

Joy





**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
Norwich, New York 13815**



An Open and Affirming Church

December 12, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday in Advent - Joy

PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE *Of the Father's Love Begotten* Mark Hayes

WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION MOMENT

Christmas Fund

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP - LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Third Sunday of Advent – Joy

CANTICLE

The Road To Bethlehem

by Lloyd Larson

Ericka and Leona Tyler

Prepare the way of the Lord, prepare the way of the Lord.
Make straight in the desert a highway, a highway for our God.
Prepare the way of the Lord, prepare the way of the Lord.
Make straight a highway for the coming King.

*Standing is not required.

**Large Print Bulletins are available from the
ushers.**

HEALING WITH JOY

The candles are lit.

UNISON PRAYER

Dear God, so many people need your healing and hope. In this season of giving, and on every day of the year, help us to say and do those things that continue Christ's ministry of compassion and caring. Amen.

CANTICLE

The Road To Bethlehem

Ericka and Leona Tyler

by Lloyd Larson

INVOCATION

OPENING HYMN *Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming* (#127)

German, 15th Century

Tune: ES IST EIN' ROS

TIME OF SHARING

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

The Lord's Prayer

PASTORAL BLESSING OF PEACE

ONE: May the Peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

OFFERTORY PLEDGE

ONE: We love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

ALL: We pledge our whole selves to God.

ONE: We love our neighbors as ourselves.

ALL: We pledge to do justice as Christ's ambassadors of reconciliation.

ONE: We love one another as Jesus loves us.

ALL: We pledge to be and become Christ's Beloved Community in our life together.

ONE: We make disciples by teaching and modeling how to follow Jesus' Way of Love.

ALL: We pledge to be Jesus' disciples sharing Jesus' Way of Love in the way we live our lives and practice our faith.

We will not be passing the offering plates. Instead, they are located at both doors for your convenience as you enter or exit the Nave

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 3:7-18

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

SPECIAL MUSIC *Carol of the Bells*

Hand Bell Choir

arranged by Kathleen Wissinger

SERMON

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

INTERLUDE

AFFIRMING OUR FAITH

United Church of Christ Statement of Faith in the form of a doxology

ONE: We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit,

ALL: God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

ONE: You call the worlds into being,

ALL: create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

ONE: You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

ALL: You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

ONE: In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot,

ALL: conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

ONE: You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,

ALL: creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

ONE: You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others,

ALL: to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

ONE: You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,

ALL: courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

ONE: Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you.

ALL: Amen.

SHARING OF JOYS/CONCERNS

(Joys and prayers requests should be written on the prayer slips as you enter the Nave prior to the start of worship.)

PASTORAL PRAYER

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

CLOSING HYMN

Hark the Herald Angels Sing (#160)

(Jesus The Light of the World)

Charles Wesley, 1739

adapted by George D. Elderkin

Tune: ELDERKIN,

arranged by Jeffrey Radford, 1993

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Christmastide,

Gail Leven Pollock

(Good Christian Friends Rejoice - I Saw Three Ships -

Here We Come A-Caroling)

Bob Oehme, organ, Jason Handy, piano

Please remain seated until the usher dismisses you.

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Children's Moment from *Young Children and Worship* by Sonja M. Stewart and Jerome W. Berryman © 1989.

Watch a live stream of our service Sundays at 10:00 a.m. at
www.uccnorwichny.org/live-stream-2

Previous worship services can be viewed at
www.uccnorwichny.org/sermons

Question for Reflection

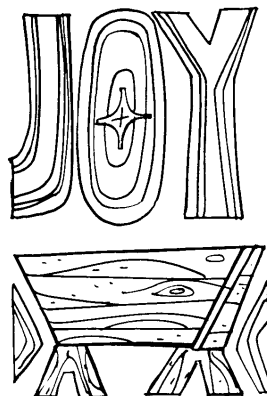
Where do you see the light of Christ magnified in your person, your life, and the ways of your family and community? Notice in the coming week one time each day when the light of Christ is made present for you by others.

