



*"Do not be afraid, for see,  
I am bringing you  
good news of great joy  
for all the people"*

*Luke 2:10*





*Columbia  
United Church  
Of Christ*

*December 24, 2025      7:00 p.m. Worship      Christmas Eve*

\*indicates that all are invited to stand, if comfortably able

Comme Loveless, piano, Emma Neale, flute

## Bringing in the Light of Christ

\*Call to Worship Lena Muench

Come, all who are faithful  
and all who seek joy in your lives!

**It is the season to sing praises to God  
for the Christ Child is near!**

The gifts of hope, peace, joy and love  
Are ours this evening.

**May they remain with us throughout the year!**

We now share a promise that was fulfilled by God:  
That our beloved Child is born and will call us  
to new lives of love, joy, and faith in action!

**We gather in worship this evening, celebrating Christ!  
We gather tonight, worshipping God!  
Come, let us worship God!**

\*Opening Hymn  
“O Come, All Ye Faithful” verses 1,3,4 (insert)

## \*Opening Prayer Lena Muench

God of light, we thank You for giving us the gift of Jesus Christ. We come before You with wonder and delight that You come to us in the child born in a manger. Be with us on this day of birth and rebirth. Come, honor us with the presence of Your gracious, joyful Spirit. Fill our weary hearts with renewed hope and joy. This evening, we admit that we do not quite understand all the implications of Your Incarnation in the Christ Child we adore; but we know that, in Him, You are very present in the world.

**Tonight, when all things are possible, we pray that we might take the essence of Your presence into our hearts.**

As Christmas turns into the New Year and the lights of this evening fade, help us keep the Christmas miracle alive in our hearts all year long. In the name of the Christ Child we pray, Amen.

**\*Prayer Response      “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus”**

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus;  
Look full in his wonderful face!  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim  
In the light of his glory and grace!*

# *God is revealed to us through the Gift of Christ*

## *Waiting for Christ*

Gospel Reading      Matthew 1:18-21      Lena Muench  
Hymn:      “O Little Town of Bethlehem”    vs. 1-3      (*insert*)  
***Receiving Christ***

## Children's Time and Lighting the Christ Candle

Gospel Reading                    Luke 2:8-14                    Lena Muench  
Hymn:            "Angels We Have Heard on High" vs. 1-3                    (insert)

## *Proclaiming Christ*

|        |                       |             |
|--------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Homily | “The Light of Christ” | Pastor Rick |
| Hymn:  | “What Child Is This”  | (insert)    |

## ***Responding to Christ***

Mission Moment

“Turning Point”

Mahree Skala

Offering our Gifts

*This Christmas Eve, our offering will go to Turning Point, a local faith-based ministry offering assistance to unhoused and economically challenged individuals in the Columbia community.*

Offertory

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

The Chapel Ringers  
Holst/McChesney

\*Prayer of Dedication

Lena Muench

**Creator God, we give these gifts this evening, holding the people of Turning Point in our hearts. We give thanks for those who do the work to benefit Your children in this community. We give thanks for the clients who see Your presence in the blessings they receive from the ministries of Turning Point. Take all the gifts we offer tonight and let them be blessings to all who benefit from these services and our partnership with them. Amen.**

### ***The Sacrament of Communion***

*All who are present are invited to share in this joyous meal!*

\*Invitation

Communion Prayer/Institution/Blessing/Fraction

Sharing the Meal

*We will celebrate Altar Communion this evening, remembering the Wisdom the Christ Child shares with us. You are invited to come forward via the center aisle and receive the bread celebrating Christ’s ministry from the communion steward; then, move to the steward holding the cup of New Life and Resurrection. Take the elements back to your chair; if you choose to wait, we will partake together once all have received the elements. The center ring of cups contain grape juice; the outer rings contain wine.*

Communion Music “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” Connie Loveless  
Arr. John Carter

\*Communion Prayer

Lena Muench

*The lights will slowly dim as Lena offers the following Prayer of Thanksgiving. You are invited to pray along silently. By the time we join together speaking the Unison Lord’s Prayer, the Sanctuary lights will be extinguished, and we will be reciting the Lord’s Prayer together among only the lights of Christmas. The Sanctuary lights will remain off until after we sing “Silent Night.” After the Lord’s Prayer, Pastor Rick will begin passing the light of Christ to prepare for Congregational singing of “Silent Night.”*

\*Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lena Muench

We give thanks, Loving God, that You have come to us through Jesus Christ; in the mists of time, in the city of Bethlehem, and in the timeless reality of Christ's loving ministry, all remembered here this Christmas Eve in the bread and the cup. Send us into the world rejoicing, ready to share Your gifts, renewed through Your presence. We celebrate our Savior's birth this evening as one family, praying together the prayer he taught us:

