

Christmas Eve Service 2022
Christmas Chorale Service - 6:40 p.m.

Joined Choirs of Trinity Episcopal Church and First Congregational United Church of Christ
A Service of Carols and Candles - 7:00 p.m.

() indicates when those who are able will stand.*

Greetings and Announcements

The miracle of this night is the miracle of promises fulfilled: the miracle of light bursting on darkness, the miracle of a baby's cry and a mother's tender love, the miracle of angels singing Gloria's to shepherds, the miracle of God coming to earth to dwell among us. It is important to keep hold of this sense of miracle as we tell the old familiar story from passages we know by heart. Something special, something incredible happens tonight. Rejoice, for our salvation has come!

***Opening Hymn: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing** Green Booklet, Page 16, Vs 1 & 2
This selection is in the public domain.

(Please be seated following hymn.)

Advent Candle Lighting Service:

Good evening! On this Christmas Eve we are gathered as God's people to celebrate again what Christ's coming means to the world. We join with Christians all over the world who are celebrating tonight.

⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people. Luke 2:10

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" Luke 2:14

⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. Romans 5:4-5

Tonight we relight the four Advent candles and recall what the good news means.
(Lighting of each candle saying: Hope, Peace, Love, Joy)

Jesus Christ is the greatest gift who makes all these other gifts possible. So, we light the Christ candle now, as we think about what Christ's coming means to each one of us. *(Lighting of the Christ candle)*

***Opening Prayer (All):** We thank you, God, for your gift of Jesus Christ to the entire world. We thank you that Christ's coming makes hope, peace, love, and joy possible for every person in every nation. Encourage us to do our part to bring goodwill and peace to our families, our churches, our neighborhoods, and the world. Now, let your Spirit put us in touch with you, the living God, through words and music we hear tonight. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

***Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem** Green Booklet, Page 10, Verses 1 & 2
This selection is in the public domain.

(Please be seated.)

Let us pray: O wondrous God of the stars, we come tonight with breathless wonder to see the babe who will change our lives. We hear the names "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Prince of Peace," and we are in awe. You have touched the earth this night with your unconditional love. Touch us— touch our hearts and minds and souls. May we never tire of this story. May we never take it for granted. Make this night magical again. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words that Christ himself has taught us: **(All) Our Father, who art in.... Amen.**

Choir Anthem: Is There Room at the Manger For Me?

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Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

***Hymn: The First Noel** Green Booklet, Page 4, Verses 1 – 4
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(Please be seated.)

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:1-20

Christmas Message: Pastor Jon Gougeon

***Hymn: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear** Green Booklet, Page 12, Verses 1 & 2
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(Please be seated.)

Offering/Doxology and Thanksgiving Over the Gifts

Come now and kneel before the Christ child. Bring all that you are and all that you have. Offer your gifts in wonder and surprise and awe. Offer your gifts in joy and delight.

(Continued on back)

Hymn: (During offering) **O Come, All Ye Faithful** Green Booklet, Page 18, Vs 1&2

There are so many things to be thankful for tonight, God. Receive these tokens of our gratitude for your love incarnate in the babe of Bethlehem. May they become God-with-us for all the world. May they breathe miracles back into a world that needs a sense of wonder and joy. **Amen.**

***Candlelight Hymn: Silent Night** Green Booklet, Page 22, Verses 1-3

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***Closing Prayer and Benediction:** Go now in wonder. Go to bring light to those in darkness, joy to those who can find no joy, miracles to a world steeped in realism. Go with the songs of angels in your ears, and the love of God in your hearts. Go and spread the word—the babe of Bethlehem is born for all. **Amen.**

***Closing Hymn: Joy to the World** Green Booklet, Page 2, Verses 1–4

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

We welcome people as they are,
share Jesus as He is, and serve
our community and the world in love.

We extend a special thank you to the Trinity Episcopal Church choir for joining us this evening. Also, much gratitude to the Borke family and to all who helped make this Christmas Eve worship service a beautiful one.

Thank you for joining us this evening.
We wish you a blessed and joyous Christmas!

