

### CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Now is the time of watching and waiting.

**All: The time of pregnant expectation of new life.**

One: Now is the season of peace unfolding.

**All: The dark winter season when peace is waiting to be born.**

One: Let us come before God with receptive and open spirits!  
To listen, praise, participate, and be changed.

### HYMN

Chalice Hymnal #153

*It Came upon the Midnight Clear*

- 1. 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  
from heaven's all-gracious King!"  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.*
- 4. For lo, the days are hastening on,  
by prophet seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years,  
shall come the time foretold;  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendors fling,  
and the whole world send back the song  
which now the angels sing.*

Edmund H. Sears, 1849; Richard S. Willis, 1850 // CCLI #1326969

## UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Advent calls us into a time of self-reflection and prayerful preparation.

**All: O God, we offer you our repentance. We replace holy days with holidays. We hurry past opportunities to give the gifts of kindness and caring. We do not prepare the place for your birth in our lives. We do not listen to angels in our dreams, or forgive those dearest to us, or welcome into our hearts and homes the poor and the stranger. Accept our honesty and guide us toward your grace. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE

Pastor: True confession is received by God with true forgiveness. To our amazement, God sends the savior before we even ask. People on pilgrimage to Bethlehem, know that you are forgiven even as you continue on the journey!

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH CANDLE

### *Lighting the Candle of Love*

*Christopher, Sherry, Munro and Caylee Crane*

Reader: Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent, the Sunday of Love.

Jesus shows us God's perfect love. Jesus embodies God's perfect love in human form. Those who believe in him and live in him, live in love. Love transforms everything. It never ends.

**All: We light this candle today to remind us that God is love.  
We thank God for the hope and peace God gives  
for the joy God pours into our hearts, and for the  
love that redeems us and shows us the way to live.**

*Light the First, Second, Third (rose) and Fourth Candles  
(front left to right counter clock wise)*

Reader: Let us pray:

**All: O God of Love, Emmanuel, send your light into our  
hearts at this time. Help us to be ready for the  
coming of Christ. We pray that his perfect love  
fills our entire being. Make our worship a time in  
which we celebrate your love and are made ready  
to show that love to the whole world - both today -  
and forevermore. Amen.**

**Song**

Hymnal #128, vs. 4

*One Candle Is Lit*

*Come, wander where lion and lamb gently play,  
where evil is banished and faith takes the day,  
a babe in a manger to fool the world's eyes.  
One candle is lit for God's loving surprise.*

Mary Anne Parrott, 1988, William J. Kirkpatrick, 1895, Words © 1995 Chalice Press // CCLI  
#1326969

## **THE CHRISTMAS STORY**

Participants

*Claire ~ Drew ~ Emma ~ Kenley ~ Landon  
Liliana ~ Miranda ~ Tess ~ William ~ Zoe*



## ENGAGING THE WORD

### **UNISON SCRIPTURE READING**

Matthew 1:18-25

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way.

When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the

Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss

her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of

David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son,

and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken

by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from

sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she

had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

### **MESSAGE**

Dr. Jay M. Terbush

“Do Not Be Afraid!”

### **ANTHEM**

Banks family handbells

*Christmas Trio*

## **GOING WITH THE WORD**

### **HYMN OF DEDICATION**

Chalice Hymnal #134

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

*Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.  
God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.*

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### **BENEDICTION**



This morning's Lay Reader is: Marsha Andzans