

Trinity United Church of Christ Worship Bulletin

Letting God's light shine since 1901

We worship God and seek to share His Word with everyone through faith in Jesus Christ

January 5, 2025

www.trinityuccwestville.org

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at Trinity!

Gathering and Preparing to Worship

**Denotes to please stand in body or in spirit*

Thoughts Before Worship

By Nancy C. Townley

Our lives can get so noisy. In this moment, take the time to calm your spirit, rest your body. Listen for the voice of the Good Shepherd who desires the best for you.

Checking in on social media

You are invited to take the time to check in on social media and let people know where you are. First, it helps get the word out on Trinity United Church of Christ in Westville. Second, it can give you a good alibi, just in case you need one.

Sounding of the Bells

Throughout the centuries, bells have rung to call people to worship or bring them news. We use the chiming of the bell to joyously call us to worship, and prepare ourselves.

Welcoming

One: Welcome to worship today at Trinity United Church of Christ in Westville Illinois. If you are worshipping with us on line, you can download a bulletin from our church's website www.trinityuccwestville.org.

They are located in the events section under today's date,

Let us now pause for prayer to calm ourselves down and prepare our hearts to worship our living and loving God.

Opening Prayer

By Nancy Townley

One: Let us pray...

Many: God of hope and light, your good news has been emblazoned across the skies, the great starry night of Jesus' birth, sung by angels, celebrated by shepherds, witnessed by animals, and worshipped by the wise. You have given to us a new chance, a reminder of your continual love for us. Be with us in this worship, we pray. Guide our thoughts, our lives, our spirits. Heal and restore us. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Announcements

Call to Worship

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: We gather wondering, 'Where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?'

Many: We will find the Babe in the laughter of children, in the wisdom of grandparents.

One: We gather asking, 'where will we find the Child of Christmas?'

Many: We will find the Child where the needy are gifted with hope, where the oppressed are set free.

One: We gather wanting to know, 'where will we find the Christ who has come for us?'

Many: We will find our Hope where fear is overwhelmed by grace,
where hatred is overwhelmed by love, where all people are overwhelmed by joy.

***Opening Hymn of Praise**

#258 Blue Hymnal

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain

Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere.

Go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.

1 While shepherds kept their watching
over silent flocks by night,
behold throughout the heavens,
there shone a holy light.

Refrain

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth.

Refrain

3 Down in a lowly manger
our humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation,
that blessed Christmas morn.

Refrain

Call to Confession

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: We know all that God has done for us, as well as all we could have done for others. Let us confess to God our failures and foibles, as we pray together our prayer of confession

Prayer of Confession and Letting Go

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: Let us pray...

All: We could proclaim your name, God of this holy season, but we spend too much time talking about celebrities. We could tell others about all your gracious deeds, but are comparing notes about the exploits of our favorite athletes. We could let your Word guide our lives, but instead we do what the politicians think is best.

Please take a few moments of silence for personal reflection.

One: Let us continue...

All: Why? Because we forget who we are called to be. But you remember, Faithful God. You remember that we put our trust in others, not you; you remember how we chase after idols,

not follow you; you remember to save us in our distress, which is why you sent Jesus to us, our Lord, our Savior. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness and Assurance

By Rev. Thom Shuman

*Gloria Patri

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end, Amen, Amen.*

Sharing of Christ's Peace

One: Hear the words of Jesus: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." The peace of Christ is ours, through the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.
May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Please type in, post and share the peace of Christ with those gathered.
Please make sure your comments are appropriate. You can use words such as
"The peace of Christ be with you,"

Listening for God's Still Speaking Voice

Prayer for Illumination

One: Let us pray...

Many: May the reading of Your word help us to be people of living faith. May we live as people of gospel power. May we embody the spirit of self-discipline and love—the spirit that is ours by the grace and power of God, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Scripture Readings for Today

Matthew 2:1-12

The Magi Visit the Messiah

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

A Reflection on the Word

* Hymn of Response

#281 Blue Hymnal

What Child is This?

1 What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

Refrain:

This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!

2 Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.

Refrain

3 So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

Refrain

Offering of Our Gifts and Our Lives

One: As God has so richly blessed us, in our gratitude let us return a portion of these blessings back to God,
If you are able, please consider giving to the work and ministry
You may drop your offering for today in the offering plates as they are brought forward.
Your gifts are used in service to others through the ministries and mission of Trinity United Church of Christ. We graciously thank all who are able to support Trinity UCC during this time.
To mail your offering or pledge, please send it to

Trinity UCC 311 E. Moses Ave. Westville, IL. 61883

*Doxology

Emmanuel
Em-man-u-el, Em-man-u-el,
His name is called Em-man-u-el;
God with us, re-vealed in us;
His name is called Em-man-u-el;

* Blessing What We Can Give Back to God

One: Let us pray...