Household Prayer: Morning

Thank you, good and gracious God,
for the morning light,
for another day in which to
live out what it means that you have magnified my soul
and the souls of those around me in this world.
Teach me the meaning of "Let it be."
Show me how to trust;
in Jesus' name. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Good and gracious God,
we give you thanks that
you have made incarnate in your world
the breath of life,
the life of hope.
Keep us safe throughout the night
that in the morning we may again rejoice
and live in peace with all creation;
in Jesus' name. Amen.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

DUE TO RECENT COVID ACTIVITY MASKS WILL BE REQUIRED THROUGHOUT THE WORSHIP SERVICES.

In order to reduce the risk of spreading infection, it is important that everyone wear a mask while in the church building, unless speaking from a microphone, singing a solo during worship, or receiving communion.

CHENANGO COUNTY COVID-19 NUMBERS

	This week (12/8)	Last week (11/30)
Active Cases	321	171
Quarantines	710	400
Hospitalizations	8	3
Deaths	92	91

CHENANGO CO. VACCINATION RATE (people 18+)
as of 11/30/21 – 72% with at least one dose

TODAY - VOTE ON THE BUDGET following the worship service.

NEXT SUNDAY IS MUSIC SUNDAY – The worship service will feature the Christmas Cantata, *The Road to Bethlehem: A Journey to the New Born King* by Lloyd Larson, sung virtually by our choir members, community members, and members of the choir at Broad St. United Methodist Church.

THE DEADLINE SIGN UP FOR A POINSETTIA is Wednesday, December 15th. Details are on the red insert in the bulletin.

THE MID YORK CONCERT BAND returns to the stage on Tuesday, December 14th at 7:30 p.m. at the Norwich High School. The concert will feature David Kirsch narrating *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* and a Christmas carol sing-a-long. Free will donations accepted.

SIGN UP- If you would like to offer the altar flowers, or be an usher, greeter, or liturgist please sign up on the bulletin board in the hallway, or contact Linda Oehme or the church office. Thank you.

SHARING OF JOYS/CONCERNS - Please fill out the prayer request form in the hallway as you enter the Nave prior to the service.

LOVE GOD, LOVE NEIGHBOR - Join us on Mondays to show our support, love and affirmation of those in the LGBTQ+ community by posting a rainbow selfie on your social media account with #rainbowmondays.

WE SUPPORT MUSIC EDUCATION – If you need help affording music lessons, consider applying for a Music Scholarship. Applications are available from the church office. For more information, talk with Meena Conant, Music Committee Chair.

IF YOU NEED HELP with something, please reach out to the church office, a Deacon or Pastor John. We're here to help each other.

CALENDAR

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12 – 3rd SUNDAY IN ADVENT- JOY

9:00 a.m. Sunday School, on Zoom
10:00 a.m. Worship, Nave – Budget Vote
11:30 a.m. Bell Choir, Chapel
3:00 p.m. Cantata Rehearsal, Zoom

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13

10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle on Zoom
1:30 p.m. K. Given Tutoring, kitchen
2:00 p.m. E. Fischer Lessons, upstairs
3:00 p.m. Tai Chi, Founders' Rm.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14

1:00 p.m. Quilting Circle, Kitchen
7:30 p.m. Mid York Concert Band at NHS

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15

10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle on Zoom
3:30 p.m. J. Handy Lessons, upstairs
6:30 p.m. Democratic Committee, Founders' Rm.
7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal on Zoom

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16

4:30 p.m. Piecemakers, Founders' Rm.
7:00 p.m. Helping Hands Give-away at the YMCA

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17

10:00 a.m. Prayer Circle, on Zoom
3:30 p.m. J. Handy Students Dress Rehearsal, Nave
7:00 p.m. Viewing event for Cantata Participants, Nave

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19 – 4th SUNDAY IN ADVENT- JOY

9:00 a.m. Sunday School, on Zoom
10:00 a.m. Worship, Nave
11:30 a.m. Bell Choir, Chapel
1:30 p.m. ONA Community Groups

The Chenango Muslim Community meets upstairs daily at 9:30 p.m. and Fridays at 1:30 p.m.