\*The Lord's Prayer

*(spoken by the congregation)*

**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.**

\*Lighting of the Candles

“Silent Night”

\*Meditation Hymn:

“Silent Night”

*(insert)*

*As Connie begins playing “Silent Night,” Pastor Rick will share the light of Christ with the folks sitting in the center aisle. You are also invited to share that light with those sitting next to you and those in the next section. Once everyone's candle is lit and the lights are extinguished, Mike will lead us in singing “Silent Night.” You may extinguish your candle after the prayer of dedication.*

\*Prayer of Dedication

Pastor Rick

Thank You, God, for the miracle of this evening. Help us to realize Your love working inside each one of us and share that love with all the world. We are renewed this Christmas Eve by Your passion, Your presence, Your light. Hear now our joyful responses as we go into Your world, shouting our Joy at Your birth.

\*Responding to Christ

“Joy to the World”

*(insert)*

\*Benediction

\*Postlude

“He is Born”

Connie Loveless  
*Arr. John Carter*

# Columbia United Church of Christ

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**Pastor Emeritus:** Rev. Fred Brandenburg



## Poinsettias in the Sanctuary this evening were given by:

**Donna Marsh**

In Memory of Larry Noxon

**Eloy Montenegro**

In Memory of Anatolia Chaidez

**Kitty Rogers**

In Memory of Jim Rogers

**Jolene & Barry Kirchhoff**

In Memory of our son Wes

In Memory of our daughter Rachel

In Honor of Alice Moon



**Linda Grotewiel**

In Memory of loved ones

**Mary Lorber & Tom Solt**

In Memory of Art & Rowena Solt

In Memory of Otto & Deloris Hackmann

In Memory of Steve Lorber

**Glenn & Carol Duermeyer**

In Memory of Family and Friends

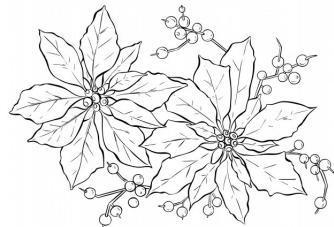
**Lloyd Mickelson**

In Memory of Kay Mickelson

**Chuck & Audrey Lasley & Family**

In Memory of parents & grandparents

In Honor of Darren Lasley



**Helen Schultz**

In Memory of family and friends

**Mike & Sharon Rapp, & Family**

In Memory of Alfred & Marianna Wilmsmeyer

In Memory of Kenneth & Maron Rapp

**Ginny Van Hove**

In Memory of CUCC Quilters who are no longer with us

**Josh & Lena Muench**

In Memory of our grandparents and great-grandparents

**Jim & Connie Loveless**

In Memory of our parents and grandparents

**Grace Williams**

In Memory of Joseph Tumulty

**Judi & Doug Privitt**

In Memory of our parents and loved ones

**Sue Ann Schaefer**

In Honor of the Schaefer family

**Jeff Kies**

In Honor of Sara Schwein & Family

In Memory of Seth Brandenburg

**Cassandra Schmittel**

In Memory of Emma Breshears

**Rev. Rick and Kim Oberle**

In Memory of loved ones

**Yvonne Piersee**

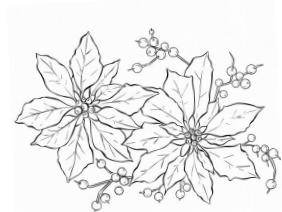
In Memory of Kellyn Kathleen

**Cliff & Sue Beckman**

In Honor of Cliff Beckman

**Judy Kaiser**

In Memory of Ed and Karenda Jeanette Kaiser



## ***“My soul is alive with thoughts of God”***

An adaptation of Mary's Magnificat

by Rev. M. Jade Kaiser

My soul is alive with thoughts of God.

What a wonder, Their liberating works.

Though the world has been harsh to me,

God has shown me kindness, seen my worth, and called me to courage.

Surely, those who come after me will call me blessed.

Even when my heart weighs heavy with grief,  
still, so does hope abide with me. Holy is the One who makes it so.

From generation to generation, Love's Mercy is freely handed out;  
none are beyond the borders of God's transforming compassion.

The power of God is revealed among those who labor for justice.

They humble the arrogant. They turn unjust thrones into dust.  
Their Wisdom is revealed in the lives and truths of those on the margins.

God is a feast for the hungry.

God is the great redistributor of wealth and resources.

God is the ceasing of excessive and destructive production  
that all the earth might rest.

Through exiles and enslavement, famines and wars,

God is a companion in loss, a deliverer from evil,  
a lover whose touch restores.

This is the promise They made to my ancestors, to me,  
to all the creatures and creations, now and yet coming,  
and in this promise, I find my strength.

