

CALDWELL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 24, 2023

8 PM



## 2023 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Caldwell United Methodist Church, 8 Academy Road, Caldwell, N. J. 07006  
 Rev. Kil Jae Park, Pastor Jackie Han, Music Minister

### OPENING

PRELUDE *"It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"* Andrew Kim

### CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Rejoice, for God is with us — Emmanuel.

**P: In the darkness of our world shines God's holy light.**

L: Now there is reason to hope, to love, to laugh, and to live.

**P: God is truly with us. We are not alone.**

**All: Thanks be to God!**

### PRAYER (Together)

Gracious God, with joy and thanksgiving we gather as your people.

We have come to hear again the timeless story of Christ's birth.

Open our hearts as we hear the story anew. Help us to be guided by the Light of Jesus Christ, that we may truly feel the power of your love and bring that love, with joy, to all we meet. This we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ born to us. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE Insert the D'Emilio Family

OPENING HYMN *"O Come, All Ye Faithful"* UMH # 234

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:1-20 Brandon Narine

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own town to register. <sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. <sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. <sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the



**READING 2: John 1:9-14****Stephanie De Bruyne, Reader**

9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. 14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**SPECIAL MUSIC*****“O, Holy Night”*****Andrew Kim****READING 3****Erin Redd**

Light is a central image for God's presence throughout Scripture. *“A pillar of fire...to give them light.”* *“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.”* And now *“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”* Jesus will declare with his own lips, *“I am the light of the world,”* and we celebrate tonight his birth — the one who *is* the light. We know that he comes *precisely because* the people are walking in darkness. We don't need a flashlight at noon on a sunny day, but once the sun goes down, we need streetlights, headlights and any other light we can muster. In Jesus, everyone and everything is illuminated. The *“light of all mankind,”* comes to dispel *all* our darkness, and he shines everywhere because there is darkness everywhere and in each one of us. Jesus is the one who finally reveals the world and all its inhabitants for what they truly are. And with deep love and compassion, Jesus Christ, the light of the world, sees our every gift and every flaw, and chooses to wrap us all in his warm light. This is the very foundation of the good news.

**\* HYMN*****“Silent Night, Holy Night”*****All**

- 1. Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**
- 2. Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;  
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**
- 3. Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;  
radiant beams from thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

**4. Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;  
with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**

*(As we sing "Silent Night, Holy Night", lights will be dimmed and candles lit. Please do not extinguish the candles until after Benediction. Dispose the candles in the box in the back on your way out.)*

L: The light from even a single flame can cut through thick darkness.

**P: Christ's flame reminds us that God is with us.**

L: May we live as people strengthened by God's hope.

**P: May we live as people encouraged by God's peace.**

L: May we live as people abiding in God's joy.

**P: May we live as people sharing in God's love.**

**\* HYMN**

***"Joy to the World"***

**UMH # 246**

**1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.**

**2. Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**3. No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.**

**4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.**

**\* BENEDICTION**

**Pastor Park**

**POSTLUDE**

***"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"***

**Jackie Kim**

**\*Stand as able**

**Welcome! We are glad you are able to celebrate the birth of Christ with us this evening. Peace be with you.**

**We thank Andrew Kim for sharing his musical talent with us tonight.**

