

December 24, 2019 – 7:00 pm

# CHRISTMAS EVE



## ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

10207 Lincoln Trail

Fairview Heights, IL Telephone 397-6323

e-mail: [stjohnuccfh@wisperhome.com](mailto:stjohnuccfh@wisperhome.com)

Website: [www.stjohnfairview.org](http://www.stjohnfairview.org)

Rev. Rosemary Captain

- CCLI LICENSE #11164431
- LITURGY WRITTEN REV. THOM SCHUMAN
- **PLEASE RESPOND WITH WORDS IN BOLD PRINT.**
- **\*PLEASE STAND IF COMFORTABLY ABLE.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES:

CHOIR INTROIT: **"Of the Father's Love Begotten"**  
Cantiones/Douglas

THE BELL RINGS TO PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS:

PRELUDE: **"Shepherds and Angels"** Larry Shackley  
Duet: Stacie Pickens – Flute  
Sharon Banjavcic - piano

\*RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: Joy comes to the world this night!

**Many: In our God who sets aside glory  
to become as hopeful and helpless as we are.**

One: Hope comes to the world this night!

**Many: In Jesus who embraces the poor as family,  
who brings justice for those who are oppressed.**

One: Peace comes to the world this night!

**Many: In the Spirit who would reconcile the divided,  
who would build bridges and tear down walls.**

\*RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF INVOCATION:

One: Here, the faithful come that we may adore you,  
God-who-is with us.

**Many: Here, the lonely come to find you and your  
family, God-who-gathers us to your heart.**

One: Here, little children look with wide-eyed  
wonder, God-who-comes in wonder.

**Many: Here, older folks listen for comforting words,  
God-who-is-our-story.**

**One:** Here, we join with those who watch,  
God-who-works-night-shifts.

**Many:** Here, we join the animals gazing at new life,  
God-who-renews-creation.

**One:** Here, we welcome all who have traveled in this  
season, God-who-shares-our-journey.

**Many:** Here, we sing our carols of joy and grace,  
God-who-is-our-songwriter.

**ALL:** Here, we gather on this holy night,  
to adore you.

**\*OPENING HYMN: “O Come, All Ye Faithful”**

**CALL TO CONFESSION:** Be near us this night, . . .

**UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS:**

**We sing of the one who is away in a manger, God of holy nights, but ignore the cries of little ones who are forgotten. We imagine the holy family was well-off as we are, forgetting they are the relatives of the poor around us. The gifts of wonder and grace are offered to us, but how silently we use them in our words and lives.**

**Come to us once again, Bethlehem’s Child, to give us new life and hope. May we join the angels in singing songs of joy, as we bring healing to the broken. May we open the doors of our hearts to those searching for refuge from their journeys to escape fear and danger. May we see each person as precious in your eyes, as well as ours, as the One whose lowly birth we celebrate this night, Jesus our Brother, our Lord.**

*Silence is kept*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON: Here in the silence of these moments . . .

**O come, let us adore our God whose love came down this night; whose grace and justice walked among us; who peace and hope are the gifts we can share with all around us. Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest! Amen.**

GLORIA: **NCH 759**

**Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three- in-One; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

FIRST TESTAMENT READING: **Isaiah 9:2-7 Lay Liturgist**

CHOIR ANTHEM: **“What is This Light?” Larry Shackley**

GOSPEL READING: **Luke 2:1-9**

CHOIR ANTHEM: **“Once Upon a Starry Night” Gene Grier**

GOSPEL READING: **Luke 2:10-20**

SERMON: **“The Beginning of the End” Pastor Rosemary**

\*HYMN OF RESPONSE:

**“Angels We Have Heard on High”**

PASTORAL PRAYER: Beginning with a time for silent personal prayer. Concluding with the Lord’s Prayer.

THE LORD’S PRAYER: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, Your 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**PRAYER RESPONSE: Verse 3 “Away in a Manger”**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray,  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,  
And fit us for heaven to live with you there.**

**INVITATION TO SHARE:**

**OFFERTORY: “What Child Is This?” Gilbert M. Martin**

**Duet: Nancy Eisenhower – Piano**

**Sharon Banjavcic – Organ**

**\*DOXOLOGY: NCH 780**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God for all that love has done.  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.**

**\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION:**

**God of holy nights, as we offer our gifts, gather them up to be the hope for all who struggle, food for those who hunger, shelter for those who sleep rough, life for all who yearn. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.**

**\*HOLY COMMUNION: (On Screen)**

**\*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:**

**Thank you, God, for renewing us at your table of joy and wonder with the presence of your Son, born so long ago, to live and die and rise for us all. Thank you**

**for your eternal love, the bread of life, that sustains all creation. Help us continue as your servants in this world, wherever we reside. Amen.**

**CANDLE LIGHTING: “Silent Night”** Led by Choir  
1<sup>st</sup> verse of “Silent Night” sung in German  
by Anne Brown and Nancy Eisenhauer

(As the light is passed, tilt your unlit candle to the lit candle to prevent wax dripping.)

**\*BENEDICTION:**

**\*SENDING HYMN: “Joy to the World”**

**\*POSTLUDE: “The Joy of Christmas”** Lani Smith

