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# Welcome to the Community Church of Richmond United Church of Christ

Our Church at Worship on Christmas Eve 2021, 8pm



Find this service live at https://www.facebook.com/CommunityChurchOfRichmond/

All hymns this evening are from the RED songbooks found at the end of your pews. Please keep your masks on throughout the service, including during singing.

### WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

This, tonight, is the meeting place of heaven and earth.

For this, tonight, is the stable in which God keeps his appointment to meet his people.

Not many high are here, not many holy, not many innocent children, not many worldly wise, not all familiar faces, not all frequent visitors.

But, if tonight only strangers met, that would be enough.

For Bethlehem was not the hub of the universe,
nor was the stable a platform for famous people.

In an out-of-the-way place which people never thought to visit –
there God kept and keeps his promise;
there God sends his Son.

- Christmas Prologue, The Iona Community, in Cloth for the Cradle

**GATHERING MUSIC** 

Penny Kraft

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Hope Molozaiy

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: An unmarried teenage girl was invited—

All: to carry Christ into this world.
One: An ordinary carpenter was invited—

All: to be a father to a child unlike any other.

One: The shepherds were invited—

All: outcast and isolated, included at the manger.

One: The Magi were invited—

All: foreigners and seekers, included at the manger.

One: And if she was invited, and he was invited, and they were

invited—

All: then we can trust that we too are invited.

One: This story is for us.

All: This love is for us.

One: Family of faith, this is our invitation. Welcome home.

CAROL "O Come, All Ye Faithful" #89 vs. 1 & 2 only (Red Hymnal)

LIGHTING THE CANDLES OF CHRISTMAS

One: In God's house, there is hope—

All: For God loves us too much to leave us just as we are.

Light the candle of hope.

One: In God's house, there is peace—

All: For all that separates us from God falls away.

*Light the candle of peace.* 

One: In God's house, there is joy-

All: Because God created music, and coffee, and dance floors,

and laughter that is contagious, and endless rounds

of peek-a-boos with babies;

and if those things have God's fingerprints, then God's house surely exudes joy.

Light the candle of joy.

One: In God's house, there is love—

All: Because God is love, from start to finish, and that love

exists for us all.

Light the candle of love.

One: And in the center of our hope,

All: In the center of our peace,

One: In the center of our joy,

All: In the center of our love

One: is God—who came to this earth to dwell among us.

So tonight we light the Christ candle, for God's love just

could not stay away.

Welcome home.

### WE LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD

### OPENING PRAYER

One: Holy God.

We've heard this story a million times—

Mary and Joseph, the angels, the shepherds.

We've heard it a million times,

but we want to hear it like it's the first.

So move among us.

Circle back.

Draw close.

Crack open our hearts and fill them with your goodness.

Help us to hear what it is you might be saying to us with curiosity, joy, and hope.

This is an invitation.

Come be here with us.

Gratefully we pray, amen.

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

### Luke 2:1-7

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.

John 3:16-17

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

"O Little Town" CAROL Verse 1 #99

### ANGELS SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT JESUS

The Gospel According to Luke 2:8-18

One: In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then the angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone all around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them,

## All: "Do not be afraid; look – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

One: To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you:

## All: You will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

One: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

## All: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

One: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

## All: "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

One: So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When the shepherds saw this, they told what had been told to them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

## All: But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

One: And the shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen.

MESSAGE

### **WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD**

CAROL

"Joy to the World"

#313 Verses 1 & 2

#### CHRISTMAS PRAYERS

Pastoral Prayer

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, forever. Amen.

### WE BRING OUR GIFTS TO THE INFANT KING Invitation to Give

Prayer of Dedication

#### SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

The Gospel according to John, from chapter 1 Lighting of Candles

The ushers will pass the light to the pews. Please keep your lit candle upright and tilt only the <u>unlit</u> candle to share the light.

The Choir will sing their anthem, "Peace, Peace."

