

THE
United Church
OF THE **San Juans**

**FOURTH SUNDAY
OF ADVENT**

**CHRISTMAS EVE
DECEMBER 24, 2023**



GATHERING MUSIC *O Come O Come Emmanuel* (Latin, 9th c.; French melody, 15th c.) UCSJ CHOIR

THE WELCOME REV. MELINDA VEATCH

OPENING SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE ISAIAH 9:6-7 TIM SPANGLER

⁶For 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.
⁷Of 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.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

CHRISTMAS CAROL NO. 184 *What Child is This* (William C. Dix, words; English melody, 16th c.)
Verses 1 and 2

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.”

SPECIAL MUSIC *Angels From the Realms of Glory*

UCSJ CHOIR; ALEX BIRCK, ACCOMPANIST

(Marshall McDonald & Mack Wilberg, music; Arr. K. Kristoffersen)

A PRAYER

MELINDA VEATCH

SPECIAL MUSIC *Mary, Did You Know* (Mark Lowry, words; Buddy Greene, music)

UCSJ CHOIR

A READING FROM SCRIPTURE **LUKE 2:1-7**

MICHAEL MOORE

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.) ³And everyone went to their own town to register. ⁴So 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. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and 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.

CHRISTMAS CAROL NO. 205 AND 203 *Away in a Manger, Both Versions!*

(Anonymous; William Kirkpatrick, music; James R. Murray, music)

205, Verses 1 and

203, Verse 3

A READING FROM SCRIPTURE **LUKE 2:8-15**

CINDI MYERS

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

CHRISTMAS CAROL NO. 188 *Angels We Have Heard on High* (French carol, 18th c.)

Verses 1 and 3

A READING FROM SCRIPTURE: LUKE 2:16-20

TODD SCHROEDEL

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.
¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,
¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

CHRISTMAS CAROL NO. 180 *O Little Town of Bethlehem* (Phillips Brooks, words; Lewis H. Redner, music)

Verses 1 and 4

A READING FROM SCRIPTURE MATTHEW 2:1-12

CAROLYN SNOWBARGER

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”
³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.
⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.””

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.” ⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.
¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

CHRISTMAS CAROL NO. 182 *O Come, All Ye Faithful* (Attr. John F. Wade; John F. Wade's Cantus Diversi)

Verses 1 and 2

A TIME FOR REFLECTION

MELINDA VEATCH

CALL FOR OFFERING AND SPECIAL MUSIC NO. 187 *O Holy Night*

UCSJ CHOIR

Sing along with the choir on Verse 3!

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

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

CHRISTMAS CAROL NO. 186 *Silent Night* (Joseph Mohr, words; Franz Gruber, music)

All Verses

BLESSING AND CHRISTMAS CAROL NO. 179 *Joy to the World* (Isaac Watts words; George Frideric Handel, music)

Verses 1, 2, and 4

OUR MISSION

- We are a loving and compassionate church family that *respects the dignity and integrity* of each individual.
- We find our joy and meaning through faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- We seek to promote Christian unity and to encourage understanding and cooperation with those from different traditions.
- We seek to foster deeper relationships with God and each other through worship, fellowship, growth and service.



WE ARE AFFILIATED WITH

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA ~ THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ~ THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



Rev. Melinda A. Veatch

ucsjpastor@gmail.com

Church Office hours: Tuesday & Wednesday -- 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

www.ucsjridgway.org . 970-626-5803 . P.O. Box 295 . 295 N. Lena Street . Ridgway CO 81432 . Facebook/UCSJRidgway

MUSIC

Katy Kristoffersen, Director
ucsjmusic@gmail.com

OFFICE

Anita Posey, Admin. Assistant
ucsjoffice@gmail.com