

NIANTIC COMMUNITY CHURCH

An Open, Affirming, and Reconciling congregation of
the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church

A Heritage of Faith since 1719 • Each Member a Minister



LESSONS & CAROLS

*“Whoever you are; wherever you are on life’s journey:
you are welcome here.”*

December 24, 2010

Christmas Eve

8:00PM

A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

PRELUDE

“Hark, the Herald Angels Sing”

Linker

RECEIVING GOD’S WORD AND CHRIST’S LIGHT IN OUR WORSHIP

WORDS OF WELCOME & RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP

Those in each pew closest to the center aisle will please begin passing the Friendship Pads so that everyone has an opportunity to indicate their presence here tonight and make a note of any messages.

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

VENI EMMANUEL

Verse 1

Choir

✦ **Verses 2 - 4**

Congregation

**O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who orderest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.**

*Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

**O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death’s dark shadows put to flight. *Refrain***

**O come, Thou Root of Jesse’s tree,
An ensign of Thy people be;
Before Thee rulers silent fall;
All peoples on Thy mercy call. *Refrain***

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one all hearts of humankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace. *Refrain***

CALL TO WORSHIP: ADVENT BECOMES CHRISTMAS

Reader: We light the first candle, reminding us of God's promise of peace on earth.

We light the second candle, reminding us that we are to dispel the darkness of sickness, poverty, injustice, and suffering all around us.

We light the third candle, reminding us to be constant and patient in our relationships and in our living.

We light the fourth candle, reminding us that the way of following Jesus is the way of righteousness, trust, and faithfulness.

O God, we have watched for your coming with longing and with expectation, with patience and with hope.

People: Now, as the prophets promised so long ago, you have come to us once again; and with the shepherds, we are filled with wonder and amazement.

With this last flickering candle we remember you, Lord, coming as a tiny, fragile baby; yet we know that you are God Almighty and you are with us.

May this flame remind us that you are the light of the world and that if we follow you, we will never walk in darkness, but will have the true light of life.

All: (Sung response)

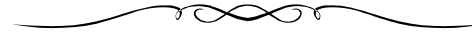
STUTTGART

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;

Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.



BIDDING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (*trespasses*)

THE FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 40:1-5, 8

Roe Granger, *reader*

God declares comfort and renewal through the prophet Isaiah.

✦ CAROL 216

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

ES IST EIN ROS

THE SECOND LESSON: Haggai 2:5-9

Sue Basham, *reader*

The prophet Haggai declares God's dominion over heaven and earth and every nation.

✦ CAROL 221

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

CRANHAM

THE THIRD LESSON: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Pat Spencer, *reader*

Isaiah foretells the coming of the Messiah.

✘ CAROL #218 "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" CAROL

THE FOURTH LESSON: Isaiah 11:1-9 Joyce Wood, *reader*
Isaiah prophesies the Messiah's peaceable kingdom.

✘ CAROL #224 "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" IN DULCI JUBILO

THE FIFTH LESSON: Luke 1:26-35, 38 Paul Althouse, *Reader*
The Angel Gabriel salutes Mary.

✘ CAROL #220 "Angels from the Realms of Glory" REGENT SQUARE

THE SIXTH LESSON: Luke 2:1-7 Sandra Spencer, *reader*
Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

RECITATIVE & CHORUS from "Christmas Oratorio, Op. 12" *Camille Saint-Saëns*

Recitative: "There were Shepherds at Night ... "

Lynne Floyd, *soprano*; Roe Granger, *tenor*; Merrilyn McNatt, *alto*; Ned Ruete, *bass*

Chorus: "Glory Be to God in the Highest"

THE SEVENTH LESSON: Luke 2:8-16 Ron Johnson, *reader*
The shepherds go to the manger.

✘ CAROL #238 "Angels We Have Heard on High" GLORIA

THE EIGHTH LESSON: Matthew 2:1-12 Carole Glenn, *reader*
The star leads the Magi to Jesus.

CAROL "Rocking" *Czech Carol*

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

RECEIVING TITHES AND OFFERINGS

We are not shepherds, bringing sheep; we are not magi, bringing precious treasures; nor a host of angels. But like them, we are amazed at the wonder of God-with-us: Emmanuel! Like them, we offer tokens of our adoration to our God, come to earth.

Let us gather our gifts together and offer them to God in wonder and praise.

THE MUSICAL OFFERING "Silent Night" *Linker*

✠ CHRISTMAS BLESSING

GREENSLEEVES

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,
Come peasant, king to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise a song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

✠ PASTORAL PRAYER

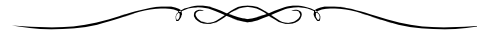
THE NINTH LESSON: John 1:1-14

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation.

✠ CAROL #234

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

ADESTE FIDELES



SENDING THE LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

The Light of the Advent Candles has illumined our worship with its glow and its promise of hope, peace, love, and joy. Now as we prepare to carry light into the world beyond these doors, we gather the light of the Advent promise. As we sing “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” please form a circle around the sanctuary. As we sing “Silent Night,” we will share the light of our candles with one another.

✠ CAROL

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ST. LOUIS

✠ CAROL

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

STILLE NACHT

✠ BENEDICTION



*Please depart in a spirit of prayer and wonder.
We wish you a blessed, Merry Christmas!*



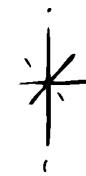
“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

1. O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of
wondering love.
O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth!
3. How silently, how silently, the wondrous Gift is giv'n;
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of high heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ
enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!



“Silent Night, Holy Night”

1. **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.**
2. **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!**
3. **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.**



S i l e n t N i g h t , H o l y N i g h t

WELCOME TO NIANTIC COMMUNITY CHURCH!

A Heritage of Faith since 1719, and an Open, Affirming, and Reconciling congregation, Niantic Community Church is affiliated with the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ. It is also a welcoming home to people from a great variety of church backgrounds and life experiences. Your presence here today is a gift to us! We hope you will feel God's Spirit here today through our worship and fellowship.

**Please set cell phones and pagers to silent mode
(unless you're expecting a call from Jesus)**

**Hearing Devices, Large Print Bulletins, and Hymnals are available.
Please ask an usher for assistance!**

Tonight's Worship Leaders:

Ushers: Nancy & Jerry Burkhardt, Georgie Granger, Germaine Ruderman

Advent Candlelighters: Judy DeVey and Marion McKenzie

Presiding Minister: John A. Nelson

Music Director: Paul Althouse

with special thanks to Sue Basham and friends, for decorating our sanctuary

✠ All who are able may stand at these times

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

Ministers: All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

Organist and Music Director: Paul Althouse

Interim Director of Religious Education &

Youth Ministries: Kayla Castronova

Church Secretary: Judy Snitkin

Community Minister: Patty Chaffee

Parish Nurse: Marie LaTourette

Director of Handbell Choirs: Lynne Floyd

Directors of Children's and Gospel Choirs:

Lee Wilkerson & Nikki Rollins

Financial Secretary: Judy Layden

Bookkeeper: Maureen Godin

Librarian: Jennifer Datum

Sound Engineers: Dick Robinson, Ron Deziel

Children's Center Director: Kathy Tiller

Pastor and Teacher: The Rev. John A. Nelson

Niantic Community Church

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Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30-5:00 p.m.; Friday 8:30-Noon