



December 31, 2023  
Order of Service – 10:00 am

\* - Please rise in body or in spirit

### *Words of Welcome*

*The Community Reformed Church of Colonie welcomes you. We are a community bound together and energized by faith, love, and commitment to Jesus Christ. And even though you may not yet share that faith, love, and commitment, you are most welcome to be with us, to belong here, to experience what we're about. Then, if you are attracted and persuaded by what you see and hear, we hope you'll want to set down roots here long-term. And even if you don't, you'll always be a friend. Thank you for worshipping with us.*

### FOR CONTEMPLATION

“Thou who art over us; Thou who art one of us;  
Thou who art also within us; may all see Thee in me also.  
So, give me a pure heart, that I may see Thee.  
Give me a humble heart, that I may hear Thee.  
Give me a heart of love, that I may serve Thee.  
Give me a heart of faith, that I may abide in Thee.”

Dag Hammarskjöld

PRELUDE “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

## THE COMMUNITY GATHERS0

### THE ELDER'S PRAYER – Ana Crosbourn

## THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

### INTROIT “How Shall I Come Before the Lord”

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Every year we celebrate Christmas.

**Every month we break bread around the Lord's Table.**

Every week we gather for worship.

**Every day we count our blessings.**

Every minute God is near.

**Yes, every minute God is near.**

These are the rituals of life.