Poinsettias

In memory of **J. Peter Chaplin**
from Virginia J. T. Chaplin.

In honor of grandchildren **Mira, Saul, Zane, Landers ad LeDain**
from Virginia J. R. Chaplin.

In memory of parents **Paul and Eleanor Currie**,
formerly of Mohawk, NY
from Paul E. Currie, Jr.

In memory of parents **Carroll and Shirley Edwards**
from Francis, Mark, Janet and Arlene.

In memory of **Stacy Gage** and **Amy Gage**
from Maxine Gage.

In memory of **William R. and Doris G. Noel** and
Gary N. Gray, Sr. and Elizabeth Gray
from Gary and Vicki Gray.

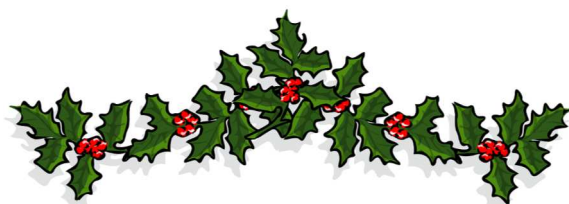
In memory of parents **Stew and Carla Chase**
from Jerrilynn and Alan Ingraham.

In memory of **Robert K. Oehme, Jr.**
from the Oehme Family.

In memory of **Cleave Yeahl** and **Werner and Mona Oehme**
from the Oehme family.

In memory of **Mary Piacquadio**
from Antoinette Piacquadio.

In Memory of our **departed loved ones**
from Betty Yeahl.



December 12, 2021

Covid-19 Safety Protocols (September 2021)

- Face coverings will be required upon entry and exit to the building. (Masks will be available.) **As of 12/5/21** - due to recent Covid activity, masks will be required throughout the service, unless speaking from a microphone, singing a solo during worship, or receiving communion.
- Social distancing of 6 feet (minimum) will be observed at all times.
- Physical contact with those outside of your household should be avoided.
- Everyone will be required to check in for attendance with the usher upon arrival.
- Please consider coming early to allow time for signing and for a slower entry into the Nave due to social distancing.
- At this time we are not able to accommodate childcare for children of any age. Children will remain in the Sanctuary and are asked to stay seated with their family/household.
- Seating in the Nave will look very different. Our ushers may assist in seating you. Please keep in mind that you may not be able to sit in the pew you are accustomed to and that your seat may change from week to week.
- The bulletins will contain everything you will need to follow along with the service (scripture, hymns, readings etc). They will be located in the pews and will be an indication as to where you can sit upon entry into the Nave.
- Currently, due to State and Conference guidelines, we will be unable to sing along with the hymns, but we do encourage you to hum along with them.
- Passing of the peace will be suspended at this time.
- Hearing assistive devices will be available for those that need them. You will receive the headset in a bag. Please write your name on the bag and store the headset in the same bag for use during future services.
- Offerings will be collected by placing your envelope in an offering plate upon entering or exiting the Nave.
- Once the service is over, we will leave the building in an orderly manner to allow for social distancing. The ushers will dismiss the congregation row by row.
- Coffee Hour and other such gatherings will remain suspended until further notice.
- One person at a time will be allowed in the restrooms (unless family group).
- Hand sanitizing stations are located near the Nave entrance hall and in each pew. Please wash your hands or use sanitizing stations frequently.
- We ask that if you are not feeling well and /or may be exhibiting cold or flu-like symptoms, that you refrain from attending until you feel better.
- Prayer requests can be emailed to the church office by Friday. On Sunday morning, we will utilize the prayer basket for prayer requests.
- Disinfection Plan: our Custodian will disinfect all high touch surfaces, including rest rooms and seating areas, before and/or after weekly services.