



*Candlelight Service of
Lessons and Carols*

WELCOME to WORSHIP

Christmas Eve
December 24, 2025

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
420 Wilson Avenue
Menomonie, Wisconsin

For Your Reflection

Christmas proclaims that God's love arrives through solidarity and presence rather than spectacle or power. Mary's body becomes the dwelling place of divine love, and through her, the kin(g)dom begins – as mutual care and courageous embodiment rather than domination. This story dismantles hierarchies of worth. The Divine chooses to be counted among the marginalized, turning lowliness into sacred space. Christmas is not merely a celebration of birth, but of who is included in the story and where we are called to look for God. Christmas insists: every life has sacred worth.

Welcome

Choral Introit

"Celtic Christmas Blessing"
(C. Curry)

Chancel Choir

Ringling of the Bell

Christmas Proclamation

*Opening Carol

(*Stand in body, mind, or spirit)

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Hymnal #41

*Call to Worship / Christmas Wreath Lighting

One: We gather together in this place:

All: prophets and dreamers, singers and poets,

One: we who dare to imagine a world renewed;

All: we who dare to dream God's dream.

One: We ponder with Mary;

All: we marvel at Christ's birth.

One: God comes to us, a vulnerable child—

All: heaven and earth, meeting in a manger.

One: The angels sing, the shepherds dance.

All: We treasure these things in our hearts.

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

All: We have come to wonder and praise.

The Christmas Wreath is lit.

***Christmas Eve Prayer (in unison)**

God of the vulnerable, you come to us in ways that defy expectation: as a fragile baby, not a trampling warrior; birthed in a stable, not a palace; born in the quiet stillness of night. Teach us to look for you in the tender things. Make our hearts soft and our spirits generous, living the way of Christ, born to us this night. Amen.

Carol "Angels We Have Heard on High" Hymnal #23

THE BIRTH OF JESUS IN READINGS AND SONGS

First Reading Luke 1:26-33, 38 Rachel Ropella

Carol "In the Bleak Midwinter" Richie and Apryl Price

Second Reading Luke 2: 1, 3-7 Carol Ropella

Carol "Away in a Manger" Hymnal #25

Third Reading Luke 2:8-14 Jon Blomquist

Carol "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" Hymnal #31

Fourth Reading Luke 2:15-20 Leah Langby

Carol "Go Tell It on the Mountain"
(arr. Francesca Battistelli) Sarah Martinek and
Paige Weisenberger

Fifth Reading Matthew 2:1, 9-11 Tom Schmelzle

Carol "We Three Kings"
(by John H Hopkins Jr, arr. Cynthia Dobrinski) Bell Choir

A TIME TO RESPOND IN FAITHFULNESS

Offertory "Carol of the Bells" Dean Langby,
Isaiah May, Dominique Stewart

Offertory Prayer (in unison)

Holy God, we bring our gifts and offerings to you because the voices of the prophets remind us of something bigger, something greater than any system this world offers us. We believe when we trust you with our resources, the kin(g)dom of God comes much closer to reality on earth. Help us steward these gifts to create abundant life and love. Amen.

Contemporary Reading "The Work of Christmas"
(Howard Thurman) Rachel Ropella

SERVICE OF LIGHTS

Song

“O Holy Night”

Isaiah May

Candle Lighting

Ushers will come to the start of each row to light our candles. Please pass the light, candle by candle, down the row. Tilt the unlit candle towards the lit candle for safety. We will sing “Silent Night” once all candles are lit.

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

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; Heav'nly 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.

Benediction

Extinguishing Candles

Leave your candles in one of the buckets by the sanctuary entrances as you depart.

*Closing Carol

“Joy to the World”

Hymnal #40

Postlude

“He Is Born”

Oxana Khramova

(arr. M. Hayes)

Thanks to all who purchased poinsettias. Please take them home with you after the service.

Credits

- “The Will to Dream” Advent Series © 2025 is an Illustrated Ministry, LLC. product, purchased and used with permission.
- “The Work of Christmas” by Howard Thurman, from The Mood of Christmas and other Celebrations;
<https://www.bread.org/sites/default/files/downloads/howard-thurman.pdf> accessed 22 December 2025.
- Licenses purchased to reprint, podcast, and/or stream the music in this service obtained: ONELICENSE #A-715543. CCLI Copyright License B 20989858.

This Week

Sunday, December 28th: 8:30 Early Service; **10am** Worship with Carol sing

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 Come, All Ye Faithful

41

ADESTE FIDELES 6.6.10.5.6 with refrain

John Francis Wade (c. 1740–1743)
Trans. Frederick Oakeley, 1841

John Francis Wade (c. 1740–1743)
Harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing,
*3. Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion!

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem!
Je - sus, to Thee be all glo - ry given;
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!

Come, and be - hold Him, Born the King of an - gels!
Word of the Fa - ther, Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God, all Glo - ry in the high - est!

