ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 24, 2025

10:00 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 SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION 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

Dr. Charles Wasserman, Julie LaRocca

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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

*All who are able, please stand.

WELCOME

One: Let us sing to the glory of God through Christ Jesus.

All: Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

*RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Song of Mary (The Magnificat)

One: My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise. My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

All: my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, who has looked with favor on me, a lowly servant.

One: From this day all generations shall call me blessed:

All: the Almighty has done great things for me and holy is the name of the Lord, whose mercy is on those who fear God from generation to generation. My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.

One: The arm of the Lord is strong, and has scattered the proud in their conceit.

All: God has cast down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up the lowly.

One: God has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

All: God has come to the aid of Israel, the chosen servant, remembering the promise of mercy, the promise made to our forebearers, to Abraham and to his children forever. My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.

Let us worship God with thanksgiving and joy!

*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

*OPENING CAROL

Chalice Hymnal #148

O Come All Ye Faithful

*UNISON OPENING PRAYER

On this Christmas Eve, Holy God, you reveal to us once again, in the eyes of our children, in the hopes of our adults, 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, 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**

THE ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

~ The Christ Candle Litany is being read and the Advent Candles and Christ Candle lit by Bryan and Sam Forst ~

*All who are able, please stand.

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

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



ENGAGING THE WORD

ANTHEM

A Call to Christmas

Adam Geiger, Becky Hinckley, Jessica Duga, Julie LaRocca, Matt Ramos

GOSPEL LESSON

LP Pew Bible NT p. #58

Luke 2:1-20

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE "The Angels, The Shepherds, and The Holy Family"

Pastor Joanne Myer

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.

*CAROL

Chalice Hymnal #147

Away in a Manger

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 our members and friends,
and local individuals and families. We invite you to share
the joy of Christ's love through your generous gifts.

OFFERTORY

Canon in D

Dave Robert, Dr. Charles Wasserman, 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,

*All who are able, please stand.

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.

ANTHEM The First Noel

Adam Geiger, Becky Hinckley, Jessica Duga Julie LaRocca, Matt Ramos



THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Invitation to the Table

The Communion Prayer

Pastor: Gathering around the Table as we celebrate new life being born, we remember many stories shared around tables; tables where bread is broken and cup is poured out, where families gather and generations share, where stories are remembered, refined, and reshaped.

All: Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Pastor: Gathering around the Table on this holy night, we remember the story of the Holy One, the Sacred Spirit, daring to share our life and the Light of God. it is the story of the Holy One, the Sacred One, donning human flesh and dwelling among us, a story that is at once both of heaven and of earth.

All: Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Pastor: Gathering around the Table on this Christmas Eve night, we break the bread and remember this paradox: it is in our brokenness that we become whole. We also fill this cup and remember the abundance we each discover when we share our sacred stories.

All: Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Pastor: Together, around the Table, we pray:

All: Come, Holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be opened, that we might recognize the Spirit rising in our midst; indeed, in one another. Holy Spirit, thank you for coming to us. Amen.

The Distribution of the Elements

The Sharing of the Elements

Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

All: We give you thanks, Loving God, that you have come to us through Christ Jesus, in the midst of time and in the midst of history in the city of Bethlehem. We also give thanks for the timeless presence of Christ's Spirit as we received the gifts of bread and wine on this holy night. We are ready to go into the world refreshed and renewed as your disciples. Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE LIGHT OF CHRIST THE ASSURANCE OF ETERNAL LIGHT

LP Pew Bible NT p. #91

John 1:1-5

*All who are able, please stand.

THE LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS

During the singing of *Silent Night* the light from the Christ candle will gradually and gently illuminate the church. A Deacon will light the candle of the first person in the row. Each one will pass the light on to the next person. <u>Please remain seated</u> while we sing *Silent Night*.

CAROL (seated)

Chalice Hymnal #145

(Dave Robert ~ violin, Julie LaRocca)

Silent Night, Holy Night

*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)

Adam Geiger, Becky Hinckley, Jessica Duga, Julie LaRocca, Matt Ramos



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

THANKS:

Usher: Dave Danforth

Cello: Dr. Charles Wasserman

Violin: Dave Robert

Vocalists: Adam Geiger, Becky Hinckley, Jessica Duga, Julie

LaRocca, Matt Ramos

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

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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 Willcocks, 1961

Desc. ©1961, Oxford University Press

CCLI #1326969

One Candle Is Lit

WORDS: Mary Anne Parrott, 1988 **MUSIC:** William J. Kirkpatrick, 1895 Words © 1995 Chalice 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

Ellington Congregational Church, UCC

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^{*}All who are able, please stand.