

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

**December 14, 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

### **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: JOY OPEN AND AFFIRMING EVENT WITH SOCIAL HOUR**

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

**PRELUDE**

Julie LaRocca

**WELCOME**

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

\*All who are able, please stand.

## GATHERING FOR THE WORD

### **\*RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP**

adapted from Chalice Hymnal #119

One: Let us rejoice as we look forward to Jesus’ birth.

**All: We await with joyful anticipation and we rejoice  
in the waiting.**

One: God’s Light through Christ Jesus dispels the  
darkness.

**All: We rejoice in the Light of God.**

One: In the glow of the lights of hope and peace, let us  
feel the warmth of deep and quiet joy.

**All: Loving God, we give you thanks. We are blessed  
to gather in worship!**

### **\*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

#### **\*OPENING HYMN**

Chalice Hymnal #119

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

### **LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH CANDLES**

**Advent 3: Joy**

**~ Today’s candles are being lit by Scott Noble and The  
Bellezza Family ~**

One: God is making the final preparations for an amazing  
thing! Coming very soon is the Advent of the long-  
awaited Messiah, our bringer of hope, our Prince of  
Peace, our song of joy.

**All: We continue to wait and prepare.**

One: We celebrate the coming of Christ with the lighting  
of the Advent candles.

**All: We are comforted by the warmth of their glow.**

One: At first there was the frail light of a single candle of  
hope, daring to pierce through the darkness of  
despair and sin. We re-light the candle of hope.

\*All who are able, please stand.

**All:** Then there was the candle of peace, the gentle and persistent fire, the one that calls out the violent forces and lets in God's deep and tranquil Spirit. We re-light that candle as we hope for peace and understanding throughout the world.

One: Today we light the candle of joy. Joy to the world!

**All:** In the glow of the lights of hope and peace, we feel the warmth of deep and quiet joy.

**HYMN** Chalice Hymnal #128 (vs. 3)  
*One Candle Is Lit*



#### **UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**All:** Loving God, through Christ Jesus you have taught us to be patient and have promised to supply our needs. Yet, at times we grow weary of waiting and restless with our wants. We blame our troubles on our neighbors while, at the same time, we withhold from them the tolerance and care you have shown to us. We ask that you make us mindful of all your children and help us to care for all of your beautiful and bountiful creation. Help us, please, to carry the glow of the lights of hope, peace, joy, and love in our hearts all year long. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

#### **ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS**

**Pastor:** Please hear the words of the Apostle Paul when he teaches that we should live our lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ Jesus. We are to stand firm in one spirit and strive side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel. As we focus our minds on the goodness of God, we will have the assurance that in Christ Jesus we are forgiven. Amen.

\*All who are able, please stand.

**\*GLORIA PATRI** Chalice Hymnal #130 (vs. 1)  
*My Soul Gives Glory to My God*  
My soul gives glory to my God.  
My heart pours out its praise.  
God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.

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

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SALVATION ARMY KETTLE**  
Irene Mosher

#### **ENGAGING THE WORD**

**ANTHEM** Senior Choir

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE** Lee Carman  
(Children and teachers will be dismissed for Church School.)

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**  
Large Print Pew Bible OT p. #663  
**Isaiah 35:1-10**

**MESSAGE** Pastor Joanne  
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"  
**Responsive Reading** *Advent Antiphons*  
Chalice Hymnal #120

#### **RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

**PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE** Chalice Hymnal #127 (vs. 3)  
*Creator of the Stars of Night*  
When this old world drew on toward night,  
you came, but not in splendor bright,

\*All who are able, please stand.

not as a monarch, but the child of Mary, blameless  
mother mild.

## IN OUR PRAYERS AND SILENT MEDITATION

### 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

Julie LaRocca

### 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 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!*

\*All who are able, please stand.

## \*DOXOLOGY

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

What can I give Him, Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;  
Yet what I can I give Him – Give my heart.

## \*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All: We offer ourselves as messengers of hope, peace,  
joy, and goodwill. Where there is war, threat of war,  
and unrest between and among neighbors, we seek by  
Christ Jesus' example to demonstrate your reconciling  
love. May these offerings be combined with our  
commitment to act as we strive to live by your  
righteousness and bring hope, peace, and joy to the  
world. Amen.

## GOING WITH THE WORD

### \*HYMN OF DEDICATION

Chalice Hymnal #129

*Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates*

### RESPONSIVE BENEDICTION (seated)

adapted from Chalice Hymnal #129

One: Let us fling wide the portals of our hearts and make  
them temples of love and joy.

All: **Guided by the Holy Spirit we open our hearts to  
God through Christ Jesus. We will be led by  
God's hope, peace, joy, and love.**

## CHORAL BENEDICTION AND EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES

## POSTLUDE

Julie LaRocca



\*All who are able, please stand.

## **COPYRIGHTS**

### ***One Candle Is Lit***

**WORDS:** Mary Anne Parrott, 1988

**MUSIC:** William J. Kirkpatrick, 1895

Words © 1995 Chalice Press

CCLI #1326969

### ***My Soul Gives Glory to My God***

**WORDS:** Miriam Therese Winter, 1978, 1987

**MUSIC:** Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second*, 1813; harm. Charles H. Webb, 1988

Words © 1978, 1987 Medical Mission Sisters; harm. © 1989 The United

Methodist Publishing House

CCLI #1326969

### ***In the Bleak Midwinter***

From *The New Century Hymnal*

Christina G. Rossetti, 1872; alt.

CCLI #1326969

### ***Creator of the Stars of Night***

**WORDS:** Latin hymn (9<sup>th</sup> 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.

CCLI #1326969

### ***Advent Antiphons***

Used by permission of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (Anglican)

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### ***Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates***

**WORDS:** Georg Weissel, 1642; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1855, alt.

**MUSIC:** *Psalmodia Evangelica*, 1789

Text revisions courtesy of United Church Board for Homeland Ministries/The

Pilgrim Press

CCLI #1326969

### ***The Message Bible***

“Scripture (and other words) taken from *The Message*. Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.”

### ***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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