Refrain
O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a -

dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ, the Lord!

Angels We Have Heard on High

23

French carol

GLORIA 7.7.7.7 with refrain

French carol

Trans. James Chadwick (1813-1882); alt.

Arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937

1. An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
 2. Shep-herds, why this ju - bi-lee? Why your joy-ous strains pro-long?
 3. Come to Beth-le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;

And the moun-tains in re - ply Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heaven - ly song?
 Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain
 Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o; Glo

ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Away in a Manger

25

MUELLER 11.11.11.11

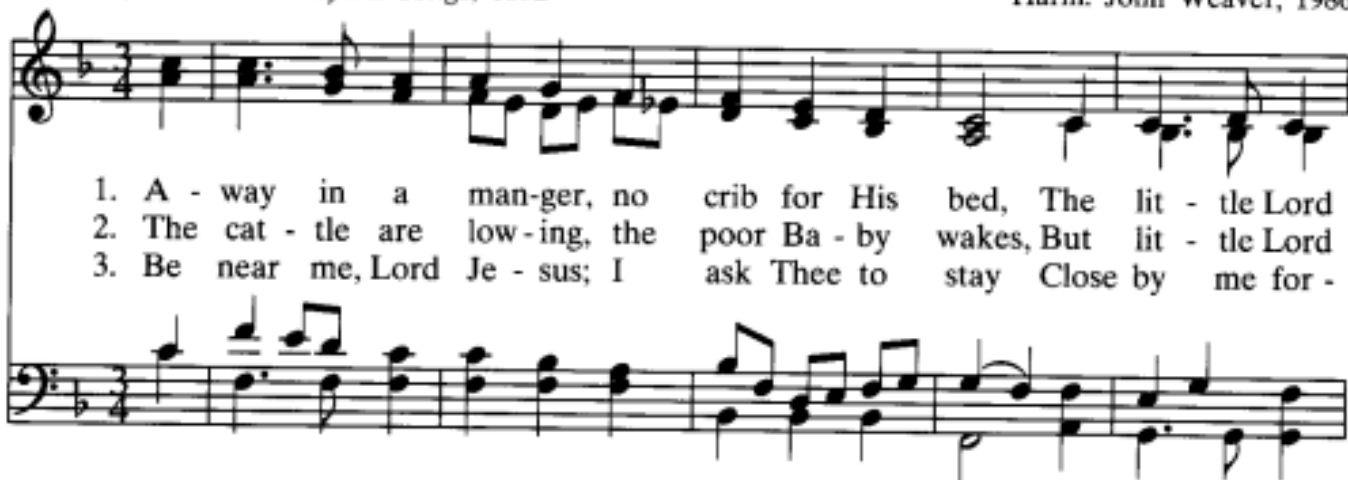
Stanzas 1-2, *Little Children's Book*

for Schools and Families, c. 1885

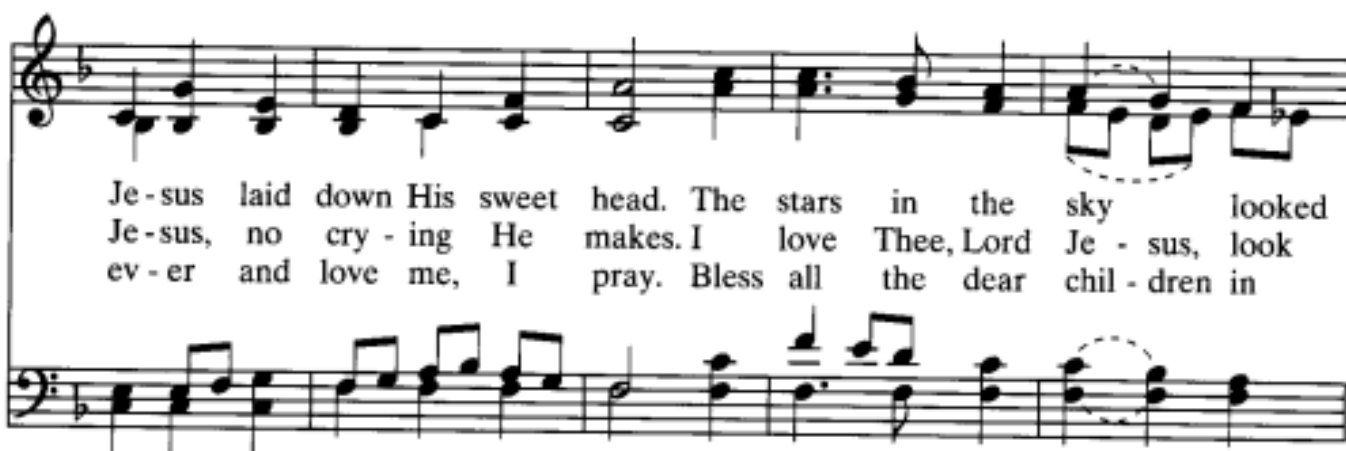
Stanza 3, *Gabriel's Vineyard Songs*, 1892

Attr. James R. Murray, 1887

Harm. John Weaver, 1986



1. A - way in a man-ger, no crib for His bed, The lit - tle Lord
2. The cat - tle are low-ing, the poor Ba - by wakes, But lit - tle Lord
3. Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay Close by me for -



Je - sus laid down His sweet head. The stars in the sky looked
Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes. I love Thee, Lord Je - sus, look
ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in



down where He lay, The lit - tle Lord Je - sus, a - sleep on the hay.
down from the sky, And stay by my side un - til morn-ing is nigh.
Thy ten - der care, And fit us for heav - en to live with Thee there.

