

# Grace United Church of Christ

Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Sunday, December 20, 2020  
Worship



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**We Gather**

Prelude Reflection on 'Creator alme siderum"', Jonas Dawson  
Plainchant, Mode IV, Sarum, ca. 9th century, arr. David Lasky (b. 1957)

Preparing of our Hearts

Call to Worship

L: I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

**P: We declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

L: God's hand shall always remain with you and shall strengthen you.

**P: God's faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with us; and in God's name our horn shall be exalted.**

**ALL: You are our God, and the Rock of our salvation!**

Opening Hymn "Little Bethlehem of Judah" NCH # 113 (insert)

Opening Prayer

Lighting the Advent Candle:

Sung Response: **Rejoice, Rejoice Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Reflection Video The Real Reason for the Season

Special Music "Coventry Carol", Jonas Dawson  
16th century English carol, arr. Chip Davis

**We Listen**

First Reading 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

# Little Bethlehem of Judah

113

*Calvin Seerveld, 1986; alt.*

*Mic. 5:2-4*

*Unison*

1 Lit - tle Beth - le - hem of Ju - dah, what good news you bear!  
2 Though your peo - ple suf - fer trou - ble, wait - ing for the child,  
3 Long - a - wait - ed comes the Shep - herd who will rule the earth;

Out of you will come the An - cient One as heir.  
Soon all strife and ha - tred shall be rec - on - ciled.  
God made low has come to serve in hu - man birth.

*Calvin Seerveld has held positions as professor of English literature and philosophy and, since 1972, has been senior member in the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto. He was on the committee appointed to revise the Psalter Hymnal.*

Tune: WESTRIDGE 8.5.8.3.  
*Martin F. Shaw, 1929*

Music Copyright ©, Oxford University Press.

Responsorial

The Magnificat  
My Soul Gives Glory to My God

NCH#119 (insert)

Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

Children's Message

Sermon

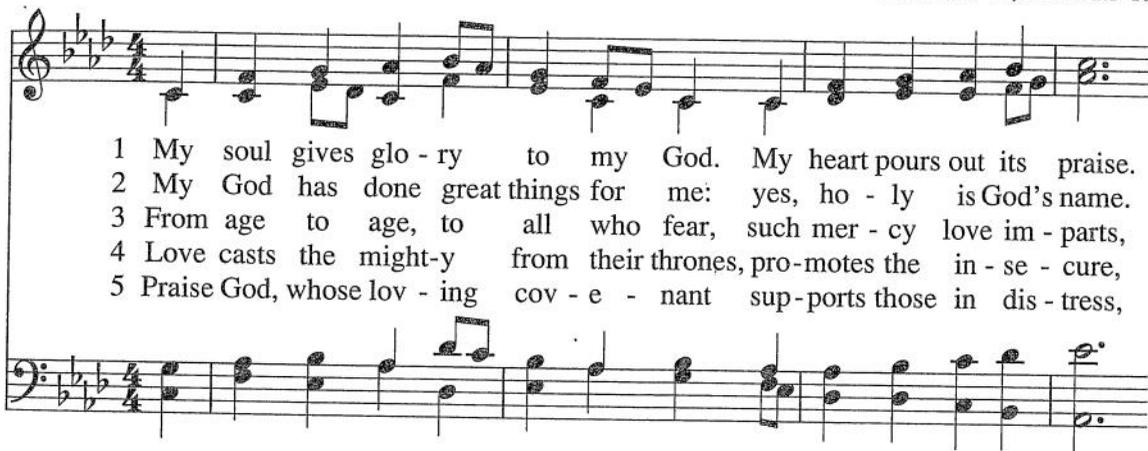
Rev. Rob Apgar-Taylor

# My Soul Gives Glory to My God

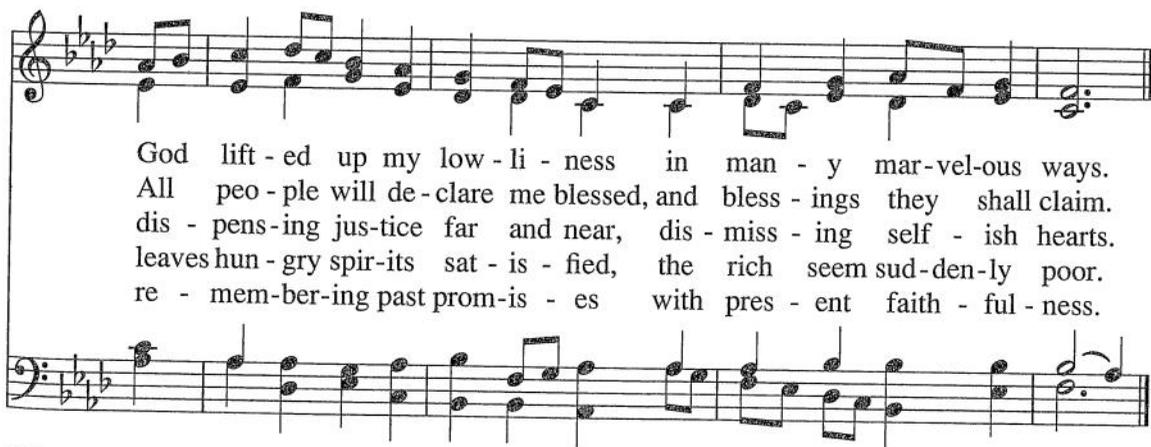
119

Miriam Therese Winter, 1987

Luke 1:70-75; 1 Sam. 2:1-10



1 My soul gives glo - ry to my God. My heart pours out its praise.  
2 My God has done great things for me: yes, ho - ly is God's name.  
3 From age to age, to all who fear, such mer - cy love im - parts,  
4 Love casts the might-y from their thrones, pro - motes the in - se - cure,  
5 Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup - ports those in dis - tress,



God lift - ed up my low - li - ness in man - y mar - vel - ous ways.  
All peo - ple will de - clare me blessed, and bless - ings they shall claim.  
dis - pens - ing jus - tice far and near, dis - miss - ing self - ish hearts.  
leaves hun - gry spir - its sat - is - fied, the rich seem sud - den - ly poor.  
re - mem - ber - ing past prom - is - es with pres - ent faith - ful - ness.

*This New Testament canticle, with its mosaic of liberation motifs that proclaim the justice of God, is known as the "Magnificat," the opening word of its Latin translation.*

Tune: MORNING SONG C.M.  
Melody from Kentucky Harmony, 1816  
Harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1940

## ***We Respond***

Pastoral Prayers

The Lord's Prayer (in 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

## ***We are Sent***

Announcements

Closing Blessing

Closing Hymn

"People Look East"  
(vs. 1 and 4)

UMH #202(insert)

Dismissal

Ringling of the bell

Postlude

"Prepare the Way, O Zion",  
Swedish melody, arr. Lani Smith (2015)

Jonas Dawson

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## People, Look East

1. Peo-ple, look east. The time is near of the crown-ing of the  
 2. Fur-rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is plant-ed  
 3. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall  
 4. An-gels an-nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to

year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble, trim the  
 there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish, that in  
 brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er, bright as  
 earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley hum - ming with the

People, look east and sing to - day:

hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo-ple, look east:  
 course the flower may flour-ish.  
 sun and moon to - geth - er.  
 word, the Lord is com-ing. Peo-ple, look east:

Love, the Guest, is on the way.  
 Love, the Rose, is on the way.  
 Love, the Star, is on the way.  
 Love, the Lord, is on the way.

WORDS: Eleanor Farjeon, 1928  
 MUSIC: Trad. French carol; harm. by Martin Shaw, 1928

BESANÇON  
 87.98.87

Words by permission of David Higham Assoc. Ltd.; harm. by permission of Oxford University Press

## Service of the Chrismons

*Chrismons are Christmas decorations with Christian symbols on them. They help Christians to remember that Christmas is the celebration of Jesus's birthday. They are often used on [Christmas Trees](#) in Churches and Christians homes.*



**Keys:** The Keys to the Kingdom were given to the Apostles by Jesus and by extension they are given to the Church. Religious art depicts St Peter as holding the keys to the Kingdom of God. Advent reminds us that it is our job to make way for the Kingdom of God to open wide for all people.



**Star:** A star led the shepherds and Magi to worship the newborn Messiah. Stars are traditional signs of Divine wonder and mystery. The North Star guided ships for generations. This season is filled with signs. All around us it is undeniable that Christmas is near. How are we called to be signs pointing others to the reality of God's incarnate love in Jesus? What are the signs in our lives....our words, our actions, our attitudes, that help tell others that Christ is near?



