



The First Sunday after
Christmas
December 29, 2024
Worship – 10:00 AM

Words of Welcome

"It is the mission of the Community Reformed Church of Colonie to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, with all our souls and with all of our minds; and to love our neighbors as ourselves." (Matthew 22:37-40)

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.

The Community Reformed Church of Colonie welcomes you
and thanks you for worshipping with us.

Please join in the worship liturgy by reading and
singing the sections in bold italics.

* Please rise in body or in spirit for the benediction only

FOR CONTEMPLATION

Loving God, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Robert Louis Stevenson

PRELUDE “Love Came Down at Christmas”

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

CALL TO WORSHIP

As we gather together within this sanctuary and within our homes, we remember the Advent journey that has brought us to this time and place.

We are precious to our Lord.

We are blessed

God has formed us into a covenant community.

We can't go alone

We can all be what Isaiah calls “repairers of the breach”.

Do the good that is yours to do

The world doesn't need more cynics. It needs people who say, “It can be better,” and make it so.

Hope is worth the risk

God is born, and this God of love knows your name.

Love knows your name

In our Lord we give rejoice and give thanks,

Amen

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER By John van de Laar

So, Lord God, You have come to us. You didn't wait for us to become good. You didn't stay away until we searched for You.
You took the initiative.

You entered the world of our experience to meet us where we are, as we are. And so, we know that as we pray, You hear and You understand, and You answer. Come into our world again.
Bring Your peace and love and trust into a world of war and hatred and suspicion.

Come into this land again.
Bring Your healing into a country ravaged by broken communities, broken relationships, and bodies broken by violence, addictions, hatred, greed and all kinds of diseases.

Come into your church again.
Bring faith and inspiration into the community that You call to be Your loving servant to the world.

And come into our lives, and those of our loved ones again. May we know in the depth of our souls, today and every day, that God is truly with us, no matter what life brings.
We welcome You and Your healing love into our world. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

As we gather together as the family of Christ, we pause for a silent moment as lift the concerns of our hearts
With hope in our hearts, we pray.
With hope in our hearts, we gather.
With hope in our hearts, we begin again.
Meet us here.
Allow this joyful feast to be the start of something new.
With joy and hope, we weave our voices together
to pray the words your son taught us to pray, saying :

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.

Let us hear the word of God and rejoice!

CHRIST'S BIRTH IS FORETOLD BY ISAIAH Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The King of Glory Comes

Refrain:

***The King of Glory comes, the nation rejoices
Open the gates before Him, lift up your voices.***

***Who is the King of glory, How shall we call Him?
He is Emmanuel the promised of ages (Refrain)***

***In all of Galilee, In city or village
He goes among His people curing their illness (Refrain)***

***He gave His life for us the pledge of salvation
He took upon Himself the sins of the nation (Refrain)***

***He conquered sin and death, He truly has risen
And He will share with us, His heavenly vision (Refrain)***

THE ANGEL GABRIEL VISITS MARY Luke 1:26-33

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Savior of The Nations, Come

*Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin's Son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O Heav'n and Earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.*

*Not by human flesh and blood,
By the Spirit of our God
Was the Word of God made flesh:
Woman's offspring, pure and fresh.*

THE BIRTH IN THE MANGER Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

Away in the Manger

*Away in a manger, no crib for His bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep in the hay.
The cattle are lowing, the poor Baby wakes .
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky.
And stay by the cradle till morning is nigh.
Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay,
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray!
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care
And take us to heaven, to Live with Thee there.*

THE ANGELS' SONG Luke 2:8-14

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

Angels We Have Heard on High

*Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

*Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say, what may the tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

*See within a manger laid,
Jesus, Lord of heaven and earth!
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
sing with us our Savior's birth.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

THE SHEPHERDS' RESPONSE Luke 2:15-20

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

The First Noel

*The first noel the Angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.*

*Noel, noel, noel, noel.
Born is the King of Israel.*

*They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East, beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued, both day and night.*

*Noel, noel, noel, noel.
Born is the King of Israel.*

THE QUEST OF THE WISE MEN Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

As with Gladness Men of Old

*As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright,
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Ever more be led to thee.*

