

**December 24, 2016
CHRISTMAS EVE**

Bell Prelude

Organ Prelude: Carol Rhapsody Richard Purvis

Chiming of the Hour

***Carol:** #133 *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

Welcome

Choral Introit: *Light the Candle, Mary*

Joseph Graham and Brad Nix

**Lighting of the Advent and Christ Candle
(Pastor Diane with the children)**

Pastor: The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, the son of God is born this night. God's word has been made flesh among us.

People: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them a light has shined.

Pastor: We now relight the four Advent candles and recall the Christ Child's gifts to us - Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

(Light each candle, as they are named)

People: Now we light the Christ candle, remembering that Jesus is in our midst, this night and always.

(Light the central candle)

Pastor: Eternal God, this Holy Night is radiant with the brilliance of your one true light. May that light illuminate our hearts and shine in our words and deeds. May the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love represented by the birth in Bethlehem this night, fill our lives and become part of all that we say and do. May we share the divine life of your son

Jesus Christ, even as he humbled himself to share our humanity. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Call to Worship

As children of God, we bear witness to the light. As followers of Christ, we proclaim the wonder of rebirth. Come, let us worship God together!

Prayer of Invocation (in unison)

God of the prophets, we hear you speaking again in the word made flesh. Help us to listen with awe and wonder and to look with seeing eyes for your presence right here, right now. We lift our voices in joyous response to your message of peace. Enlighten us in ways that change us and transform our world. Grant us your peace, that we may be peacemakers.

***Carol:** *Away In A Manger*

#114 (verse 1) - #115 (verses 2&3)

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 9: 6-7

Christmas Reflection "Silent Night, Holy Night"
Reverend Diane Monti-Catania

Anthem: *Carol of the Light*

David Barton

Scripture Reading: Proverbs 8: 1; 22-24; 27-31

Wisdom Plays and the World is Made

Reader: Sheryl Kennedy

Prayer (in unison)

O God, our Creator
In your Wisdom we see the reflection of your only begotten Child, Jesus, the Christ. As Wisdom played at your side to make the world, teach us joyfully to engage the world with your beloved Child, together to make all things new.

***Carol:** #147 *The First Nowell* (verses 1&2)

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 11: 1-9
The Ideal Davidic King and His Rule
Reader: Bob Maxwell

Prayer (in unison)

O God our Redeemer,
when we have strayed from your paths
You light our way home,
and send us your Holy One to guide the way.
Let us follow in the way of your Light,
walking faithfully with You
in the paths of justice and peace
which lead to abundant life.

***Carol:** #145 *What Child Is This* (verses 1&2)

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1: 18-23

Joseph Dreams of God-With-Us

Reader: Mary O'Neill

Prayer (in unison)

O God of depth and mystery,
You call us beyond convention
to a way of risky faithfulness.
Fill our dreams with your truth
and our minds with your discernment
so that we, like Joseph,
may awaken with confidence and joy
to expand our lives and make room for You.

Carol *sung by the Bargabos-Godshall Family*

Scripture Reading: Luke 2: 1; 3-7

Jesus is Born

Reader: Reverend Dick Taber

Prayer (in unison)

O Fragile Savior
You come, unprotected, into our dangerous world
and offer yourself as our Peace.
Let our Joy be to seek your Peace
let our Hope be to foster your Peace
let our Purpose be to announce your Peace

with all the fervor of the Angels and all the courage of the Poor;
 Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, God's Peace!

***Carol:** #119 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*
 (verses 1&2)

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:8-16
The Shepherds and the Angels
 Reader: Caleb May

Prayer (in unison)

O Presence of the Heavens
 You bring your message of hope and peace to all.
 We join in your joyous refrain.
 With the angels around us we sing praise to you.
 May our lives reflect the joy we feel, not just this night, but forevermore.
 We are blessed! Amen.

***Carol:** #113 *Angels We Have Heard on High*

Offering of our Gifts

Our offering tonight will go to 'Neighbors In Need.'

Organ offering: *To Bethlehem The Shepherds Came*
 Helmut Walcha

***Doxology:** *Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Prayer of Dedication

***Carol:** #122 *Silent Night, Holy Night*

Benediction

Congregation Response: #134 *Joy to the World*

Postlude: *Carol Rhapsody* Richard Purvis
 (* Please stand if able.)

Our ushers tonight are Tony, Kyle, Alison and Landon Good, Joe Catania and Sharon Tingley

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 2016 - 2017**

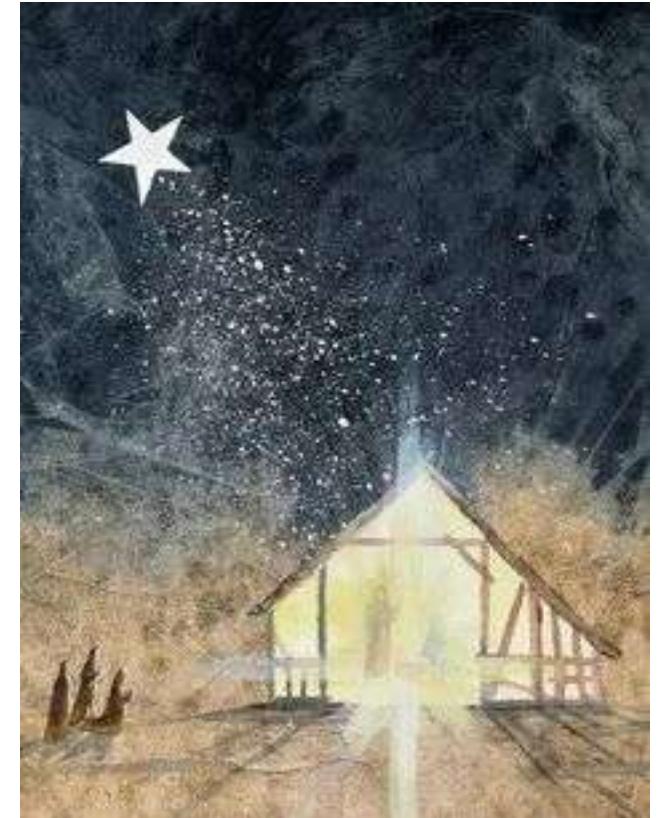
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**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
 OF SALISBURY**

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 SALISBURY, CONNECTICUT

GATHERED IN 1744
 INCORPORATED IN 1949



CREATED BY GOD
 CALLED BY JESUS CHRIST
 GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT
 DEDICATED TO LOVING AND SERVING GOD AND NEIGHBOR

The Reverend Diane Monti-Catania, *Pastor*