

THE
United Church
OF THE **San Juans**



CHRISTMAS EVE
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

DECEMBER 24, 2022

LEADING WORSHIP - *Katy Kristoffersen, Music Director; Howard Davidson, Pastor*

Meditation

True worship doesn't put on a show or make a fuss; true worship isn't forced, isn't half-hearted, doesn't keep looking at its watch, doesn't worry what the person in the next pew is doing.

True worship is open to God, adoring God, waiting for God, trusting God even in the dark. *N. T. Wright*

Waiting on God requires the willingness to bear uncertainty, to carry within oneself the unanswered question, lifting the heart to God about it whenever it intrudes upon one's thoughts. *Elisabeth Elliot*

CHRISTMAS PRELUDE MUSIC

KATY KRISTOFFERSEN AND FRIENDS

WELCOME

PASTOR HOWARD DAVIDSON

INVOCATION

God with us, we open our hearts and souls to the beauty of your kingdom. We seek to hear the precious news once again that we might be continually renewed, transformed, and awed by your abundant love, everlasting peace, miraculous hope, and quenchless joy. May our praise and prayers be pleasing to you. May our lives reflect the beauty you have birthed in us. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

BOB AND RICKY MCDANIEL

Reader: "We light the first candle of Advent, the Candle of **Hope**, to remind us of the hope that the people of Israel had for the coming of the Messiah."

"We light the second candle of Advent, the Candle of **Peace**, to remind us of the peace that enters our lives when we experience the presence of Jesus Christ."

"We light the third candle of Advent, the Candle of **Joy**, to remind us of the joy the angels proclaimed when Jesus was born."

"We light the fourth candle of Advent, the Candle of **Love**, to remind us of the love that God shares with the world through the birth of God's Son."

"We light the fifth candle, the **Christ Candle** because Jesus Christ, the true light of the world has come.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

ANTHEM

O Holy Night (John S. Dwight, words; Adolphe C. Adam, music)

UCSJ CHOIR

**words are found in 187 in the hymnal*

HYMN NO. 188 Verses 1 and 3*Angels We Have Heard on High* (French carol, 18th c.)**SCRIPTURE'S PROPHETIC PROMISE****ISAIAH 9:2 AND 6 & 7**

BOB MCDANIEL

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned, they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest,

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

HYMN NO 196 - Verses 1, 2 & 4*In the Bleak Midwinter* (Christina Rossetti, words; Gustav T. Holst, music)**SCRIPTURE - A SURPRISING BIRTH!****LUKE 1:5-7 & 11-14 & 57-58**

VINCE SNOWBARGER

⁵ In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. ⁶ Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. ⁷ But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

¹¹ Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. ¹³ But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. ¹⁴ He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth.

⁵⁷ When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. ⁵⁸ Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.

HYMN NO. 184 - Verses 1 and 3*What Child is This?* (William C. Dix, words; English melody, 16th c.)**SCRIPTURE - THE BIRTH OF JESUS****LUKE 2:1-7**

DONNA WHISKEMAN

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register. ⁴ 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. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ 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.

HYMN NO. 185 - Verses 1 and 2*Hark the Herald Angels Sing* (Charles Wesley, words; Felix Mendelssohn, music)**SCRIPTURE - SIMEON & ANNA****LUKE 2:25-38**

PASTOR HOWARD DAVIDSON

²⁵ At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him ²⁶ and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, ²⁸ Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised. ³⁰ I have seen your salvation ³¹ which you have prepared for all people. ³² He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!" ³³ Jesus' parents were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them, and he said to Mary, the baby's mother, "This child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall, and many others to rise. He has been sent as a sign from God, but many will oppose him. ³⁵ As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul."

³⁶ Anna, a prophet, was also there in the Temple. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher, and she was very old. Her husband died when they had been married only seven years. ³⁷ Then she lived as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer. ³⁸ She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem..

CHRISTMAS EVE MESSAGE

WAITING IS HARD!

PASTOR HOWARD DAVIDSON

*But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*

ISAIAH 40:31

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE WITH OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*Thank you for your generosity in supporting our ministries.
Gifts may be placed in the basket located at the entrance of the sanctuary.*

HYMN NO. 182 - All Verses *O Come, All Ye Faithful* (Words Attr. John F. Wade; John F. Wade's *Cantus Diversi*)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING, DEDICATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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 sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

LIGHTING OF PEACE CANDLES

When passing the flame, please hold the lit candle upright and allow the person seated next to you to dip an unlit candle into the flame. When extinguishing your flame, please blow gently and keep the candle upright for a few seconds. Upon leaving the church there will be baskets to return the candles.

CAROL

SILENT NIGHT

CONGREGATION

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.

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."

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.

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.



POSTLUDE *Still, Still, Still*

UCSJ CHOIR

*Still, still, still
One can hear the falling snow
For all is hushed
The world is sleeping
Holy star, its vigil keeping
Still, still, still
One can hear the falling snow*

*Sleep, sleep, sleep
'Tis the eve of our Saviour's birth
The night is peaceful all around You
Close Your eyes
Let sleep surround You
Sleep, sleep, sleep
'Tis the eve of our Saviour's birth*

*Dream, dream, dream
Of the joyous day to come
While guardian angels without number
Watch You as You sweetly slumber
Dream, dream, dream
Of the joyous day to come*

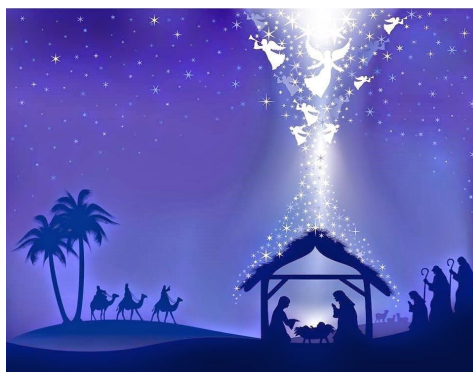
CHRISTMAS BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

PASTOR HOWARD DAVIDSON

When the song of the angels is stilled, When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home, When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost, To heal the broken, To feed the hungry, To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations, To bring peace among others, To make music in the heart.

Go in hope, peace, joy, and love...to spread the beauty of Christmas.

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Church Office hours: Tuesday—Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

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