*As with joyful steps they sped,
Savior, to thy lowly bed,
There to bend the knee before
Thee whom Heav'n and Earth adore,
So may we with willing feet
Ever seek thy mercy seat.*

*As they offered gifts most rare
At thy cradle rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy,
Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee, our heav'nly King.*

The Word Became Flesh John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

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,
Wondrous star, lend thy light
With the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King
Christ the Savior is here,
Jesus the Savior is here!*

THE PROMISE John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Joy to the World

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come.
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room;
And heav'n and nature sing,*

*And heav'n and nature sing.
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness.
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.*

***BENEDICTION by Rev Sarah Speed "Sanctified Art"**

*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
Amen*

POSTLUDE “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

We would like to thank Sandy Cornwell for the liturgical resources for this service.



Let All Creation Dance

by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Inspired by Luke 2:10, Matthew 2:10, Isaiah 9:2-3,

Psalms 148, Isaiah 55:12-13

Ink dyes and gold resist on silk, with digital collage his quilt square collage shows the ripple effect of joy dancing throughout all creation. In the nativity story, the birth of Christ is meant to bring universal joy and good news to all people, especially those like the shepherds who might be estranged, undervalued, or marginalized (Luke 2:10). Joy greets the Magi during their long and arduous journey; when the star stops, they know they are close (Matthew 2:10). In addition to the Christmas story, this piece is also inspired by the rich poetry of praise found throughout many Hebrew scriptures. For those enduring exile, God brings exaltation that multiplies (Isaiah 9:2-3). The psalmist sings praise for the God of the mountains and hills as well as the highest heavens and starry skies (Psalm 148). The

prophet Isaiah casts a new vision of people returning home as the trees clap their hands and the mountains and hills sing shouts of praise (Isaiah 55:12-13). For the focal point of this design, I chose an eight-pointed star, which is symbolic in many cultures and religious traditions.¹¹ In Judeo-Christian traditions, the number eight symbolizes new beginnings, as seven is the number of completion. The eight points can also represent the four cardinal directions combined with the four elements: fire, air, water, and earth. For many, an eight-pointed star means harmony and balance. In this image, I wanted the landscape to feel refracted, perhaps like a prism, or even a broken mirror. The land rejoices despite forces that try to break it. The horizon expands into all directions. There is no east or west, north or south—the arms of creation reach into the cosmos. In between stars and moons, fruit trees bear their harvest and clap their hands. In many ways, this piece is a song of praise as well as a song of resistance. Creation cannot be quieted. If praise is not on your lips this day, do not fear, for we can trust that all of creation is dancing on our behalf. —Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

WORSHIP TEAM

Reader's
Beth Colbert
Mark Kaercher

Elder
Melody York

Deacon
Kevin Bottini

Music Director
Ben April

Sound Technician
Mike York

Video Technician
Addison York

Welcome Host
Cynthia Placek

Coffee Hour Host
Linda Murphy and
Doris Neese

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Love Came Down at Christmas

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The King of Glory Comes

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Savior of the Nations, Come

Authors: Ambrose Of Milan, Calvin Seerveld,
Martin Luther
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Angels We have Heard on High

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Silent Night, Holy Night

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Music: Franz Gruber, 1818; desc. Donald
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The Irish Blessing

Words: Traditional
Music: Benjamin April
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O Come, All Ye Faithful

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ZOOM

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

<https://tinyurl.com/CRCCZoom>

Meeting ID: 688 088 7155

By Phone: 1-646-558-8656

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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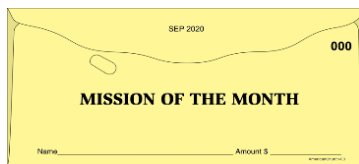
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December Offering Envelopes –



Prayer E-Chain

Please email prayer requests to:

Sandy Cornwell
crccsandy@gmail.com

and

Karen Latta
kmlatta@nycap.rr.com

**COMMUNITY REFORMED CHURCH OF COLONIE
STAFF AND CONSISTORY**

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A night scene with a city skyline and fireworks. The sky is dark, and the city lights are visible in the background. Several fireworks are exploding in the sky, creating bright streaks of light. The text is overlaid on the image.

*Happy New Year
to Everyone.*

Glory to God in the
highest heaven and peace
to us on earth.