Many: Whatever challenges we face, O God, we have also known your many blessings—
Accept these gifts as tokens of our thankfulness,
that they may be used to prophesy in your spirit
and to share your bounty with those in need. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Welcoming

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: Gathering Once again we gather, from different homes and circumstances, with different dreams and ideas, different values and tastes, different in age and color, different in gender and language, Yet, we are one family – Children of God every one;

Many: We join our hearts in worship, we join our voices in praise and we join our lives as the Body of Christ. Amen.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: May the God of Christmas be with you!

Many: And also with you!

One: Put your trust in the One who has come.

Many: We offer our hearts willingly to our God.

One: Join all creation in praising God.

Many: We join in the chorus of glad songs to God.

One: In that not so silent moment, you spoke to creation,
God of our dreams and hopes,
For us, those shaped in your image, were these gifts imagined and formed,
but we took up after death, getting up to follow sin.
Prophets came to praise your name, and to bring us back to you,
Then you sent Jesus, Pioneer of salvation, to proclaim your name to us.
With those who are shy and silent,
with those who persist in glorifying you,
we offer our thanksgiving songs:

**Many: Holy, holy, holy are you, ever-loving God.
All creation praises your name.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the One who put his trust in you.
Hosanna in the highest!**

One: In the silence of the night, your holiness became human, our God,
and you blessed us with Jesus, Child of grace.
When he could have stayed with you, God, he came to offer us help.
When he could have remained in Nazareth, he got up to bring us the good news.
When he could have played it safe, he shared his flesh and blood on the cross,
so we might have life through the resurrection.
As we celebrate the gift of his life,
as we remember his death and rising to new life,
we proclaim that mystery called faith:

**Many: Christ died, putting his trust in you;
Christ rose, taking on the resurrection life;
Christ will come, to carry us home to you.**

One: Welcoming God, pour out your Spirit upon these your gifts of loaf and cup, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who follow in his name, that we may be one in ministry in every time and place.

As this bread is Christ's body for us, help us to be the body of Christ in the world. Let us, as the body of Christ, pause to lift up those in need of our prayers this morning...

Prayers of intercession for people in need may be offered here.

One: Help us, O God, to love as Christ loved. Knowing our own weaknesses, may we stand with all who stumble. Sharing in his suffering, may we remember all who suffer. Held in his love, may we embrace all whom the world denies. Rejoicing in his forgiveness, may we forgive all who sin against us. And when the past is finally behind us and we are gathered in the new Jerusalem with our sisters and brothers of every time and place, we will join our hands around your feast, and sing your praises from the depths of our hearts, We ask these things, both spoken and unspoken, in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray

The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

**Our Creator, 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**

Words of Institution

One: On the night on which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat. This bread is my body, given for you. Do this remembering me."

And in the same manner, he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood, given for the forgiveness of sin. Drink from it, all of you. Do this remembering me."

Sharing the Elements

One: Christ, our host, offers us the bread of life and the cup of salvation. Come, all has been prepared.

(Please take what you are using for the bread of life and hold it up)

The body of Christ, broken for you, take and eat.

(Please take what you are using for the cup of salvation and hold it up)

The cup of Salvation, poured out for you, take and drink.

Prayer After Communion

By Rev. Thom Shuman

One: Let us pray...

Many: Gracious God, we thank you for this meal and for all of the ways you nourish us. Help us to grow so that we may nourish others. Sustain us as we press toward the goal of your call to serve all of your children in the name of our savior, Christ Jesus. Amen.

*** Our Hymn of Departure**

#265 Blue Hymnal

The First Noel Vs. 1 - 5

**1 The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

Refrain:

**Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
born is the King of Israel.**

2 They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.

Refrain

3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.

Refrain

4 This star drew nigh to the northwest;
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay.

Refrain

5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

Refrain

*** Charge and Benediction**

One: Praising God is not enough.

Many: And so we will go to offer practical help to our sisters and brothers.

One: Joyful noises do not feed those around us.

Many: And so we will go with Jesus to the food pantries and shelters,
to care for those forgotten by our society.

One: Songs of thanksgiving do not replace service.

Many: And so we will go to share the peace of the Spirit with a broken, yet hopeful world.

One: So let us go out into the world in peace. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind,
and all your strength; and love your neighbor as yourself.

Many: **We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.**

One: And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be
with you, now and forever. And may laughter and joy go with you every step of your journey.

Many: **Amen.**

Sing "A-Men!"

*Thank you for worshipping with us. And remember, that no matter who you are,
or where you are on your journey in life, you are always welcome at Trinity UCC!*

The Work of Christmas by Howard Thurman

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.

