

WELCOME to WORSHIP

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Menomonie, Wisconsin

First Sunday of Christmas
December 28, 2025

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude/Candle Lighting

"Sheep May Safely Graze"
(J.S. Bach, arr. D. Agay)

Oxana Khramova

Ring of the Bell

*Call to Worship (*Stand as you are able)

One: We gather together in this place:

All: prophets and dreamers, singers and poets, we who dare to imagine a world renewed; we who dare to dream God's dream.

One: We witness with Anna.

All: Jesus is our hope!

One: We hold fast to our faith.

All: trusting God's promises

One: Young and old, declare it together:

All: love is born and salvation is here!

One: Come and worship, all you who dream and imagine.

All: We have come to wonder and praise.

*Opening Prayer (in unison)

God of hopefulness, give us lives of holy anticipation, that we remain fervent in faith, and persistent in love, as we await the revelation of your redemption. Bless us, in every stage of life, with your unfailing presence, promised through the birth of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

*Opening Hymn

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Hymnal #44

Readings

Isaiah 63:7-9; Matthew 2:13-23;

Contemporary reading: *Preaching Thoughts* by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Karen Miller

Carol Sing

Karen Miller

Prayers of the People

Lord's Prayer

Our Creator, 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Offertory

"Lead, Kindly Light"
(J. B. Dykes, arr. M. Bailey)

Oxana Khramova

***Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Prayer of Dedication (in unison)**

As we go forth from this place, may we be grateful for the wisdom of those who have been faithful over decades of their lifetime. May we hear the testimony of our elders as we long for and dream about what is to come with our youth. May we value all people, at every step of life and faith, as God does. Amen.

Closing Hymn

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Hymnal #31

***Benediction**

Leader: Go out into the world, embracing the will to dream, and unable to remain quiet about all that is good and hopeful in the Christian faith we share.

All: **Amen.**

***Sung Benediction (unison)**

**God be with you till we meet again;
Loving counsels guide, uphold you,
With a Shepherd's care enfold you:
God be with you till we meet again.**

Postlude

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"
(Polish Carol, arr. J.A. Lind)

Oxana Khramova

The flowers today are from Kathy Colvin to celebrate her grandson's, Isaac Ellingson's, birthday on 12/30.

Credits

- "The Will to Dream" Advent Series © 2025 is an Illustrated Ministry, LLC. product, purchased and used with permission.
- Preaching Thoughts, Steve Garnaas-Holmes in Unfolding Light, Dec 28, 2025) at: <https://unfoldinglight.net/2022/07/25/sunday-after-christmas/>
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This Week

Thursday, January 1: Office is closed. Happy New Year!

Link to the full church calendar: <https://www.menomonieucc.org/monthlycalendar>

Mission Statement of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Menomonie, WI

We are called together:

To celebrate God's presence.

To help each person to grow in his or her relationship with God;

To create a welcoming and supportive community of all God's people, affirming the diversity of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, and identity, social and economic status, and the differently abled;

To observe and share life's passages and our faith traditions;

To reach out in love seeking justice and peace;

And to tell the old story of Jesus and His love.

Land Acknowledgement

Here we congregate on Ojibwe, Dakota, Menominee, Potawatomi, and Ho Chunk land. Generations of Indigenous people occupied and provided careful stewardship of this land long before Europeans arrived on these shores. The traumatic dispossession of this land by European immigrants and the displacement of countless individuals produced collective suffering that has repercussions for our Indigenous neighbors today. The original inhabitants of this land—known to some Indigenous peoples as Turtle Island—took seriously the Creator's call to be stewards of air, land, water, and creatures. With gratitude, we acknowledge the lessons we continue to learn from our Indigenous neighbors as we seek to be good stewards and pray for guidance in learning how to make reparations.

ONA Covenant

We covenant as a congregation to welcome, celebrate, and include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning people and their families into the full life of our church. We take this stance publicly and proudly, knowing that silence is inadequate to confront the violent theology that is widespread throughout the Christian church. We covenant to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning people and their families with our prayers, words, and actions.

