Community Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 2020

5:00 pm via Zoom

This service will be recorded and posted on the church website.

GATHERING MUSIC No Obvious Angels

WELCOME Rev. Candace Whitman

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: This Christmas Eve we come to hear a story, a beautiful story --

People: A story of hope.

Leader: Tonight we remember Mary and Joseph, the baby Jesus, and how grace poured

out of heaven, and the angels declared

People: Peace on earth.

Leader: We come this Christmas Eve to rekindle our faith, and be carried through our pain

and fear into the light and love of God.

People: Let us worship the Child!

CAROL O Come All Ye Faithful

Please feel free to sing along with the carols this evening with your device muted. Words are provided.

THE CHRIST CANDLE

Leader: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; for those living in the shadows of death, a light has dawned! The good news is found in Jesus, who said -

All: "I am the light of the world."

PASTORAL PRAYER

O God, whose love blesses us and unites us in this place and time, we come before you with hearts gladdened by this holy season and its message of peace and good will. In the birth of Jesus, you have given our weary and struggling world a reason to rejoice. Create in us - as we end a difficult year and face uncertainties in our future -- hearts devoted to putting others first, remembering what is important, and being thankful for the many blessings in our lives. Renew us all for the work ahead, and may we seek to honor your love for us and all humankind. **Amen.**

ARE ANGELS REAL? A Christmas Eve Story

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 2:1, 3-20 Tim Patterson

REFLECTION Rev. Whitman

CAROL *Joy to the World*

IN THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

CLOSING RESPONSE

Leader: On this night of carols and candlelight, let us sing new songs of joy.

All: Let us celebrate Christmas!

Leader: On this night of remembering the birth in Bethlehem, let us walk in the love of Christ --

All: The love that changes everything!

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

If you can light a candle safely, please do so, joining together in a spirit of hope for the new year.

CAROL Silent Night

BENEDICTION Rev. Whitman

Merry Christmas and a Blessed 2021 to all!

Portions of this evening's liturgy are adapted from the writings of Rev. Thom Shuman and from *Touch Holiness*, edited by Ruth C. Duck and Maren C Tirabassi. The angel story is related in the book *Where Angels Walk: True Stories of Heavenly Visitors* by Joan Wester Anderson.

Fishers Island Union Chapel
PO Box 192, Fishers Island, NY 06390 631/788-7898 fichapel1@gmail.com
www.fiunionchapel.org

Fishers Island Union Chapel warmly welcomes you to this Christmas Eve service. We are grateful to be able to celebrate the birth of our Lord with you.

We are indebted to Mr. Chris Dollar of the Fishers Island School for coordinating and conducting our virtual choir this evening! Thank you, Chris! We also thank all our wonderful carolers as well as Diane Dexter and John Klimczak for sharing their musical gifts with us.

Union Chapel extends our deep thanks to our friends and community for their support in 2020. We are grateful to have you as our partners as we seek to fulfill our mission to share God's love in this Island and beyond.

We would be delighted to add your email to our weekly church updates and Zoom invites to Sunday 10 am worship. Just contact the church with your information to be included.

Christmas Flower Dedications

In Memory of Frank and Marie Burr, Margaret and Walter Thompson and Frank Burr Given by Peter and Jan Burr

In Memory of Peter and Janet Rogan Given by David Rogan

In Loving Memory of Nancy Gerry and Harris Parsons Given by the Brinckerhoffs

In Memory of Gunther Fritze and Mary and Grayson Murphy Given by Anita Fritze

In Memory of Maxwell and
Rachel Porter,
Eliot, Marilyn and Christopher Porter
and Charlie Arnold
Given by the Porter, Soper and Arnold
Family

In Memory of Lisa Reed and Meredith Moody Given by the Sarah Porter Family

In Memory of David J. Mullen Given by Sarah Porter, Marilyn Mullen-Pierce and Sarah Mullen

In Honor of Dr. Christopher Ingram and the Island Health Project team Given by John and Melie Spofford

In Loving Memory of Rachel Dohanian and Doris Markarian Given by Rev. Candace Whitman

In Honor of my Wonderful Family and Dear Friends Given by Diane Dawson Dexter

O Come O Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant O come ye, o come ye to Bethlehem Come and behold Him, born the King of Angels.

Refrain
O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him
Christ the Lord!

True God of true God, Light from light eternal, Lo, He shuns not the virgin's womb. Son of the Father Begotten not created. [Refrain]

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation, O sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above: "Glory to God, All glory in the highest!" [Refrain]

THANK YOU TO OUR VIRTUAL CHOIR MEMBERS



C. J. Alexander

Sasha Berdan

Elizabeth Bloethe

Claire Butler

Chris Dollar

Kathy Dollar

Lydia Doucette

Susan Ferguson

Chloe Johnson

Maddie Lusker |

Annie Packard

Louise Packard

Sam Roethgen

Tim Roethgen

Constance Toldo

Candace Whitman

Silent Night

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.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight! Glories stream from heaven afar; Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-ia! Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!

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.

About our gathering music, "No Obvious Angels"...

This unusual title for a Christmas song makes sense when one knows the words. Here is the first verse of Shirley Erena Murray's eloquent lyrics:

No obvious angels sing through the night skies,

No thunderstruck shepherds tell out their surprise,

For Christmas comes into the here and the now -

Through star-sighted people, the watchful and hopeful, who wake us to see a new world.