



**CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
9525 Colesville Road
Silver Spring, Maryland

*A Just Peace Church
An Open and Affirming Church
Becoming an Anti-racist Church*

At CCC, we honor and celebrate people of all races, cultures, ages, abilities and sexual orientations

Christmas Day, December 25, 2011

PRELUDE

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN #131, "IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR"

OPENING PRAYER

Blessed are they who find Christmas...
in the Christmas star...
in the age-old story of a child born in a stable and laid in a manger...
in the joy of gifts sent lovingly to others...
in the message of Jesus of Nazareth.

All Singing: Gloria, in excelsis Deo . . .

No one is ever really ready for Christmas.
If we were really all prepared:
If every gift we wished for had been received;
If all the goodies our friends deserve were baked and cooled, and stored just so;
If each and every person we love was gathered for our celebration;
If we never snapped at someone we care about;
If our minds were 100 per cent loving and our hearts were 100 per cent generous;
We would be truly ready - and truly we would not need Christmas quite so much.
God, come with the reminder that love does not depend on perfection but on willingness to risk connection. Come into the unready manger of our hearts that we may feel the warmth of new life and give flesh to the promise of hope that cries to bring healing into our world.

All Singing: Gloria, in excelsis Deo . . .

In the living of this day, may we find the courage to let go of our fears,
In the living of this day, may we accept the challenges before us,
In the living of this day, may we open ourselves to the still, small voice of God.

All Singing: Gloria, in excelsis Deo . . .

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES

Over the past four Sundays we at CCC have lit our Advent candles.

We light them again and remember...
peace, hope, joy and love are always brought to birth in, through, and among, all creation.

Last night we lit our Christ Candle.

It was a time for memories and remembering,
To wonder and to give thanks.

It was a time of quiet awakening to beauty that still lives on through strife.

We light our Christ candle again.

It is a candle of understanding which drives away fear.
It is a candle of truth.

It will lead one in unknown paths to learn more about the mysteries of life.

CENTERING SILENCE

Let there be a quiet time among us. (*Silence*)

Come apart from the usual traditions of Christmas morning, and dwell together in the presence of God who is our source of life. (*Silence*)

May the silence which we now share quiet us, touch our need, refresh our courage, enlarge our wonder. (*Silence*)

CELEBRATION OF CAROLS (PLEASE STAND)

- #129 Good Christian Friends Rejoice
- #133 O Little Town of Bethlehem
- #139 The First Nowell (stz. 1 -2)
- #147 See the Little Baby

CHRISTMAS MEDITATION: PASTOR MATT BRADDOCK

MUSICAL OFFERING: "CHILDREN, GO WHERE I SEND THEE"

Jenn Sawin

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

MUSIC OFFERING: "IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER"

Lazo Momchilovich (oboe), Zoe Braddock (clarinet) & Nae Pearson (accompanist)

BENEDICTION: WORDS OF MISSION

Mysterious God, confounding our expectations meeting us where we least expect to find you ... Stay with us now.

Child of the manger, healing our pain, sharing our weakness ... Stay with us now.

Source of life, birth of God within our own experience ... Stay with us now.

Stay with us in our frailty, stay with us on our journey. Walk beside us, live within us, lead us to glory, lead us home.

CLOSING HYMN #136, "JESUS, JESUS, OH, WHAT A WONDERFUL CHILD" (PLEASE STAND)

**Christ Congregational Church
A United Church of Christ**

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The Church Office is open 9:00-3:30 Monday through Friday. The Office is closed Dec. 26-27.

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