



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

WORSHIP FOR DECEMBER 15, 2024  
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

PRELUDE "Oh Come All Ye Faithful" arr. Keveren

Kaoru Heitzman, piano

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE Michelle Birt-Leeds and Adelaide

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Raise your hearts and voices

**Let us be glad**

**[Unison]**

**for great is God who comes to dwell among us.**

**\*HYMN 49 “Once in Royal David’s City” (vs. 1-3)**

**Once in royal David’s city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for His bed:  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little Child.**

**He came down to earth from heaven  
who is God and Lord of all,  
and His shelter was a stable,  
and His cradle was a stall:  
with the poor, and meek, and lowly,  
lived on earth our Savior holy.**

**Jesus is our childhood's pattern;  
Day by day, like us He grew;  
He was little, weak and helpless,  
Tears and smiles like us He knew;  
And He feels for all our sadness,  
And He shares in all our gladness.**

**\*OPENING PRAYER**

**Loving God, we open ourselves to you trusting that this is how you made us:  
you created us with the capacity for joy.  
You light our lives with the power of imagination.  
Show us the creative power of hope.  
Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared,  
that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#28, vs. 1)**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart, and soul, and voice;  
Give you heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;  
Ox and ass before him bow, And he is in the manger now.**

**Christ is born today! Christ is born today!**

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.**

SERVICE OF GIVING

Invitation

Offertory "The First Noel" (arr. Frost)

Niko Gartelos, Ani Gartelos, & Nadia Spragg, violins

\*Response

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ, all creatures here below,  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

\*Prayer of Dedication

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

\*CAROL 29 "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

**Refrain:**

**Go tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere;  
go tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born!**

**While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. [Refrain]**

**The shepherds feared and trembled  
when lo! above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth. [Refrain]**

**Down in a lowly manger  
the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “O Come, Little Children” arr. Lantz

Thanks to Rachel Burchett for playing the piano during our worship this morning.

Go, Tell It on the Mountain – harmonization: Music - ©1987 Presbyterian Publishing/Westminster John Knox/Geneva Press. Contributors: Melva W. Costen. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-715458. All rights reserved.

Minister:	The Rev. Bill Lovin
Director of Christian Education:	Hope Spragg
Organist:	Bill Crouch
Choir Director:	Dr. Chris Nakielski
Children’s Choir Director:	Rachel Burchett
Office Manager:	Jenn Harden
Financial Manager:	Sharyn Huriaux Reitz

**WE’RE GLAD THAT YOU ARE WORSHIPING WITH US THIS MORNING.** Everyone is invited to Coffee Hour in Rockwood Hall after worship.

TODAY—THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- ❖ No Choir Rehearsal
- Adult Education Session 9:15 am
- Children’s Pageant Preparation
- Worship Service—Christmas Pageant 10:15 am
- Caroling 4-7 pm

TUESDAY

- ❖ Diaconate 7:00 pm
- Trustees 7:00 pm
- Stewardship (Zoom) 7:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

- ❖ Winter Solace Service 7:00 pm

THURSDAY

- ❖ Women’s Lunch (Blackstone) 11:30 am

SATURDAY

- ❖ Men’s Breakfast (Waterfront Hy-Vee) 8:00 am

NEXT SUNDAY—FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- ❖ Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am

No Christian Education  
Worship Service 10:15 am  
“Staying Alive” Celebration 2-4 pm

## **ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, and EPIPHANY CELEBRATIONS AT CONGREGATIONAL UCC**

December 15—Third Sunday in Advent; Children’s Christmas Pageant  
December 18—Winter Solace Service at 7:00 p.m.  
December 22—Fourth Sunday of Advent; Worship at 10:15 a.m.  
Christmas Eve is Tuesday, December 24—Worship at 5:30 p.m.  
December 29—Sixth Day of Christmas—Worship at 10:15 a.m.  
January 5—Epiphany Sunday; Communion

**JENN HARDEN** will be out of the office on Monday, December 16th.

**GIVING TOGETHER, GROWING TOGETHER:** The Christian life is lived together. We gather to worship, we work with each other in mission, we study in groups, we bear one another’s burdens, and we talk and laugh together over coffee. We give together. We grow together. Please return your 2025 pledge card as soon as possible. Extra cards are available on the table outside of the sanctuary.