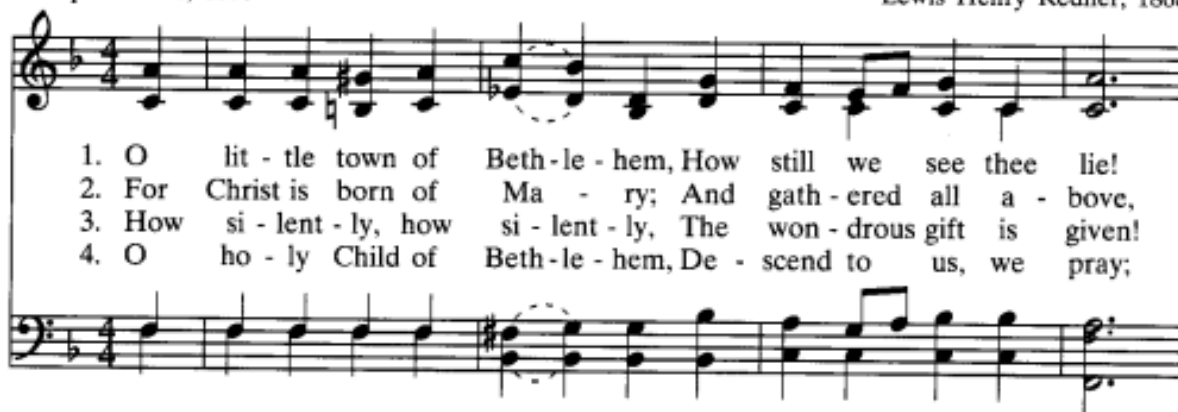
O Little Town of Bethlehem

44

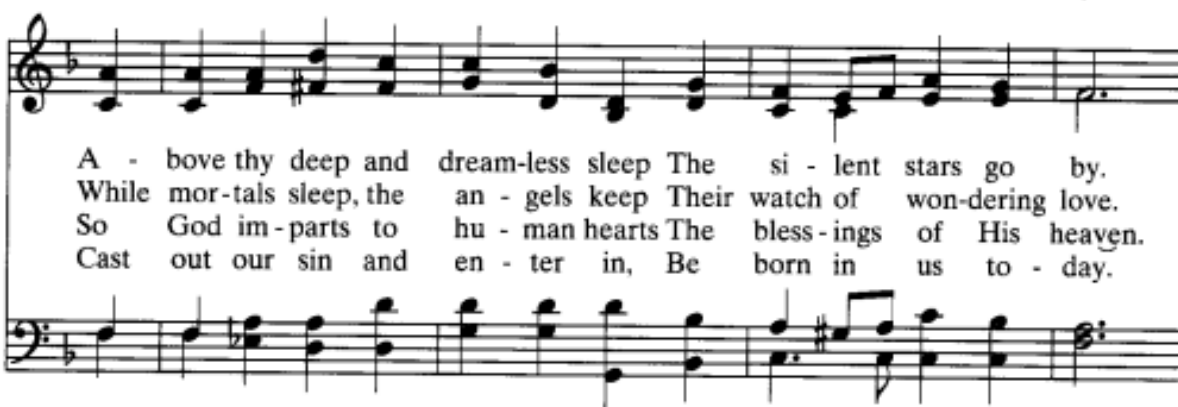
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Phillips Brooks, 1868

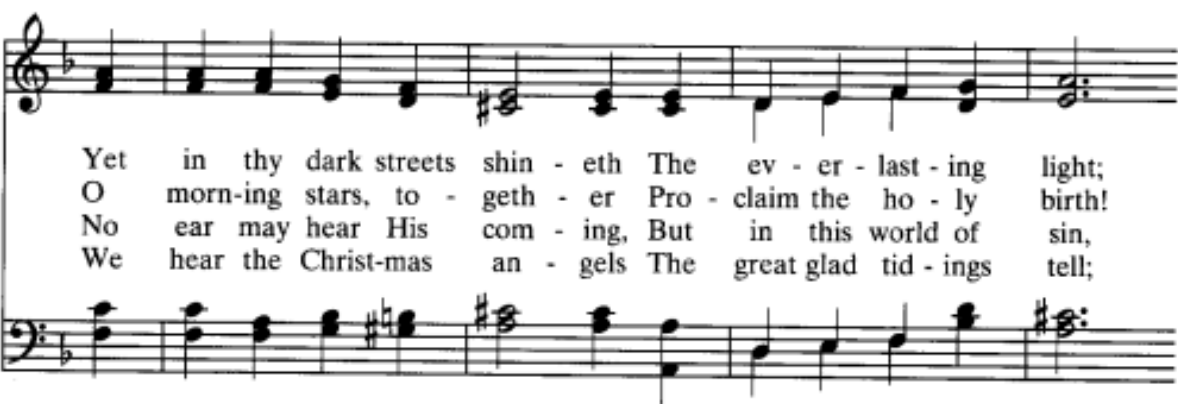
Lewis Henry Redner, 1868



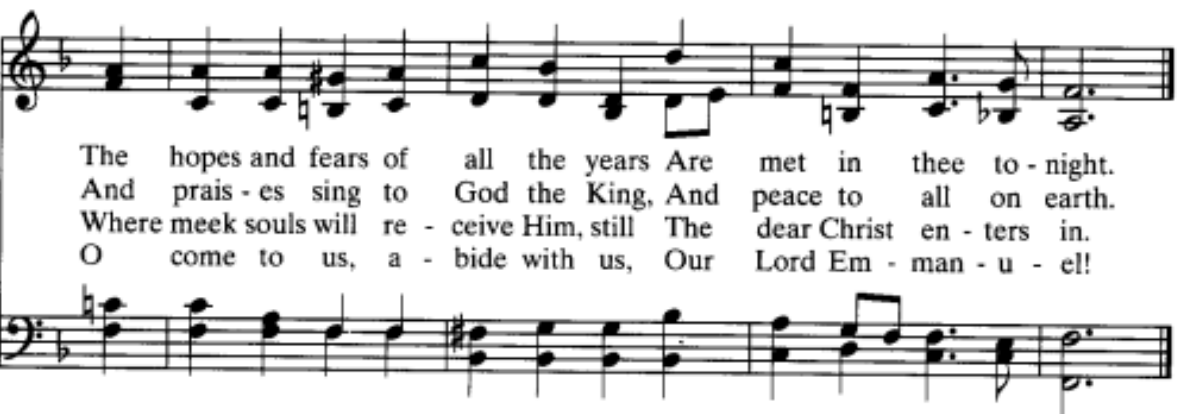
1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
 2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry; And gath - ered all a - bove,
 3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, The won - drous gift is given!
 4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by.
 While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav - en.
 Cast out our sin and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth!
 No ear may hear His com - ing, But in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
 And prais - es sing to God the King, And peace to all on earth.
 Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Em - man - u - el!

