

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF VERNON, UCC

December 24, 2013

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

PRELUDE “Fanfare on ‘Hark! The Herald Angels Sing’” Wyton
“Noël Parisienne” Quef

WELCOME

INTROIT “Gesù Bambino” P. A. Yon
Duet – Leanne Connolly and Joanne Myer

***CALL to WORSHIP** (*responsive*)

Leader: Darkness and stillness on a clear night;

People: Unsuspecting shepherds huddle in the cold.

Leader: A night like so many other nights;

People: A night just like tonight.

Leader: When stars may stray from their course

People: And carols may echo in the heavens;

Leader: When our hearts sense something

People: And our spirits wait with hopeful expectation.

Leader: It could happen again.

People: It is happening now.

Leader: Tonight and every night,

People: God’s love is born in the hearts of those who prepare him room.

***OPENING HYMN** #143 “Joy to the World”

ADVENT WREATH

The Christ Candle

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in the land of the shadow of death - on them a light has shined. For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given; all authority shall rest upon his shoulders; and he shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Isaiah 9:2, 6

As we light these candles today, we thank God for the hope he gives us, for the peace he bestows, for the joy he pours into our hearts, and for the love that redeems us and shows us the way.

We also celebrate the Light of the World, born to us today and every day. With the birth of our Savior Jesus we know the gift of Emmanuel – God with us!

Lighting the Christ Candle (in silence)

Prayer (*unison*)

Loving God, God with us, we thank you for your presence, for sending your Son to walk with us and to lead us. Open our hearts to joy and peace. Fill us with new hope. Show us again the miracle of your saving love this Christmas. Amen.

***Hymn** #128 “One Candle Is Lit”

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:1-20

ANTHEM “Do You Hear What I Hear” Regney/Shayne

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE Rev. Meg Watson

HYMN #148 “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

PRAYER

The LORD’S PRAYER (*unison*)

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 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.

BRINGING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY “Breath of Heaven” Grant/Eaton
Soloist – Michelle Darby

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER of DEDICATION**

***LIGHTING of the CANDLES** “Mary Did You Know” Lowry/Green

***HYMN** “Silent Night, Holy Night” (*insert*)

***BLESSING and EXTINGUISHING of the CANDLES**
(Please place candles in the basket as you exit.)

POSTLUDE “Yuletide Echoes” Hodson

***All who are able are invited to stand.**

The poinsettias are given by the church family and arranged by the Flower Committee.

The **Christmas Fund** enables the United Church of Christ to provide financial aid to low income, retired clergy and their widowed spouses; emergency assistance to clergy in financial need and funding for pension and health supplementation plans for low income retired clergy and lay employees. If you wish to make a donation, please use the envelope included in your bulletin. Checks should be made payable to FCCV with “Christmas Fund Offering” in memo. All donations may be placed with the regular offering.