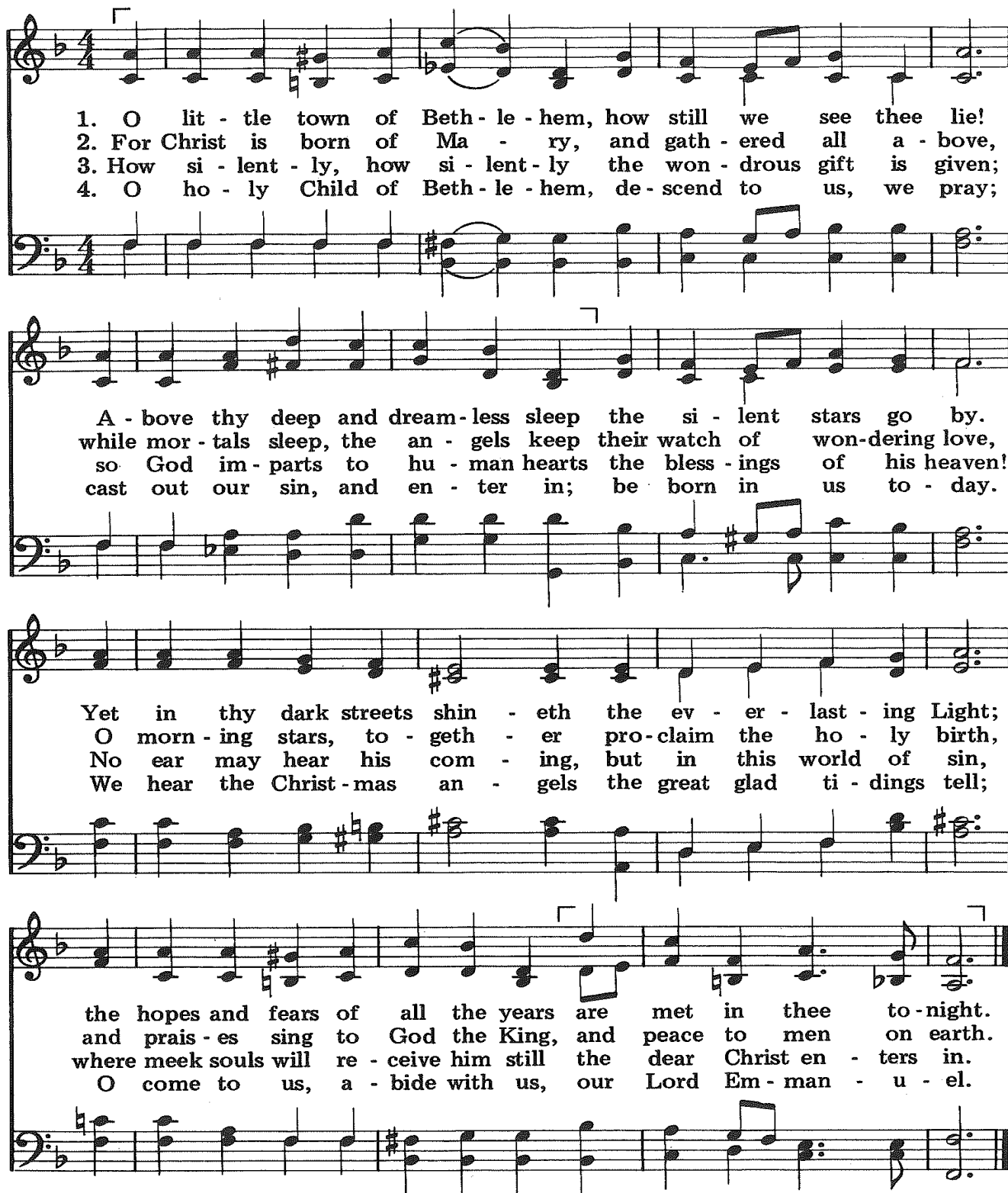
**Let us worship God together.**



\* HYMN 155 "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

# O Little Town of Bethlehem 155

*But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small . . . out of you will come . . . one who will be ruler over Israel. Mic. 5:2*



1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
 2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry, and gath - ered all a - bove,  
 3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is given;  
 4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.  
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love,  
 so God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven!  
 cast out our sin, and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;  
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,  
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
 and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.  
 where meek souls will re - ceive him still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el.

WORDS: Phillips Brooks, 1868  
 MUSIC: Lewis H. Redner, 1868

ST. LOUIS  
 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6.

## THOUGHT OF THE DAY

The prophet Anna and righteous Simeon sang God's praise and proclaimed Jesus our Lord to all who were looking for the redemption of Israel.

Let us who seek redemption this day prepare our hearts that we may believe the good news of Jesus, receive the light of salvation, and live according to all that he teaches us.

## TAIZÉ MEDITATION "Sing Praises"

*Sing praises, all you peoples,  
sing praises to the Lord.  
Sing praises, all you peoples,  
sing praises to the Lord!*

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of rhythms, we confess that our faith would not be what it is without rituals. Unlike you, we depend on bread and water. We have to return to this space again and again to hear old, familiar stories. For if we stopped, we know it would not take long before we lost our way. Forgive us our fragility and thank you for giving us ordinary rituals and rhythms to hold onto. With grateful and humble hearts, we pray. Amen.

## TAIZÉ MEDITATION "Holy Spirit Come to Us"

*Holy Spirit, come to us,  
Kindle in us the fire of your love  
Holy Spirit, come to us,  
Holy Spirit, come to us.*

## ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE – Mark Kaercher

## DEACON'S PRAYER FOR THE WORLD – Marv Helf

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

ANTHEM "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen"

## SCRIPTURE LESSONS Luke 2:21-38

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too." There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She

never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

This is the Word of The Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

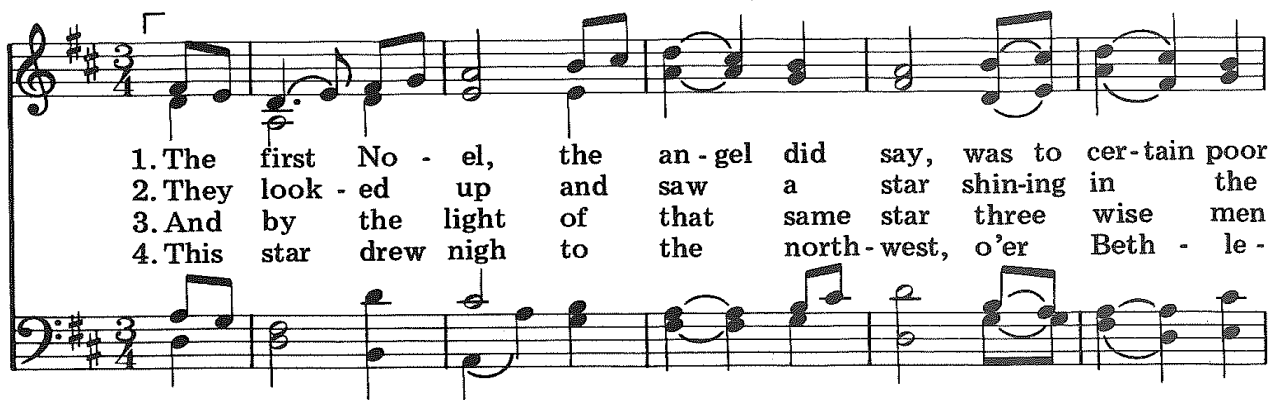
**THE MORNING MESSAGE: How Does a Weary World Rejoice?**  
“We Root Ourselves in Ritual.”