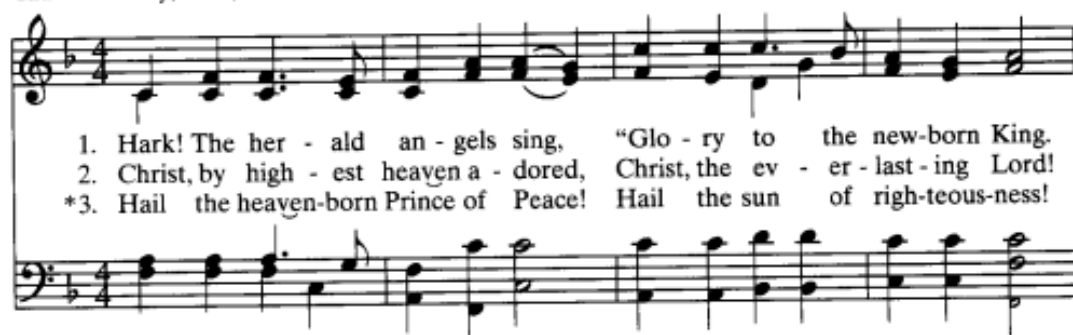
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN 7.7.7.7 D with refrain

Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.

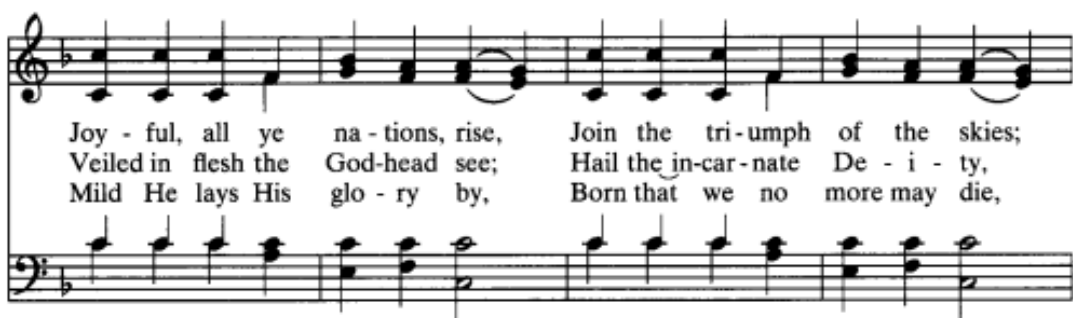
Arr. William Hayman Cummings, 1855



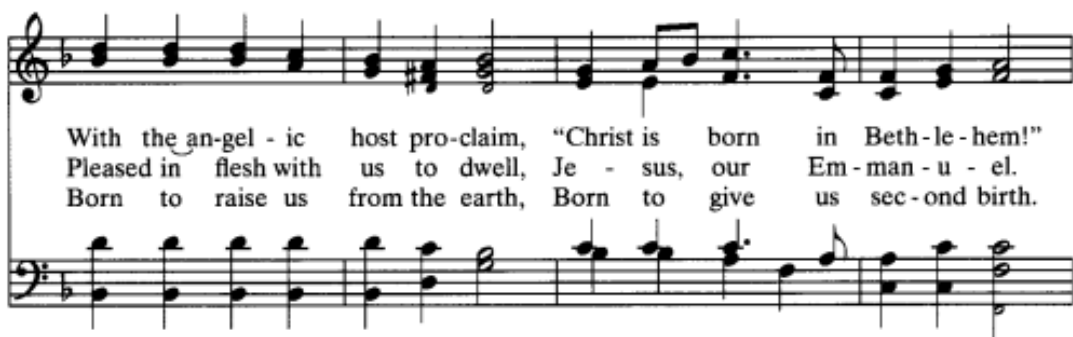
1. Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King.
 2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord!
 *3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of right-eous-ness!



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!"

Joy to the World!

132

Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.

Ps. 98:4-9; Luke 2:11-15

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth its
 2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

prais - es bring; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Christ room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of God's righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
 and won - ders of God's love, and won - ders of God's

and re - and
 re - peat the sound-ing joy, re -
 and won - ders of God's love, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound-ing joy.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of God's love.

heaven and na - ture sing,
 peat the sound-ing joy,
 won - ders of God's love,