**MISSION BOARD ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIVING FAIR—TODAY IS THE LAST DAY!** Please come down to Rockwood Hall today after worship for the final day of our Alternative Christmas Giving Fair! There will be Heifer Project animal gift cards bearing Ginny Clemons’ graceful calligraphy and Church World Service “ornaments”. Proceeds from Christmas cards, jewelry, and gift baskets donated by artists and craftspeople in our congregation will go to local community agencies. The Mitten Tree is awaiting your new or gently used mittens, scarves, and hats for the Joan Buxton School project. And the Angel Tree will have toy request cards from the Salvation Army and envelopes for a holiday meal donation distributed by CommUnity. Photo and picture frame sales will benefit our Church Endowment Fund. Contact John Reitz at 319-333-9588, [john-reitz@uiowa.edu](mailto:john-reitz@uiowa.edu) for information. **Come have a cup of coffee and browse!**

**WINTER SOLACE SERVICE—DECEMBER 18:** The days before Christmas can be difficult, especially for those who are dealing with loss, illness, and other challenges. On Wednesday, December 18, Bill Lovin will be leading our annual Winter Solace Service in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. We are trying to bring out as much comfort as possible in this season, and as we do so, we can also acknowledge our sorrow, our losses, our concerns and our fears. This will be a time of prayer and scripture reading and music. The worship service will be both in person and live streamed.

**CHUCK CONNERLY AND MARTHA ANN CRAWFORD INVITE YOU** to join them next Sunday, December 22 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Chuck's recovery from sepsis. The event, "Staying Alive" will take place in Rockwood Hall from 2:00 to 4:00 PM on the 22nd. Please RSVP by texting Chuck at 319-855-2256.

**JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ON CHRISTMAS EVE, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, AT 5:30 P.M.** This is a service for people of all ages. Our worship includes a time for children, special music, Christmas carols, a reading of the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke, and lighting of candles. If you would like to be an usher for this worship service, please sign up in Rockwood Hall or call the church office.

Everyone is invited to the gala reception in Rockwood Hall after worship. This is a warm and wonderful time of fellowship and a chance to catch up with students and friends who are home for the holidays. The reception will be even better if you volunteer to bring some cookies or other goodies to share. Sign up in Rockwood Hall or call the church office to let us know what you're bringing.

Members and friends may provide poinsettias for the sanctuary for our Christmas Eve worship service. If you would like to remember or honor someone with a poinsettia, please let the church office know that you will bring a poinsettia and the name of the person by Monday, December 18.

**THE CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING—CHRISTMAS EVE:** 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.

**A NOTE FROM THE DIACONATE: COOKIES GALORE AT CHRISTMAS EVE** Please join the traditional cookie brigade on December 24th. If you are able and willing to bring two dozen cookies, there will be plenty of mounded plates for filling the tables after our Christmas Eve Candle Light Worship Service. We'll have a special Christmas punch ready for everyone.

**RESULTS OF THE FALL DIAPER DRIVE FOR COMMUNITY FOOD BANK:** Thanks to everyone who participated in the fall diaper drive for CommUnity Food Bank. Through your donations and efforts, over 2000 diapers and 40 packages of baby wipes were collected and delivered to the Food Bank. The church also received \$195 in donations that the Mission Board used to purchase additional diapers which helped extend our diaper deliveries into November and December. By supporting this drive, you made a difference in our community and in the lives of many local families in need.

**HELP WITH SLEEPING MATS STILL NEEDED:** With our winter weather just around the corner, the need for more sleeping mats for the homeless is growing! By contributing your plastic bags from your purchases we can help the homeless! Bring your clean, unneeded, plastic grocery bags, or similar plastic bags from your purchases here, to Rockwood Hall. We will see to it that they are delivered.

**PLEASE HELP WITH PARKING IN THE CHURCH LOT:** Several people currently have mobility issues and need to park in our small parking lot on Jefferson St. If you are able, please park elsewhere so that the marked and unmarked spaces can be used by those who need them. Thanks.

**SEE SOMETHING—SAY SOMETHING:** If you notice something in the building that needs attention—a leaky faucet, a loose railing, etc.—please let the church office (319-337-4301) know right away. Thanks.

**USHERS, GREETERS, AND HOSPITALITY OPPORTUNITIES:** There are still some opportunities to greet people coming to worship, to usher, and to provide hospitality during coffee hour after worship. Please sign up on the sheets in Rockwood Hall or call the church office--319-337-4031.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO SERVE AS A LITURGIST ON SUNDAY MORNING?** This is a great opportunity to welcome people and to lead them in worship. Bill Lovin provides the material. You provide the spirit. Contact Bill if you are interested or would like more information.



Want to give online? Scan the QR code for our giving app.  
Your giving makes a world of difference.

**WE LIVE STREAM 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 is the same each week.

**RECORDINGS OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES** are posted after worship on Sunday 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.