



December 17, 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

I have committed myself to JOY.

I have come to realize that those who make space for JOY,
those who prefer nothing to JOY,
those who desire the utter reality will most assuredly have it.
We must not be afraid to announce it to refugees, slum dwellers,
saddened prisoners, angry prophets.

Now and then we must even announce it to ourselves.
In this prison of now, in this cynical and sophisticated age,
someone must believe in JOY.

Richard Rohr

PRELUDE “Joy to the World”

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

THE PRAYER SHAWL – This morning’s prayer shawl will be given to Sue, a friend of Nancy Bacon’s.

THE ELDER’S PRAYER – Melody York

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Members of the Book Club- Cynthia Placek, Pam Zeph, and Maggie George

How does a weary world practice joy?

By dancing and throwing birthday parties.

By hanging Christmas lights and holding sleeping babies. By singing loudly and looking for good news.

By telling stories of Jesus and showing up for our community.

There are a million ways to practice joy. So, today we light the candle of joy as a reminder and a charge.

With God’s help, we may be bringing joy into a weary world.

INTROIT “Holy Ground”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Our God can part the sea.

God can bring water from a rock and provide bread in the desert.

Our God can walk on water.

God can heal the sick and turn water into wine.

Our God sets the stars in the sky.

God hears our voice when we cry and is closer than our own breath.

Let us stand in awe. Let us worship God with wonder.

* HYMN 145 "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

145 Of the Father's Love Begotten

In the beginning was the Word . . . and the Word was God. Jn. 1:1

Unison

1. Of the Fa-ther's love be - got - ten, ere the worlds be - gan to be,
 2. O that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when the Vir - gin, full of grace,
 3. O ye heights of heaven, a - dore him, an - gel hosts, his prais - es sing,
 4. Christ, to thee with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly Ghost, to thee,

he is Al - pha and O - me - ga, he the source, the
 by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing, bore the Sav - ior
 powers, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him, and ex - tol our
 hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing and un - wea - ried

end - ing he, of the things that are, that have been,
 of our race; and the Babe, the world's Re - deem - er,
 God and King; let no tongue on earth be si - lent,
 prais - es be: hon - or, glo - ry, and do - min - ion,

and that fu - ture years shall see, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!
 first re - vealed his sa - cred face, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!
 ev - ery voice in con - cert ring, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!
 and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!

WORDS: Marcus Aurelius C. Prudentius, 4th C.; tr. John M. Neale, 1854,
 and Henry W. Baker, 1859, alt.

MUSIC: Plainsong, c. 13th C.; arr. based on C. Winfred Douglas, 1916

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM
 8.7.8.7.8.7.7.

RESPONSIVE READING

The Promised One of God brings good news to the oppressed and binds up the brokenhearted.

We are witnesses of the light of Christ.

The Promised One of God proclaims liberty to captives and release to prisoners.

We are witnesses of the light of Christ.

The Promised One of God comforts all who mourn and gives a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

We are witnesses of the light of Christ.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, hold fast to what is good, live in harmony with all.

As witnesses of the light of Christ we can bring God's good news to our weary world.

TAIZÉ MEDITATION "Lord Be Glorified"

*In our lives, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.
In our lives, Lord, be glorified today.*

*In our homes, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.
In our homes, Lord, be glorified today.*

*In your church, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.
In your church, Lord, be glorified today.*

*In your world, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.
In your world, Lord, be glorified today.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, somewhere in our childhood we face pressure to outgrow awe. We turn into adults who obsess over data and facts. We praise those who have answers and assume that wonder is an

answerless game. Forgive us for closing that door to you. Remind us that the kingdom of God belongs to children. Teach us the ways of awe and wonder so that like Zechariah, when we find ourselves speechless, our first words will be words of praise. With hearts open wide, we pray. Amen.

TAIZÉ MEDITATION “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” (Verse 1)

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear Desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.*

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S FORGIVENESS

Family of faith, just as we marvel at mountains and newborns, at sunrises and sunsets, God marvels at us. There is nothing you could do or leave undone that could prevent God from loving you. So, hear and believe the good news of the gospel, and let us proclaim it together with joy:

We are forgiven! We are loved! We belong to God! Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a God who knows our names, who counts the hairs on our heads, and who carries the dreams of our hearts.

We believe that God’s fingerprints are all over creation and that God is forever speaking to us in a million different ways.

We believe that awe and wonder, goosebumps and laughter, telling stories and paying attention are all ways that we can say thank you to our creating, sustaining, and loving God.

Therefore, we commit ourselves to moving through this world with eyes wide open, with porous hearts, and grateful spirits.

We commit ourselves to living lives of awe, wonder, and gratitude trusting that these things will forever draw us deeper into God’s loving arms.

We believe. We stand in awe. Thanks be to God!

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE – Mark Kaercher

DEACON'S PRAYER FOR THE WORLD – Jessica Kaercher

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 “O Come, O Come”

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them.”

The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses in the Negeb.

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

Luke 1:57-66

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

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

THE MORNING MESSAGE: How Does a Weary World Rejoice?
"We Allow Ourselves to be Amazed."



*HYMN 165 “”

165 I Wonder as I Wander

And all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. Lk. 2:18

Unison

1. I won - der as I wan - der, out un - der the sky, how
 2. When Ma - ry birthed Je - sus, 'twas in a cow's stall, with
 3. If Je - sus had want - ed for an - y wee thing, a
 4. I won - der as I wan - der, out un - der the sky, how

Je - sus the Sav - ior did come for to die for
 wise men and farm - ers and shep - herds and all, but
 star in the sky or a bird on the wing, or
 Je - sus the Sav - ior did come for to die for

poor ordi - nary peo - ple like you and like I; I
 high from God's heav - en a star's light did fall, the
 all of God's an - gels in heaven for to sing, he
 poor ordi - nary peo - ple like you and like I; I

Optional Coda

won - der as I wan - der, out un - der the sky.
 prom - ise of a - ges it then did re - call.
 sure - ly could have it, 'cause he was the King.
 won - der as I wan - der, out un - der the sky. Out un - der the sky.

WORDS: Traditional Appalachian carol; coll. John Jacob Niles, 1934

MUSIC: Traditional American melody; coll. John Jacob Niles, 1934; arr. Donald P. Hustad, 1984

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I WONDER AS I WANDER
 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 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
Rev. Robert Hoffman

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Melody York

Deacon of the Day
Jessica Kaercher

Liturgist
Karl Coté

Sound Technician
John Lombardo

Video Technician
Addison York

Soloist
Brian Rhode

Choir
**Tina-Marie Bottini
Michelle Braungard
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Marvin Helf
Kevin Ingalls
Pam Izzo
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Pam Fitzpatrick

Coffee Hour Host
Mark & Jessica Kaercher

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O Come, O Come

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I Wonder as I Wander

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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

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

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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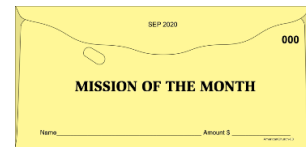
Mailing Address:

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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.



Online Church Bulletin Board

padlet.com/crccsarah/ChurchBulletinBoard



Prayer E-Chain

Please email prayer requests to:

Sandy Cornwell

crccsandy@gmail.com

Karen Latta

kmlatta@nycap.rr.com

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