**Cross:** We love the message of Christmas. The hope and joy a newborn baby brings. But as John the Baptist reminds us, we can not rightly separate Christ's birth from his death. He was born to die. The gifts brought by the Magi foreshadowed his death: Gold for a King, Incense for a God, and Myrr, oil for anointing the dead. Jesus, the newborn baby boy in his mother's arms was the same Christ of Gethsemane and Golgotha.



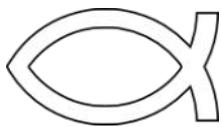
**Angel:** Angels are divine messengers. They heralded the birth of the Christ child, God come to us in human form. Angels proclaimed a message of rescue to Joseph that helped save the Child as the Holy Family fled as refugees to Egypt to save their child from the angry jealous King Herod. Angels attended the man Jesus in the wilderness as he prepared to begin his public ministry. Angels once again sat by his tomb and told the disciples that he was risen, just as he said. Go, they proclaimed. Go and tell the good news! Go, they sat to us today...Go and tell the good news! God is coming to us. Our God is coming to bring salvation to all people. And he shall be called Immanuel, God with us!



**Chi Rho:** Chi Rho, the first letters of the greek word Christos, meaning anointed One. Christ. God's Anointed One, the Meshiach, or Messiah in Hebrew. God's anointing was upon Jesus, setting him apart as an instrument of God's very presence in the world around us. Anointing is a Biblical symbol of dedication. People are anointed throughout the scriptures as Priest, Prophets or Sovereigns. This is the 3 fold ministry of Jesus: Priest, Prophet and King. It is also the 3 fold ministry of us, who share in the priesthood of all believers. We are anointed by virtue of our Baptisms to share in the royal ministry of Jesus, the Anointed One, the Christ. We are priests as we offer God our sacrifice of prayer and praise. We are prophets who are called to speak truth to power and bear prophetic witness to justice and peace in our world. We are sovereigns as we share in the administration of a world where all people are treated with justice and equity.



**Dove:** The symbol of peace, the dove has been for centuries a symbol of the peace of Christ and the more importantly God's indwelling presence in the form of the Holy Spirit. The Dove reminds us that Christ not only calls us to be a people devoted to peace in our world, but they Christ also gifted us with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to empower us to be the living presence of God in our world. This peace-making is no longer just the work of the Godhead. By the very nature of the Holy Spirit in us, this work belongs to us as well.



**Fish:** Follow me and I will make you fish for people, Jesus said. Fishing, the main occupation of the first disciples, became an important metaphor for Christian faith sharing. The fish became an important symbol for the early church as well. The word FISH in Greek is Ichthus. The word ichthus became an acrostic and was an important secret symbol for those early Christians who lived in persecution. The acrostic ICHTHUS stood for Iêsous Christos, Theou Yios, Sôtêr; "Jesus Christ, God's son, Savior". When you saw the symbol of a fish, you knew there were Christians in that home. It was a safe way to identify other believers in a way that Romans would not understand.



*Grace United Church of Christ*

**Advent**

**Mission Project**

# *Socks* *& Coats* **DRIVE**



**Please donate now through December 23:**

- \* **New or gently used men's and women's coats**
- \* **New socks (unisex, white or black)**



Collection box will be outside on Sunday mornings,  
and M-F during daytime hours at the west-side door (left side of church).

Questions? Email [tonyhemler0@gmail.com](mailto:tonyhemler0@gmail.com) or [admin@grucc.com](mailto:admin@grucc.com)



Order and dedicate a  
**Poinsettia for Advent** or  
Make a donation to the  
**Frederick Food Bank**

*As we look to the advent and Christmas season, we normally look to poinsettias in memory or honor of a loved one. This year has been a different year so we are doing things a bit differently. We will have a limited number of poinsettias in the chancel (probably 12 or so); but, with restrictions the way they are, it seems silly to order 40 poinsettias for a nearly empty church with no Church tour and frankly no way to deliver them to shut-ins afterward. If you would like a poinsettia in honor or memory of a loved one, you are welcome to have that be one of our 12.*

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**To DEDICATE a POINSETTIA**

Email [admin@grucc.com](mailto:admin@grucc.com) First come first serve for the 12 poinsettias.

