Middlebury Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
December 24, 2022  
Christmas Eve  
11pm

*all those who are able please stand  
*Our worship begins with the Prelude.  
*Please be mindful of those who wish to spend this time in prayer

PRELUDE  
Christmas Carol Medley

CHRISTMAS GREETING  
The Rev. Katrina Manzi

INTROIT  
Adult Choir  
Carol of the Bells  
M. Leontovich, arr. Wilhousky

CALL TO WORSHIP  
Leader: A child has been born for us, a son given to us. And his name shall be called:  
People: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace  
Leader: Once we were no people;  
People: Now we are God’s people  
Leader: Once we walked in darkness  
People: Now we have seen a great light

*CAROL  
O Come, All Ye Faithful  
Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #132

INVOCATION

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH & CHRIST CANDLE  
The Carringtons  
Prayer (Unison)  
Living God, come to our world. May the hope, peace, joy and love of Christ shine brightly at the center of our lives, spreading
warmth and light in us, in this community, and everywhere.
Amen.

TELLING THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness
    have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
    as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
    and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors
    and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
    and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
    Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
    and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
    He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
    from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

CAROL

What Child is This, Who, Laid to Rest

Pilgrim Hymnal #140
Luke 2:1-7
Brittany Romaniello
In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

CAROL
Away in a Manger
Pilgrim Hymnal #137

Luke 2:8-14
Mike Granja
In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

CAROL
Angels We Have Heard on High
Pilgrim Hymnal #116

Luke 2:15-20
Brenda Romaniello
When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told
them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**CAROL**
O Little Town of Bethlehem  
*Pilgrim Hymnal #134*

**John 1:1-14**  
*Amy Coughlin*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

**MEDITATION**  
The Rev. Katrina Manzi

**CHRISTMAS PRAYER**

**OFFERTORY**
Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heav’nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)**
Source of light and gladness, in faith and joy we celebrate the birth of your Son. We pray that through our gifts and our lives all people may know the riches of your love in the Word made flesh. Amen.

**SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER**
Communion is open to all, including children, who wish to grow in faith in Jesus Christ

**Invitation**
The Great Thanksgiving
Leader: The Lord be with you
People: And also with you
Leader: Lift up your hearts
People: We lift them up to the Lord
Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
People: It is right to give God thanks and praise

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen. [We use “Father” and “trespasses,” but please use whatever words bring you closest to God.]
Words of Institution
Distribution of the Elements

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (UNISON)
Loving God, tonight you have united earth and heaven in sending your Son to take our human nature. May we, who have tasted heavenly things, share in the life of his eternal kingdom. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CANDLES OF CHRISTMAS
Following the Prayer of Thanksgiving, the Ushers will proceed down the aisles, lighting the candles of the first person in each pew. The flame will then be passed from person to person until each candle is lit. Tip the unlit candle into the lit candle.

CAROL (please remain seated) Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #138

Silent 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
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
BENEDICTION

Please remain seated in silence as the church bell rings.

POSTLUDE
Christmas Carol Medley

DOING GOD’S WORK
The Congregation, Ministers in the World
Church Officers & Members of our Boards & Committees
Staff:
The Rev. Katrina Manzi, Minister
Donna Obarowski, Choir Director
David Obarowski, Organist
Valerie Beard, Faith Formation Coordinator
Diane Barnard, Bookkeeper/Asst. Treasurer
Rebecca Trosan, Nursery Attendant

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