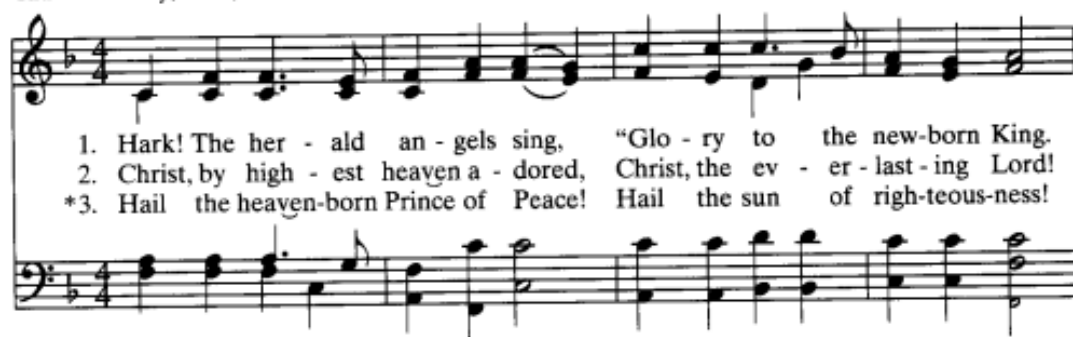
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN 7.7.7.7 D with refrain


Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.

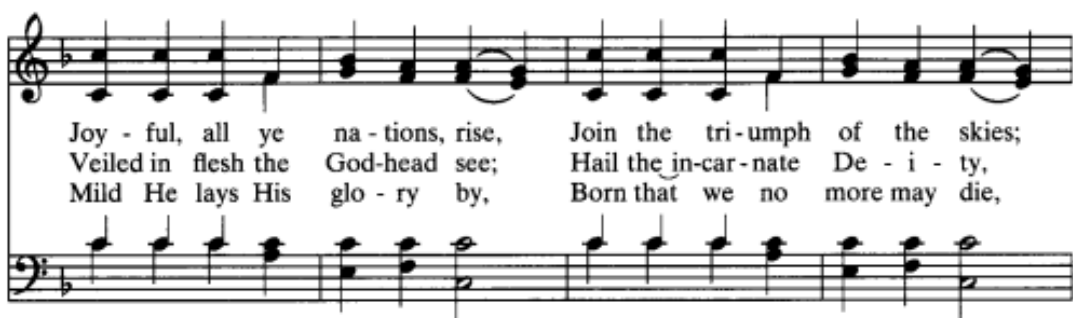
Arr. William Hayman Cummings, 1855



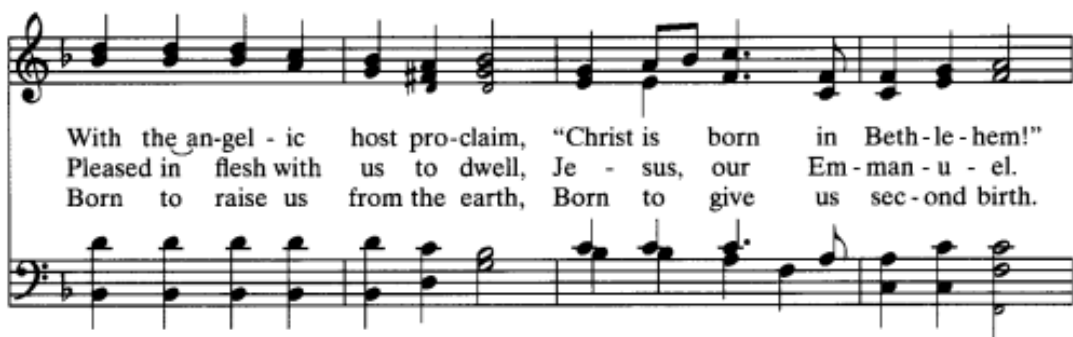
1. Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King.
 2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord!
 *3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of right-eous-ness!



Peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of the vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all He brings, Risen with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; Hail the in-car-nate De - i - ty,
 Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that we no more may die,



With the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!"
 Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man-u - el.
 Born to raise us from the earth, Born to give us sec-ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King!"