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**POINSETTIAS** are from The Dutch Plan Farm  
Red 6.5" Pot Single Plant/Multi-Bloom Poinsettia - \$11.00  
They are decorating the altar for Advent and Christmas.

**or MAIL THIS PAGE TO THE CHURCH OFFICE WITH YOUR CHECK**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_ ph# \_\_\_\_\_

How many? \_\_\_\_\_ 6.5" pot(s) at \$11 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL

Dedicated to: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

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*BUT..... this year has caused great hardship for people in our community. What I am recommending is that instead of poinsettias, you donate the cost (or more) of the poinsettia to the church and we will make a donation in that amount to the Frederick Food Bank.*

(see next page)

# Frederick Food Bank

<https://www.cityoffrederickmd.gov/462/Food-Bank-Program>

## To PLEDGE your DONATION to the Frederick Food Bank

Email [admin@grucc.com](mailto:admin@grucc.com) to pledge a donation to the Frederick Food Bank and dedicate your donation. Or make your **donation by check and mail** to the church office or go to <http://www.grucc.com/giving.html> and use the **PayPal** button.

### or MAIL THIS PAGE TO THE CHURCH OFFICE WITH YOUR CHECK

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_ ph# \_\_\_\_\_

Frederick Food Bank Donation amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL

Dedicated to: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

*Flowers are lovely, but we can easily give \$400 to help feed people this way. And this year there is such need.*

*So if you'd like a poinsettia, by all means!*

*But, if you really don't care about a poinsettia and you'd like to still donate, we will gladly make the donation in memory or honor of your loved one.*

*Thanks! Pastor Rob*



# Candlelight Tour of Historic Houses of Worship

Presented By [VISIT FREDERICK](#)



This year's annual Candlelight Tour of Historic Houses of Worship in Downtown Frederick will not take place in the same way it typically would. However, Visit Frederick is excited to share that a special encore presentation of the tour's anniversary special will be available on the Visit Frederick page beginning on December 14, 2020!

Virtual Event will launch December 14 at 9am, and can be viewed here: <https://www.visitfrederick.org/events/annual-events/historic-houses-of-worship/>

This special tour celebrates Frederick's tradition of religious diversity, local history, and the holiday season. This is a free virtual presentation and is a great opportunity to peek inside some of its most beautiful buildings.

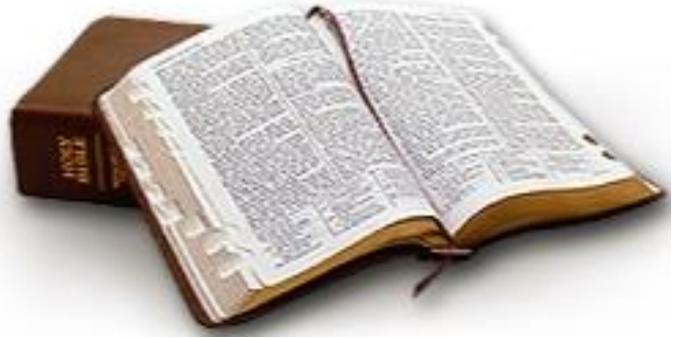
*The Candlelight Tour of Historic Houses of Worship is made possible through the generous support of:*

*The Plamondon Companies, Tourism Council of Frederick County, Inc., Bella Trattoria, Pistarro's, Ayse Meze Lounge, Brewer's Alley, Isabella's Taverna & Tapas bar, PNC Bank, and Everedy Square & Shab Row.*

Visit Frederick is working diligently to design the webpage that will be hosting the links to your wonderful videos.

We have also created a Facebook Event that can be seen and shared, this can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/728530584458489/> . The Facebook event will run December 14-28.

This event marks our 34<sup>th</sup> annual tour!