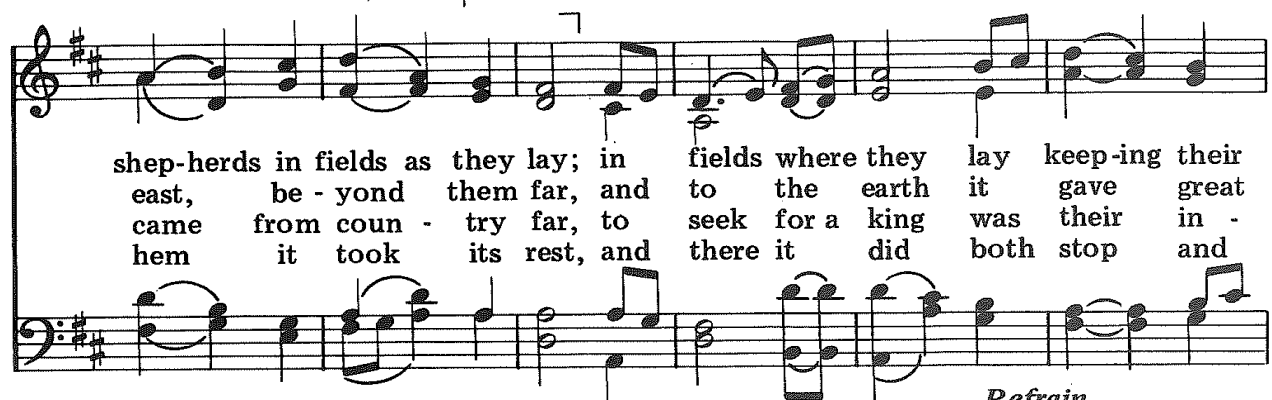
\*HYMN 162 "The First Noel"

# The First Noel, the Angel Did Say 162

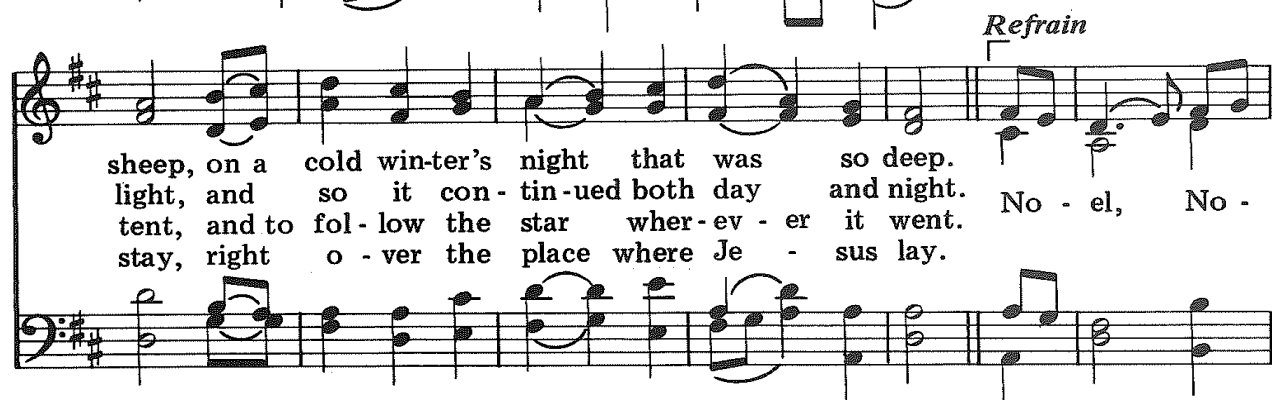
*This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about . . . Mt. 1:18*



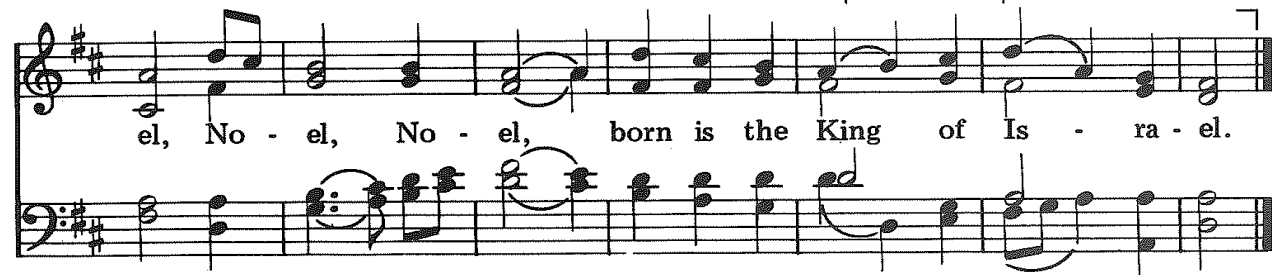
1. The first No - el, the an - gel did say, was to cer - tain poor  
 2. They look - ed up and saw a star shin - ing in the  
 3. And by the light of that same star three wise men  
 4. This star drew nigh to the north - west, o'er Beth - le -



shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where they lay keep - ing their  
 east, be - yond them far, and to the earth it gave great  
 came from coun - try far, to seek for a king was their in -  
 hem it took its rest, and there it did both stop and



*Refrain*  
 sheep, on a cold win - ter's night that was so deep.  
 light, and so it con - tin - ued both day and night. No - el, No -  
 tent, and to fol - low the star wher - ev - er it went.  
 stay, right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.



el, No - el, No - el, born is the King of Is - ra - el.

