

ORDER OF WORSHIP

November 23, 2025

10:00 A.M.

Welcome to Worship at the Ellington Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. We are happy to have you with us this morning. If you are visiting and would like to receive more information about our church, please fill out an **"I Wish"** card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate during our Offertory time.



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



CHRIST THE KING/REIGN OF CHRIST SUNDAY FAMILY SERVICE: HANGING OF THE GREENS THANKSGIVING SUNDAY

*As the prelude begins, let the music help you enter into the
spirit of worship and prayer.*

PRELUDE

Junior Bell Choir

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

WELCOME

*All who are able, please stand.

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: We are blessed to celebrate the coming of the Advent season and the Holy Child by "Hanging the Greens."

All: "Greening" the church reminds us of the eternal life God offers.

One: The Christmas wreaths on the front doors of the church welcome all our members, friends, and neighbors.

All: God's "Circle of Love" includes everyone.

One: The candles that shine forth from the windows tell all who see them that Jesus is indeed the "Light of the World."

All: Ellington Congregational Church will continue to be a "Beacon of Light and Hope" for generations to come.

One: This morning, from the youngest to the oldest, we will decorate this beautiful sacred space, sing, and praise the Lord with our worship!

All: Let us worship God with thanksgiving and joy!

***LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

***OPENING HYMN**

Chalice Hymnal #125

Come, O Long Expected Jesus

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: God of births, deaths, flowering and ripening seasons, Ecclesiastes 3:1 tells us: "For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven." As we prepare for this season of hope, peace, joy, and love, help us not to get too caught up in having everything we do agree with our

*All who are able, please stand.

ideas of perfection. Help us to understand that when you, dear God, are involved in our lives through Christ Jesus, all will be perfect because it will be done with your love in our hearts and souls. Many times we forget that you guide us through everything! In the coming Advent season we ask that you aid us in focusing on the meaning of the season while we go about the busyness of the season. Whenever we look at our beautifully decorated Sanctuary, let it be a reminder for us to love one another in agreement and accord. In that way, let us find unity in Christian hope, peace, joy, and love as a faith community. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Pastor: We are told in Scripture that the days are coming when God will raise up a Righteous Branch. This Righteous Branch will reign and deal wisely and will carry out justice in the land. We believe that Christ Jesus has come and performed all that was foretold by the prophets. This is our assurance that in Christ Jesus we are forgiven. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI** Chalice Hymnal #35

Glory Be to the Father

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

***GREETING ONE ANOTHER WITH THE PEACE AND LOVE OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST JESUS**

ENGAGING THE WORD

HANGING OF THE GREENS

Pastor Joanne, Lee Carman, Julie LaRocca
with help from the faith community

*All who are able, please stand.

PARAMENTS

(Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday)

John 18:33-37

³³ Then Pilate went back into his headquarters and called for Jesus to be brought to him. "Are you the king of the Jews?" he asked him. ³⁴ Jesus replied, "Is this your own question, or did others tell you about me?" ³⁵ "Am I a Jew?" Pilate retorted. "Your own people and their leading priests brought you to me for trial. Why? What have you done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My Kingdom is not an earthly kingdom. If it were, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world." ³⁷ Pilate said, "So you are a king?" Jesus responded, "You say I am a king. Actually, I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true."

Revelation 1:4-8

⁴ This letter is from John to the seven churches in the province of Asia. Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit before his throne; ⁵ and from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world. All glory to him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by shedding his blood for us. ⁶ He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

⁷ Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him—even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen!

⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega—the beginning and the end," says the Lord God. "I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One."

*All who are able, please stand.

White: for the pureness of Christ Jesus.

Purple/Blue: royal colors for the King of Kings who came to be the Light of the World.

HYMN Chalice Hymnal #165 (vv. 1 & 4)
Once in Royal David's City

GARLAND AND CHRISTMAS TREE

Isaiah 40:3-5

³ Listen! It's the voice of someone shouting,
"Clear the way through the wilderness
for the LORD!
Make a straight highway through the wasteland
for our God!
⁴ Fill in the valleys,
and level the mountains and hills.
Straighten the curves,
and smooth out the rough places.
⁵ Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
The LORD has spoken!"

Decking the Halls!

In churches, it is called "Greening" or "Hanging of the Greens."

Piano Music Julie LaRocca
Deck the Halls, People Look East, O Christmas Tree

SWAGS AND WREATHS

Isaiah 7:14

¹⁴ "All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us')."

*All who are able, please stand.

Circle Shape of the Wreath: signifies the Eternal Presence of God and the Oneness of God's Universe.

HYMN Chalice Hymnal #148 (vs. 1)
O Come, All Ye Faithful

WINDOW CANDLES, GREENERY, RIBBONS

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

² The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine. ⁶ For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the LORD of Heaven's Armies will make this happen!

Window Candles: to welcome the weary traveler to a safe place; to welcome Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus.

