



CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
30 N. CLINTON ST.
IOWA CITY, IA 52245
319-337-4301

WORSHIP FOR DECEMBER 12, 2021
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“I love Christmas. It’s the child in me. Maybe I’ve never quite grown up. I still feel just for those few magic days a year, that we have the world as it might be.”

John Rutter

PRELUDE “In the Bleak Midwinter” Setting by Allen Orton Gibbs

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT *Personent Hodie* Lara Hoggard

Let resound today
the voices of children,
joyfully praising
Him who is born to us,
given by most high God,
and conceived in a virginal womb.

He was born into the world,
wrapped in swaddling clothes,
and laid in a manger
in a stable for animals,
the master of the heavens.
The prince of Hell has lost his spoils.

Three Magi came,
they were bearing gifts,
and sought the little one,
following a star,
to worship him,
and offer him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Let all the junior clerics
and also the boys
sing like angels:
"You have come to the world,
I pour out praises to you.
Therefore, glory to God in the highest!"

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Jason Beerends, Jeanna Otto, Hadyen, Dylan, & Colin Beerends

CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us open our hearts in welcome.

Let us rejoice and be glad.

Let us worship God.

HYMN "Angels We Have Heard on High"

**Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.**

Refrain:

Gloria, in excelsis Deo;

Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

OPENING PRAYER

God of compassion, in these days of preparation, let us wait in hope and peace, for no one is lost to you.

Let us offer our sorrow with our praise, for you have made our pain your own.

Let us find joy in holy memories and give you thanks, for they promise the joy of your realm.

Let us bring freely before you our shadows and regrets, for you forgive and heal.

Let us wait with a quiet heart for the Christ to whom all are dear, for he has made his home with us. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 35:1-4

PSALM 29

Ascribe to the Lord, you gods,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

**Ascribe to the Lord the glory that is due the holy name;
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.**

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;
the God of glory thunders;
the Lord is upon the mighty waters.

**The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice;
the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.**

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees;
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

**the Lord makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**

The voice of the Lord splits the flames of fire;
the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness;

the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

**The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe
and strips the forests bare.**

And in the temple of the Lord
all are crying, "Glory!"

**The Lord sits enthroned above the flood;
the Lord sits enthroned as Sovereign forevermore.**

[Unison]

**The Lord shall give strength to the chosen people;
the Lord shall give the people the blessing of peace.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2:13-14

TIME OF PRAYER

Prayers of the People

Silent Prayer

The Prayer of Our Savior

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

Choral Response

TIME OF GRATITUDE

A CHORAL OFFERING *Gloria* John Rutter

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “In dulci jubilo” Setting by Paul Laubengayer

Artwork: Gloria in excelsis deo!, photograph of stained glass from the abbey church, Prince of Peace Abbey, Oceanside, California, by Randy Greve, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.

<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54912> [retrieved December 3, 2021].

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Opening Prayer by James A. Whyte, adapted.

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Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Children’s Programs:	The Rev. Ann Molsberry
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director	Chris Nakielski
Office Manager	Jenn Harden

WE’RE GLAD THAT YOU HAVE JOINED US FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING. We are putting the safety of both the vaccinated and the unvaccinated in our congregation and the community first. Masks are required for all people in all parts of the building. We will keep

social distance in the pews. There will be no coffee hour, although you are encouraged to talk with one another outside after worship.

WE ARE NOW LIVE STREAMING OUR WORSHIP SERVICES AT 10:15 ON SUNDAY MORNING. You can join us online in real time at <https://vimeo.com/event/1424751>. This streaming address will be the same each week.

RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES are posted on Sunday afternoon at <https://vimeo.com/channels/1547852>. The recordings remain up permanently, so you can watch past worship services at your convenience or recommend them to a friend.

FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP SERVICES—If you would like to contribute flowers for the worship services on upcoming Sundays please call the office to let Jenn know or sign up on the sheet in Rockwood Hall.



Want to give online? Scan the QR code for our giving app.

ALTERNATIVE GIVING

In anticipation of Christmas, the Mission Board has organized our annual Alternative Giving opportunities. Tree tags for the Salvation Army Angel Tree are available. Gifts for Kids will need to be returned to the church by December 12.

Project Holiday tree tags/envelopes are also available. This is the CommUnity annual holiday food distribution. Donations will be mailed by the donor and need to be received at CommUnity by December 12.

Mission Board members will take orders for Heifer Project gifts after church for the last time this morning, December 12. Payments by check will be received, and Ginny Clemons will personalize gift cards that can be mailed by the purchaser. The catalog can be seen here: <https://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/index.html>

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT CONGREGATIONAL UCC

Like everything else, our Advent preparations and Christmas celebrations are different this year. As always, however, you can expect inspiring and joy-filled events. Here are some dates to keep in mind.

December 12— Third Sunday in Advent; Special Music Sunday—*Gloria* by John Rutter

December 19—Fourth Sunday in Advent.

Christmas Eve is Friday, December 24. Two services at 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.

ARTICLES FOR THE JANUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER should be sent to the church office by Monday, December 20. Thank you.

Stewardship Is Heart Work: Pledge/estimate of giving cards for 2022 have been sent out. If you have not received one, please contact the church office. If you have received a card, please prayerfully fill it out and return it to the church as soon as possible. 2021 has been filled with many challenges and we have responded faithfully and with a generous compassion. We anticipate more challenges in 2022. Your deeply considered, prayerful support will help us to continue our Church's mission in downtown Iowa City and around the world. Thanks again for your generous giving.

GIVING UPDATES AVAILABLE: If you have any questions about your giving to the church or if you would like an update on your giving, please call the church office (337-4301) or email our Office Manager, Jenn Harden at uccicadmin@uccic.org.

The Bible Study looking at the scripture lessons that are used in the Christmas section of Handel's *Messiah* will conclude this Wednesday, December 15. The sessions will be held on Zoom at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested or want more information, please talk with Bill Lovin.

CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING: Each year, the United Church of Christ's Christmas Fund Offering allows the UCC to assist retired pastors living on limited incomes as well as to supplement small retirement annuities and health premiums and to provide emergency grants to active and retired clergy and lay employees. The mission of the Christmas Fund is to provide assistance dollars in situations of critical need, while preserving the dignity of those who receive the aid.

We will receive the Christmas Fund Offering during our worship on Christmas Eve. Please remember that your generous contributions can and do make a difference in the lives of many people.

Church Board Opportunities There are several opportunities to serve the church on one of our boards. There are openings on the Diaconate, Christian Education, Membership and Stewardship boards. Please contact Barb Sisley at (319) 430-2694 or sisleywebb@aol.com if you are interested in or want more information about any of these opportunities.