5. Then entered in those wise men three,  
 full reverently upon their knee,  
 and offered there in his presence  
 their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.  
*(Ref.)*

6. Then let us all with one accord  
 sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
 who hath made heaven and earth of naught,  
 and with his blood our life hath bought.  
*(Ref.)*

WORDS: Traditional English carol  
 MUSIC: W. Sandys' *Christmas Carols*, 1833; arr. John Stainer, 1871

THE FIRST NOEL  
 Irregular

## BENEDICTION

### \*THE IRISH BLESSING

*May the road rise to meet you,  
May the wind be ever at your back,  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
And the rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again, and until we meet again,  
May the God who loves us all  
Hold you in the palm of His hand.  
Amen.*

All the Liturgical resources for our Advent and Christmas Worship Theme, "How Does a Weary Rejoice?" are used with permission from "A Sanctified Art LLC" and have been prepared by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed.

### WORSHIP TEAM

Worship Leader  
**Sarah Huiest**

Sound Technician  
**Jerry Kallner**

Elder of the Day  
**Ana Crosbourne**

Video Technician  
**Cameron Kaercher**

Deacon of the Day  
**Marv Helf**

Soloist  
**Ben April**

Liturgist  
**Linda Murphy**  
**Melody York**

Welcome Host  
**Cynthia Placek**

Children's Message  
**Melody York**

Coffee Hour Host  
**Debi Todd**



## Copyright Licenses

### **O Little Town of Bethlehem**

Music: Lewis H. Redner, arr. Joel Raney  
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### **Sing Praises**

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### **Holy Spirit, Come to Us**

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### **God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen**

Traditional English Carol,  
arr. Vicki Collinsworth  
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**Offerings and gifts to the church may be submitted online via PayPal (link found below or on our website), by mailed check, by direct bank payment or by placing them in the offering box.**

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#### **Website:**

[www.communityreformedchurch.com](http://www.communityreformedchurch.com)

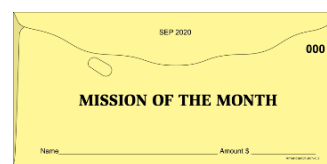
#### **Mailing Address:**

Community Reformed Church of Colonie  
701 Sand Creek Road  
Colonie, NY 12205

## **Special Offering Envelopes –**

### **The special offering envelopes for December**

You may make your offering to these with the envelope provided, mail in the offering to the Church office or through Paypal. If you have any questions, contact Lori Coté at [crclori@gmail.com](mailto:crclori@gmail.com).



**In-Person Worship Guidelines** - Even though you may be vaccinated, mask wearing continues to be encouraged to protect our vulnerable and medically compromised worshippers. We ask you to respect the distance and comfort levels of others. Reminder: If you are feeling under the weather, please remain home and participate in worship via Zoom

## **ZOOM**

To join Sunday Worship via Zoom, use the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6880887155>

Meeting ID: 688 088 7155

By Phone: 1-646-558-8656

## **Online Church Bulletin Board**

[padlet.com/crccsarah/ChurchBulletinBoard](https://padlet.com/crccsarah/ChurchBulletinBoard)



## **Prayer E-Chain**

**Please email prayer requests to:**

Sandy Cornwell

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

Karen Latta

[kmlatta@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kmlatta@nycap.rr.com)

## COMMUNITY REFORMED CHURCH OF COLONIE STAFF AND CONSISTORY

### STAFF E-MAIL ADDRESSES

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### CONSISTORY

#### Elders

Karl Côté  
Ana Crosbourn  
Linda Murphy  
Melody York

#### Deacons

Kevin Bottini  
Marvin Helf  
Kevin Ingalls  
Jessica Kaercher



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Website - [www.communityreformedchurch](http://www.communityreformedchurch)  
Facebook - [facebook.com/coloniereformed](https://facebook.com/coloniereformed)  
Twitter - @ColonieReformed

# HAPPY New Year

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make His face  
shine upon you, And be gracious to you...