HYMN Chalice Hymnal #151 (vs. 3)
The First Noel

POINSETTIA

Numbers 24:15-17a

¹⁵ This is the final message Balaam delivered: "This is the message of Balaam son of Beor, the message of the man whose eyes see clearly, ¹⁶ the message of one who hears the words of God, who has knowledge from the Most High, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who bows down with eyes wide open: ¹⁷ I see him, but not here and now. I perceive him, but far in the distant future. A star will rise from Jacob; a scepter will emerge from Israel.

*All who are able, please stand.

Shape of the Flower: represents the Star of Bethlehem that the Wise Men followed to find the child, Jesus.

Red Leaves: symbolize the blood shed by Jesus at the time of Crucifixion.

White Leaves: symbolize the purity of Christ Jesus.

HYMN Chalice Hymnal #170 (vs 4)
How Great Our Joy!

HOLLY AND IVY

Jeremiah 23:5-6

⁵ “For the time is coming,” says the LORD, “when I will raise up a righteous descendant from King David’s line. He will be a King who rules with wisdom. He will do what is just and right throughout the land.

⁶ And this will be his name: ‘The LORD Is Our Righteousness.’ In that day Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety.”

ANTHEM Senior Choir
The Holly and the Ivy

ROSE

Isaiah 11:1

¹ Out of the stump of the line of David will grow a shoot – Yes, a new Branch bearing fruit from the old root.

In Christianity: the petals of the rose symbolize the five wounds Jesus suffered at the Crucifixion.

HYMN Chalice Hymnal #160 (vv. 1 & 2)
Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming

*All who are able, please stand.

NATIVITY

Luke 2:4-7

⁴ And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David’s ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. ⁵ He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. ⁷ She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

HYMN Chalice Hymnal #147
Away in a Manger

ADVENT WREATH

Psalms 89:1-4

¹ I will sing of the LORD’s unfailing love forever! Young and old will hear of your faithfulness. ² Your unfailing love will last forever. Your faithfulness is as enduring as the heavens. ³ The LORD said, “I have made a covenant with David, my chosen servant. I have sworn this oath to him: ⁴ ‘I will establish your descendants as kings forever; they will sit on your throne from now until eternity.’”



RESPONDING TO THE WORD

PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE Chalice Hymnal #127 (vs.1)
Creator of the Stars of Night

Creator of the stars of night, your people’s everlasting light,
O Christ, redeemer of us all, we pray you, hear us when we call.

IN OUR PRAYERS AND SILENT MEDITATION

*All who are able, please stand.

PASTORAL PRAYER and THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

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. Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

RESPONSE

OFFERING: Affirmation By Touch for Our Offerings to God

Sentence

Offertory

Senior Choir

Thanks to Thee

Presentation of Offerings

The Shopping Cart is used during the offering to collect your gifts of food for Ellington and Tri-Town residents in need. The food is distributed by the Ellington Food Bank, Crystal Lake Community Food Pantry, the HVCC Food Pantry and The Cornerstone Cupboard. Your generosity is a blessing to all who receive and a witness to Christ's love for the world. Thank you!

***DOXOLOGY**

Chalice Hymnal #46

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow
Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*All who are able, please stand.

***UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

All: God of Light and Hope, we offer ourselves to you in response to Christ Jesus' call. Out of the abundance of your love, we offer gifts to you. Please accept these offerings as tributes to your glory as we dedicate ourselves anew to Christ's service. We know you will help us to use these gifts wisely as we spread Light and Hope to the community and the world. Amen.

GOING WITH THE WORD

***HYMN OF DEDICATION**

Chalice Hymnal #715

Now Thank We All Our God

RESPONSIVE BENEDICTION (seated)

adapted from Chalice Hymnal #715

One: We have been renewed and refreshed with beautiful decorations, Scripture readings, and words for the coming season.

All: We thank God, through Christ Jesus for the wonderful things God has done for us and for the world. We join the world in rejoicing!

One: God, Mother and Father of us all, will continue to bless us as we seek to do God's mission work in the world.

All: We give praise and thanks to God who binds us in unity and faith to one another. Since the universe began, God was our God then, is our God now, and will be our God forevermore. Amen.

EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES

POSTLUDE

† Please feel free to change wording referring to God to whatever language supports your faith.

*All who are able, please stand.



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O Come, All Ye Faithful

WORDS: John Francis Wade, 1743; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841, and others

MUSIC: John Francis Wade, 1743; desc. David Wilcocks, 1961

Desc. 1961 Oxford University Press

CCLI #1326969

The First Noel

WORDS: Traditional English carol (17th century)

MUSIC: Traditional English melody; desc. Healey Willan, 1926

Desc. ©Used by permission of Oxford University Press

CCLI #1326969

Away in a Manger

WORDS: Anonymous (19th century)

MUSIC: Attr. James R. Murray, 1887; harm. LBW, 1978

Harm. © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, used by permission of Augsburg Fortress

CCLI #1326969

Creator of the Stars of Night

WORDS: Latin hymn (9th century); tr. as in The Hymnal, 1940, alt.

MUSIC: Plainsong, Mode IV; harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1943, alt.

Tr. © 1940, 1943, renewed 1971, The Church Hymnal Corp.

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The Message Bible

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New International Version

Scripture quotations taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version, NIV

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Common English Bible

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