

The Church of the Pilgrimage
United Church of Christ
Sunday, December 31, 2017
10:00am
First Sunday of Christmas



Rev. Dr. Helen Nablo, PASTOR
Kelley DePasqua, MUSIC DIRECTOR
Michael Eaton, ORGANIST
Jenny Healy, DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN ED
Lois Post, GUEST ORGANIST

Order of Worship

Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

Prelude Good Christian Friends, Rejoice
 German Melody
 Arranged by Robert Lau, based on a traditional

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

When Jesus is born to Mary and Joseph,

God is there.

When Jesus is presented at the temple,

God is there.

When Simeon holds Jesus in his arms,

God is there.

When Anna recognizes Jesus in the temple,

God is there.

This very morning,

God is here.

In the future we cannot see,

God is there.

All: Let us worship God!

CAROL SING

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie

Above thy deep and dream-less sleep the silent stars go by;

Yet in the dark streets shineth the ever lasting Light;

The hopes and fear of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,

While mortals sleep the angels keep their watch of wondering love. O

morning stars, together, proclaim the holy birth!

And praises sing to God the King, and peace to us on earth.

The First Nowell

The first Nowell, the angels did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winters night that was so deep

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up, and saw a star, shinging in the east beyond them far, and to the earth, it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night...

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harks of gold, "Peace on the earth, good will to call, from heaven great news we bring" The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long.

Beneath the angel strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong;

And we, through bitter wars, hear not the love-song which they bring:

O hush the noise and end the strife, to hear the angels sing.

Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains

And the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains...

Gloria

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;

Come adore on bended knee, Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria

*** A Christmas Prayer**

Loving God, remind us of your great love for us. Let us love ourselves, and out of that love, give us a heart of love for all your children. Let us know our worth as your beloved child, blessing others as we have been blessed. Amen.

***The Lord's Prayer (unison)**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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

* **Gloria Patri** No. 36 (unison)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

The Children's Message Jenny Healy

Children will be dismissed to storytime

Sharing of Celebrations and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Scripture Luke 2: 22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Reflection

Faithful Souls

Rev. Helen Nablo

Where in the last year did you find wisdom?

What hopes do we bring to the new year?

Affirmation: *From Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3*

For everything there is a season:

And a time for every matter under heaven:

A time to be born and a time to die.

A time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted.

A time to break down, and a time to build up.

A time to weep and a time to laugh.

A time to keep and a time to throw away.

A time to be silent and a time to speak.

A time to love and a time to hate.

A time for war and a time for peace.

God has made everything suitable for its time.

God has put a sense of past and future into our minds.

God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before God.

Whatever God does endures forever.

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

A New Year Carol; David Tyler, Soloist

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976); Words anon.

Here we bring new water from the well so clear,

For to worship God with, this happy New Year.

*Sing levy dew, sing levy-dew the water and the wine;

The seven bright gold wires and the bugles that do shine.

Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon her toe,
Open you the West Door, and turn the Old Year go. *

Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon her chin,
Open you then East Door, and let the New Year in.

* Christmas Doxology

To God, all glorious heavenly light
To Christ revealed in earthly night,
To God the Spirit now we raise
Our joyful songs of thankful praise. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

Holy God, as we move into this New Year, may we give your grace to those near us, and share grace in our relationships. Let us be your companions, one act at a time, in helping to heal our world. May your generosity inspire our own. May your love lead us to be more loving in all we do and say. May the peace you give to us be in our hearts always. In Jesus name we pray this. Amen.

* Hymn No. 147 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Infant holy infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall; oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the babe is born for all. Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing greet the morrow, Christ the babe was born for all, Christ the babe was born for all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping, vigil til the morning new, saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.

Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing greet the morrow;
Christ the babe was born for you; Christ the babe was born for you!

Benediction

Postlude We Three Kings
 by Gordon Young

During the Postlude you may remain seated.

The Deacon in Charge is Mark Coombs

The Christmas Poinsettias are in memory of loved ones.

Our thanks to the Deacons for providing breakfast this morning

NOTES

Welcome to worship at The Church of the Pilgrimage. We hope you enjoy the worship service, today in a “coffee house” style. Next Sunday, January 7th, we return to the sanctuary for our regular worship.

Please silence your cell phones so we can be fully present to the spirit and to one another.

This morning we have nursery/cribroom care with Kristin Moses, our childcare worker. Today Kristin will be in the JRC.

Copies of the morning sermon and the memorial poinsettia listing are available on the table by the kitchen.

Next Sunday will be an all-ages Epiphany worship service.

MLK Day Monday January 15th. 9:15 Gather for service project at the Spire, 9:45 Rally “Shout Out for Justice” on Common in Front of the new town hall, , 11 am worship service at Bethel AME church.

Save the date - Leadership Retreat, Saturday February 3rd at the JRC.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR-

Mon, Jan 1: Monday Meals, 11am, Allerton Hall. Office closed for New Years Day.

Fri, Jan 5: Nominating Committee Meeting, 8:30am at Steve Triffletti’s office.

Wed, Jan 3: *Bible study will not meet- resumes on January 10th.*

Choir Rehearsal, 7:30pm, Sanctuary.

Sun, Jan 7: Epiphany Celebration with Communion, 10 am Worship for all ages. Pastor Helen preaching.



As an Open and Affirming Congregation we invite all into our faith, to fully share in all church life, including our work, worship, rites, and sacraments, with the assurance that we are all created in God's image, reconciled by Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

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