

**Middlebury Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
December 28, 2025
First Sunday of Christmas**

*all those who are able please stand

Our worship begins with the Prelude.

Please be mindful of those who wish to spend this time in prayer

PRELUDE

Good Christian Men, Rejoice

arr. Dietrich Buxtehude

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

INTROIT

Adult Choir

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

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist

Leader: The grade of God has appeared bringing salvation to all

People: Glory to God in the highest

Leader: To us is born in the city of David a Savior, the Messiah,
the Lord

People: Glory to God in the highest

Leader: And the Word became flesh and lived among us

People: Glory to God in the highest

***HYMN**

Good Christian Men, Rejoice

Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #12

INVOCATION

THE LORD'S PRAYER (UNISON)

**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 and ever. Amen. [We use “Father” and “trespasses,” but please use whatever words bring you closest to God.]

CALL TO CONFESSION (Based on Titus 2:11-12)

CONFESSION (UNISON)

Gracious God, we confess that we have sinned against you and against one another. You call us to clothe ourselves with compassion, but we surround ourselves with distraction, ignoring friends and neighbors in need. You call us to bear with one another patiently, but we fail to share our time and attention, straining the bonds of love and care. You call us to forgive as we have been forgiven, but we hold grudges and harbor complaints, allowing bitter anger to consume us. Pour out your mercy upon us, loving God, to wash us clean from sin and fill us with your peace. Let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, and let the grace of Christ fill us with gratitude; for it is in Jesus’ name we pray. Amen. (Time for individual silent confession)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Based on Titus 3:6-7)

Hear the good news! God has poured out the Holy Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might have the hope of eternal life. Friends, hear and believe the good news of the gospel: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI**

Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #513

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.

*Children Pre-K through 7th grade may exit through the back doors
of the sanctuary and meet in the Social Hall for Sunday School*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READINGS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 63:7-9

I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,
the praiseworthy acts of the Lord,
because of all that the Lord has done for us
and the great favor to the house of Israel
that he has shown them according to his mercy,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

For he said, “Surely they are my people,
children who will not act deceitfully,”
and he became their savior
in all their distress.

It was no messenger or angel
but his presence that saved them;
in his love and pity it was he who redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Matthew 2:13-23

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

“A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazarene.”

SERMON

The Rev. Katrina Manzi

The Work of Christmas

***HYMN**

Coventry Carol

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JOYS, CONCERNS, & PASTORAL PRAYER

Prayer requests will be received from the congregation. Please be mindful worship is livestreamed, so we advise caution on using last names to preserve people’s privacy.

OFFERTORY

Poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, setting by Heather Sorenson
I Heard the Bells Adult Choir

***Doxology in Unison**

Sung to the tune of “The First Noel”

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heav’nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel. Born is the King of Israel.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)**

Loving God, we give you thanks for Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Receive the gifts we offer in union with Christ’s gift for us. Clothe us with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, that we may show forth your love and light in the world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

***HYMN**

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

Pilgrim Hymnal (Red) #122

***BENEDICTION**

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Adult Choir

O tidings of comfort and joy! Amen.

POSTLUDE

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

arr. Mark Hayes

Please join us downstairs in the Social Hall after worship for fellowship and refreshments

Burden

Lul - ly, lul - lay, thou lit - tle tin - y child, bye - bye, lul -

ly lul - lay. 1 O sis - ters, too, how may we do
 2 He - rod the King, in his ra - ging
 3 That woe is me, poor child for thee!

for to pre - serve this day this poor young - ling for
 charg - ed he hath this day his men of might, in
 And ev - ery morn and day, for thy part - ing nor

Repeat Burden after verse 3

whom we sing bye - bye, lul - ly lul - lay?
 his own sight, all young chil - dren to slay.
 say nor sing bye - bye, lul - ly lul - lay.

Holy Innocents (January 28).

Words: Coventry carol, 15th cent.

Music: *Coventry Carol*, melody from *Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors*, 15th cent.;
 harm. Martin Fallas Shaw (1875-1958)

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DOING GOD'S WORK

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