**Sunday, December 20, 2020: Fourth Sunday of Advent**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46b-55; or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

**Monday, December 21, 2020:** Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Samuel 1:1-18; Hebrews 9:1-14

**Tuesday, December 22, 2020:** Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Samuel 1:19-28; Hebrews 8:1-13

**Wednesday, December 23, 2020:** Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Mark 11:1-11

**CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY**

**Thursday, December 24 & 25, 2020: Nativity of the Lord - Proper I**  
Isaiah 9:2-7 •  
Psalm 96 •  
Titus 2:11-14 •  
Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

**Thursday, December 24 & 25, 2020: Nativity of the Lord - Proper II**

Isaiah 62:6-12 •  
Psalm 97 •  
Titus 3:4-7 •  
Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

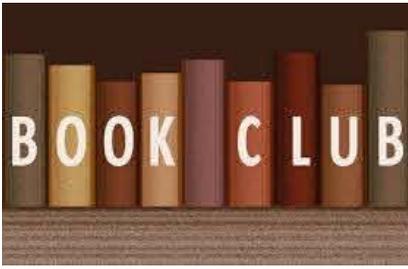
**Thursday, December 24 & 25, 2020: Nativity of the Lord - Proper III**

Isaiah 52:7-10 •  
Psalm 98 •  
Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12) •  
John 1:1-14

**Saturday, December 26, 2020:** Psalm 148; Jeremiah 26:1-9, 12-15; Acts 6:8-15; 7:51-60

**Sunday, December 27, 2020: First Sunday after Christmas Day**

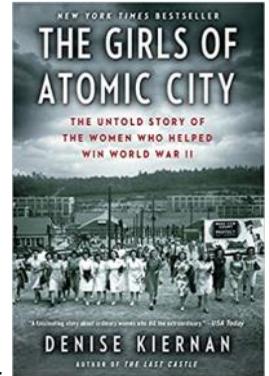
Isaiah 61:10-62:3 •  
Psalm 148 •  
Galatians 4:4-7 •  
Luke 2:22-40



**Grace UCC  
(Virtual) Book Club  
Wednesdays @ 7PM**

*Join us if you'd like to socialize, stretch your mind, or just leave the daily grind of life behind for a bit.*

Book title:  
**The Girls of Atomic City**  
by **Denise Kiernan**  
*This book started Dec 2nd*



*An incredible true story of the top-secret World War II town of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and the young women brought there unknowingly to help build the atomic bomb.*

*At the height of World War II, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, was home to 75,000 residents, and consumed more electricity than New York City, yet it was shrouded in such secrecy that it did not appear on any map. Thousands of civilians, many of them young women from small towns across the U.S., were recruited to this secret city, enticed by the promise of solid wages and war-ending work. What were they actually doing there? Very few knew. The purpose of this mysterious government project was kept a secret from the outside world and from the majority of the residents themselves.*

*Drawing from the voices and experiences of the women who lived and worked in Oak Ridge, The Girls of Atomic City rescues a remarkable, forgotten chapter of World War II from obscurity. Denise Kiernan captures the spirit of the times through these women: their pluck, their desire to contribute, and their enduring courage*

Please Email the church office at [admin@grucc.com](mailto:admin@grucc.com) to be added to the list for email notices.

***Look for your all church email or check the church website for zoom link.***

Questions? Contact Missy Moxley at: [nehoneybee@gmail.com](mailto:nehoneybee@gmail.com)  
or Doris Moxley at: [Dorismoxley@gmail.com](mailto:Dorismoxley@gmail.com)



## *Grace United Church of Christ*

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*  
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301-662-3312 ~ Office Hours: 9AM-3PM/M-F  
[admin@grucc.com](mailto:admin@grucc.com) ~ [www.grucc.com](http://www.grucc.com)

Rev. Dr. Rob Apgar-Taylor, Pastor

[pastorrob@grucc.com](mailto:pastorrob@grucc.com)

Jessica Townsley, Youth Minister

Jonas Dawson, Director of Music

[music@grucc.com](mailto:music@grucc.com)

James Taylor, Bell Choir Director

[bells@grucc.com](mailto:bells@grucc.com)

Taylor Whidden, Jennie Huntoon, Donald Toms, James Taylor

Choir Section Leaders

Joan Princler, Nursery Attendant

[joan.dancer@comcast.net](mailto:joan.dancer@comcast.net)

Mat Lutman, Caretaker

[trainhouse13@gmail.com](mailto:trainhouse13@gmail.com)

Sarah Petermann, Church Admin

[admin@grucc.com](mailto:admin@grucc.com)

### SUNDAY WORSHIP – 11:00 AM — Virtual

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of every month.

### WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Scripture Reader: ONLINE

Children's Message: N/A

Children's Church: N/A

Altar Guild: N/A

*If you would like to serve as a greeter, or host fellowship time after worship, please add your name to the sign up sheet in the Good Shepherd Room.*

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**

