

First Congregational United Church of Christ
315 S. Moore Street – Algona, IA 50511
Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve
December 24, 2023

*“Christmas began in the heart of God.
It is complete only when it reaches the heart of humankind.”*

Welcome

Lighting the Advent Candles

Call to Worship

(read responsively)

One: The night was dark.

Many: **A baby lay in a manger.**

One: The night was still.

Many: **Angels sang to shepherds.**

One: The night was expectant;

Many: **God’s glory shone brightly.**

One: On this night,

Many: **Let us rejoice in the gift of love.**

One: Jesus is born!

Many: **Glory to God in the highest heaven! Peace to all on earth!**

Carol “O, Come, All Ye Faithful” #182

*Invocation (prayed together)

**Holy One, open our hearts to receive the true gift of Christmas.
May the stillness of your peace wash over us. May we encounter
hope born anew. We are here, waiting for you, ready to receive
your gift of love. Be with us now, as we come and adore the
newborn child. Amen.**

A Christmas Meditation

0

³
Gathering at the Christmas Communion Table

Invitation, Communion Prayer, Sanctus, Words of Institution,
Consecration Prayer, Lord’s Prayer, Sharing the Bread and Cup

Sanctus

**Gloria! Gloria! In Excelsis deo! Creation joins in the angelic
chorus of joy! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One born
this night for us. Hosanna in the highest!**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give you thanks, God, that you have come to us through Jesus
Christ, both in the midst of time and history in the city of
Bethlehem, and in the timeless presence of his Spirit as we receive
the gifts of bread and cup. Send us out into the world rejoicing,
ready to share your love with the people we meet; through the
grace of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

The Christmas Story in Scripture and Song

Carol “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear” #191

From You Little Bethlehem - Micah 5:2-5a
Carol “O Little Town of Bethlehem” #180

You’re Going to Have a Son - Luke 1:26-38
Carol “What Child Is This” #184

Don’t Be Scared! Trust God! - Matthew 1:19-24a
Carol “Angels, from the Realms of Glory” #189

Jesus Is Born - Luke 2:1-7
Carol “Away in a Manger” #203
First verse sung by Greta, Jack, Sam, Marie, Tess and Archie.
Congregation joins in on the remaining verses

Wonderful News! - Luke 2:8-20
Carol “Angels We Have Heard on High” #188

Celebrating the Light

Lighting Our Candles Isaiah 9:2-7

*Please light your candle from the lighted candle of the person next to you. Tip your
unlit candle to the upright lit candle.*

Carol “Silent Night” #186
(Verses are printed on the insert of the bulletin)

Benediction (read responsively)

One: We have heard the Christmas story of love-

Many: love born in a manger.

One: Like the shepherds

Many: we found the Christ child.

One: Like Mary,

Many: we hold this story deep in our hearts.

One: Let's join the angels, telling the news of incredible joy.

Many: May God's blessing of peace be ours this night and evermore!

***Carol**

“Joy to the World”

#179



Welcome to this Christmas Eve Candlelight celebration of Jesus' birth! May God's Spirit surround you in this place. May the hope, peace, joy, and love that Christ's birth brings dwell within you this day and throughout the coming year!

We will celebrate the Sacrament of Communion this evening. **Everyone** is welcome at The Table! The outer ring in each tray is grape juice, the inner rings are wine.

A very big THANK YOU to Jared Feddersen for sharing his musical gifts with us this evening.

Another very big THANK YOU to Greta, Jack and Sam Grindberg and Marie, Tess, and Archie Feddersen for leading us in singing “Away In a Manger.”

All scripture readings this evening are from *The New Jerusalem Bible* .

The Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy (adapted) is from the *Book of Worship-United Church of Christ*. The Call to Worship, Invocation, and Benediction are by Mary Petrina Boyd from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2023* edited by Mary Scifres. and B.J. Beu. The Communion Prayer of Thanksgiving is by Rebecca A. Ferguson and Ruth C. Duck from *Flames of the Spirit-Resources for Worship Like Bread for the Journey* edited by Ruth C. Duck. The quote at the top of the bulletin is The quote at the top of the bulletin is adapted from the *Religious Telescope* magazine of the United Church of the Brethren.

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 dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth.



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 dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth.



Poinsettia

Dave and Becky Bibler

Ginny Buchanan

Scott and Sandy-Harmes
Buchanan

David Burrow

David Burrow

Rev. Chris and Pam Burtnett

Phil Heath

Don and Becky Marine

Don and Becky Marine

Kathryn Myers

Larry and Sandy Person

Mick and Kris Schlievert

Mick and Kris Schlievert

Helen Scuffham

Helen Scuffham

Connie Schwab

Todd and Shelly TerHark

Memorials

In memory of the West Family:
Chuck, Mary Ellen and Lee

In memory of Russ Buchanan

In memory of Gregg and Julie
Buchanan

In memory of George and
Betty Burrow

In memory of Margaret and
Brian Sullivan

In memory of loved ones

In memory of Holly Filson-
Heath

In memory of their parents

In memory of Olivia Bachman

In loving memory of Donald
Myers

In the memory of **Tim Boyd**

In memory of Charles and
Helen Schlievert

In memory of Betty Wilcox

In memory of their parents
John and Mildred Scuffham,
and Joe and Edna Skow

In memory of John

In memory of my husband
Dennis

In memory of Larry TerHark



Poinsettia

Dave and Becky Bibler

Ginny Buchanan

Scott and Sandy-Harmes
Buchanan

David Burrow

David Burrow

Rev. Chris and Pam Burtnett

Phil Heath

Don and Becky Marine

Don and Becky Marine

Kathryn Myers

Larry and Sandy Person

Mick and Kris Schlievert

Mick and Kris Schlievert

Helen Scuffham

Helen Scuffham

Connie Schwab

Todd and Shelly TerHark

Memorials

In memory of the West Family:
Chuck, Mary Ellen and Lee

In memory of Russ Buchanan

In memory of Gregg and Julie
Buchanan

In memory of George and
Betty Burrow

In memory of Margaret and
Brian Sullivan

In memory of loved ones

In memory of Holly Filson-
Heath

In memory of their parents

In memory of Olivia Bachman

In loving memory of Donald
Myers

In the memory of **Tim Boyd**

In memory of Charles and
Helen Schlievert

In memory of Betty Wilcox

In memory of their parents
John and Mildred Scuffham,
and Joe and Edna Skow

In memory of John

In memory of my husband
Dennis

In memory of Larry TerHark

