

ORDER OF WORSHIP

DECEMBER 24, 2025

5:00 P.M.

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

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
CHILDREN'S MESSAGE
SENIOR CHOIR CANTATA
SENIOR BELL CHOIR
CANDLELIGHTING

*"AND SHE GAVE BIRTH TO HER FIRSTBORN SON AND WRAPPED HIM IN
SWADDLING CLOTHS, AND LAID HIM IN A MANGER ..." LUKE 2:7*

PRELUDE

Bell Choir

O Come, All Ye Faithful

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

*All who are able, please stand.

WELCOME

One: The bells have pealed out the announcement of Jesus' birth.

All: Glory to God in the highest!

GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP** adapted from Hymn # 150

One: We come together on this sacred evening to celebrate God's unconditional love brought to us in the life of a tiny baby born in humble surroundings.

All: Glory to the newborn King!

One: The angels first appeared to the shepherds and sang of Jesus' birth.

All: "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

One: We hail the heaven born Prince of Peace and the Sun of Righteousness who brings light and life to all the earth.

All: Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

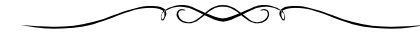
We are blessed to worship God with thanksgiving and joy!

***LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

***OPENING CAROL**

Chalice Hymnal #150

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



THE ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

*~ The Christ Candle Litany is being read and the Advent
Candles and Christ Candle lit by Carol Aborn and Marilyn
White ~*

One: We relight the Advent candles of hope, peace, joy, and love. (Pause for the Relighting.)

*All who are able, please stand.

All: The Advent candles form a circle of light that reminds us of God's never-ending love.

One: The Advent waiting is over.

All: The dreaming has given birth to a new reality.

One: The source of our healing has come.

All: God's promise has been fulfilled.

One: Now we light the Christ candle, remembering that Jesus is in our midst today and always.

(The Christ candle is lit.)

All: Thank you, God, for coming to be with us as your son, Jesus. We rejoice that he lived as one of us, knew our joys and sorrows, our pains and hopes and dreams. As he came to show your love to us, help us to show your love to others all the year through. Amen.

HYMN

Chalice Hymnal #128 (vs. 5)

One Candle Is Lit



*UNISON PRAYER

All: On this Christmas Eve, Holy God, you reveal to us once again in the eyes of our children, in the hopes of our adults, and in the wisdom of our seniors, that the Word is continually made flesh to dwell among us. Your light shines in our midst. Grant us the grace to see it, perceive it, and celebrate it! All glory is yours, now and forever. Amen.

*GLORIA PATRI

Chalice Hymnal #153 (vs. 4)

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

**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,**

*All who are able, please stand.

**and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.**

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

ENGAGING THE WORD

ANTHEM

Bell Choir

The Holly and the Ivy

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Pastor Joanne

MESSAGE IN SONG (see insert)

Senior Choir

A Call to Christmas: The Angels' Journey

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

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.**

CHRISTMAS CAROL RESPONSE

Chalice Hymnal #153 (vv. 1, 2, 3)

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

***It has been our tradition to designate The Christmas
Offering for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. This fund is
used to meet the special needs of local individuals and***

*All who are able, please stand.

families. We invite you to share the joy of Christ's love through your generous gifts.

OFFERTORY *In Dulci Jubilo* Julie LaRocca

*DOXOLOGY Chalice Hymnal #162 (vs. 3)
What Child Is This

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
come, rich, and poor, to own him,
the King of kings salvation brings,
let loving hearts enthrone him.

This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

***UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

All: Loving God, on this Christmas Eve night, we give you our treasure and, in discipleship, will make sure that we use these gifts to help one another and our neighbor. Thank you for our many blessings and your eternal love. Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE LIGHT OF CHRIST
THE ASSURANCE OF ETERNAL LIGHT

LP Pew Bible NT p. #129
John 1:1-5

THE LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS

During the singing of ***Silent Night*** the light from the Christ candle will gradually and gently illuminate the church. For safety reasons at this 5:00 pm. service, children have been given battery operated candles. Please remain seated while we sing ***Silent Night***.

CAROL (seated) Chalice Hymnal #145
Silent Night, Holy Night

*All who are able, please stand.

***UNISON CHRISTMAS PRAYER**

All: Glorious God, greater than all that we can imagine and infinitely more vast than the universe you are still creating, we ask that you come to us once more in the simplicity and the splendor of a baby, the amazing wonder of new life. No matter what our circumstances, we will strive to allow the stirring of hope to work within us and among us so that the world may be transformed in the image of Christ. May we respond with amazement and eagerness to share the wonder we experience here. In Christ Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

DEPARTING WITH THE SPLENDOR AND LOVE OF CHRISTMAS

*CAROL Chalice Hymnal #143
Joy to the World

EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES

CHORAL BENEDICTION (seated) Senior Choir

POSTLUDE Juliane LaRocca
Fantasia on Joy to the World



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

THANKS

The Deacons on Duty

Ushers: Fred Bird, Brian, and Beth Cocuzzo

Bell Choir Members

Senior Choir Members

Violin: Dave Robert

*All who are able, please stand.

Candlelight Communion Service

10:00 pm. this evening

Please join us for a
Service of Lessons and Carols
Sunday, December 28, 2025
10:00 A.M.

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One Candle Is Lit

WORDS: Mary Anne Parrott, 1988

MUSIC: William J. Kirkpatrick, 1895

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Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt.

MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. William H. Cummings, 1856; desc. Paul Liljestrang

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