When they reach the final verse, the congregation will be invited to begin singing "Silent Night."

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright; 'round you 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.

### CLOSING WORDS

One: Let the people who have walked in darkness say,

All: We have seen a great light.

One: Let those who have lived in deep darkness say,

All: We have seen a great light.

One: A child has been born for us, a son given to us,

and so we say,

All: We have seen a great light!

One: For our sakes, God sent the child of Bethlehem. For our salvation, Jesus came to live among us, and so we say,

All: We have seen a great light!

One: And the darkness did not,

All: does not,

One: will not overcome it.

All: Glory to God, whose light shines with life for all people.

#### BLESSING

### \*POSTLUDE

Call to Worship, Candle Lighting, and Opening Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.CCLI License No. 1908882



### **Poinsettias Dedicated To:**

### To the Glory of God

Dick & Louise Strahs Kelli Brossart

### In Memory of

Carol Sligting & Bill Haase, in memory of John Sligting & Peggy Haase

Robert & Carol Richardson, in memory of Margaret & Owen Richardson

Marti Swanson, in memory of Rick, Gary, Ken, & Mark Yvonne & Charles Kemp, in memory of Lucille Lyght & Jeanette Gardner

Dick & Louise Strahs, in memory of Kenny & Bill

### In Thankfulness for

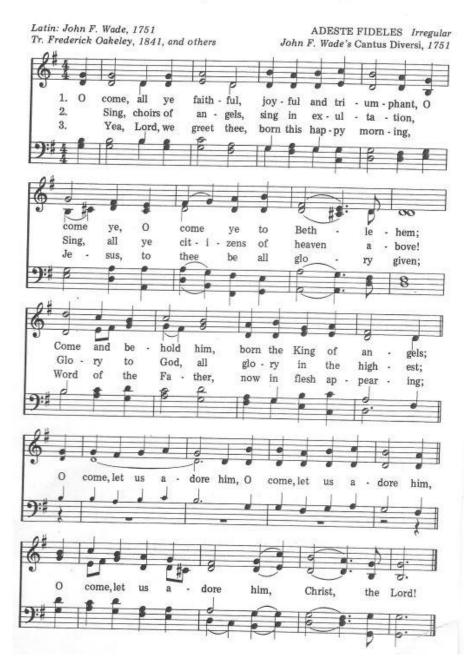
Bob & Judy Jooss, for family Bob & Judy Jooss, for friends & the Community Church Kelly Brossart, for family Jim & Kathy Speaker, for family

If you have sponsored a poinsettia, please take it home with you tonight so it may bring joy to you on Christmas Day.

Reminder: Worship on Dec 26<sup>th</sup> will be online only, find us at:

https://www.facebook.com/CommunityChurchOfRichmond/

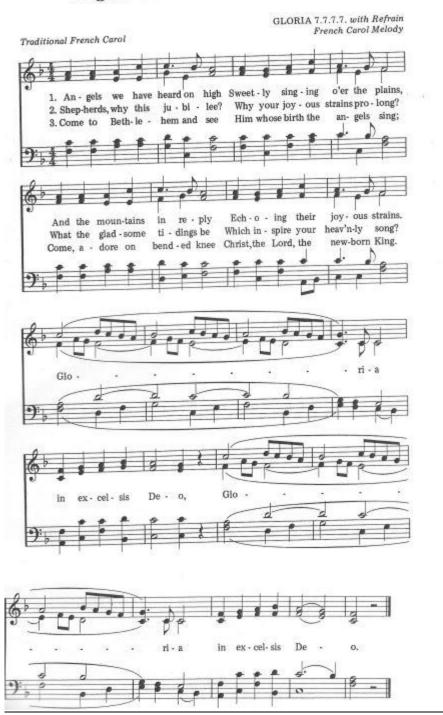
### \*O Come, All Ye Faithful



## \*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



## \*Angels We Have Heard on High



### \*Joy to the World