Come, Great Healer, and be with us.

### **CUCC Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant:**

Columbia United Church of Christ celebrates God's boundless and unconditional love by intentionally welcoming and affirming all God's children.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey;

No matter where you are on your faith journey;

No matter your sexual orientation, gender expression or identity;

No matter your race, culture, ethnicity, nationality or politics;

No matter your age, ability, health, relationship status or family structure;

No matter your social, economic, educational, legal or life circumstances;

You are welcome here!

Called by Jesus to be an Open and Affirming, inclusive faith community, Columbia United Church of Christ commits to welcoming everyone into the full life of our congregation. Our paths and voices may differ, but we journey in faith together.

# O Come, All Ye Faithful

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1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um-phant; O come  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -

ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,  
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all  
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

*Refrain*

born the King of an - gels!  
 glo - ry in the high-est! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let  
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

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



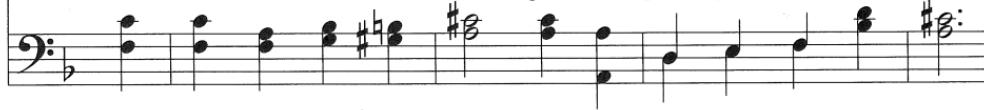
1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
 2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry, and gath - ered all a - bove  
 3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is given!  
 4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by.  
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.  
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the joys of high - est heaven.  
 cast out our sin, and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;  
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth.  
 No ear may hear Christ com - ing, but in this world of sin,  
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
 Your voic - es raise to God in praise; and peace to all on earth.  
 where meek souls will re - ceive him still, the dear Christ en - ters in.  
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our God, Em - man - u - el.



## Away in a Manger

147

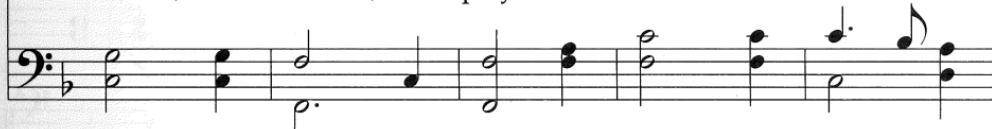
Unison



1. A - way in a man- ger, no crib for a bed, the lit - tle Lord  
2. The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - 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 cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.  
thy ten - der care, and fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.



## 155 Angels We Have Heard on High



o'er the plains, and the moun - tains in re -  
 strains pro - long? What the glad - some tid - ings be  
 low - ly birth. Come a - dore on bend - ed knee  
 an - gels praise; Ma - ry, Jo - seph, lend your aid,



while our hearts in love we raise. Ah!



ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
 which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
 Je - sus, joy of heav'n and earth.  
 while our hearts in love we raise.



Glo - ri - a, in ex - cel-sis De - o! Ah!

ri-a, in ex - cel-sis De - o! Glo -

Glo-ri-a in ex - cel-sis De - o!

ri-a, in ex - cel-sis De - o!

# What Child Is This

162

1. What Child is this who, laid to rest, on Ma-ry's lap is sleep-ing?
2. Why lies he in such mean es-tate where ox and ass are feed-ing?
3. So bring him in-cense, gold, and myrrh, come, rich and poor, to own him,

Whom an-gels greet with an-thems sweet, while shep-herds watch are keep-ing?  
 Good Christ-ian, fear: for sin-ners here the si-lent Word is plead-ing.  
 the King of kings sal-va-tion brings, let lov-ing hearts en-throne him.

*Refrain*

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep-herds guard and an-gels sing:

haste, haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the Son of Ma-ry.

## Silent Night, Holy Night

145



1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm, all is bright
2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep-herds quake at the sight,
3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God, love's pure light
4. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, won-drous star, lend thy light;



round yon vir - gin moth-er and child, ho - ly in-fant so ten-der and mild,  
glo - ries stream from heav-en a - far, heaven-ly hosts sing al - le-lu - ia;  
ra - diant beams from thy ho-ly face, with the dawn of re-deem - ing grace,  
with the an - gels let us sing, al - le-lu - ia to our King;



sleep in heav - en- ly peace, sleep in heav - en- ly peace.  
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.  
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born, Christ, the Sav - ior, is born.



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing,  
 re - peat the sound-ing joy,  
 far as the curse is found,  
 and won - ders of his love,

and heaven and na - ture sing,

and heaven and na - ture sing,  
 re - peat the sound-ing joy,  
 far as the curse is found,  
 and won - ders of his love,

and heaven and na - ture sing,

sing,  
 joy,  
 found,  
 love,

and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 re - peat, re - peat the sound-ing joy.  
 far as, far as the curse is found.  
 and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,