



December 24, 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

**"Time is too slow for those who wait.
Too swift for those who fear.
Too long for those who grieve.
Too short for those who rejoice.
But for those who love,
Time is eternity."**

Henry Van Dyke

PRELUDE "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

THE PRAYER SHAWL – This morning’s prayer shawl will be given to Gail Hoogkamp, Lori Coté’s sister. Gail is facing health challenges.

Let us prepare our hearts to worship God with the Elder’s Prayer.

THE ELDER’S PRAYER – Linda Murphy

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Members of the Community Outreach Committee –

Kevin Bottini, Sue Bredice and Beth Colbert

How does a weary world practice love?

By sending cards and picking up the phone.

By practicing empathy, and assuming the best in others. By learning people’s stories and finding common ground.

By advocating for justice and saving a place at the table.

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

(the fourth candle is lit)

With God’s help, may we bring love into a weary world. Amen.

INTROIT “Emmanuel”

CALL TO WORSHIP

How does a weary world rejoice?

We sing songs of hope.

We allow hope to change us, to strengthen us.

We tell the stories of what could be.

We listen for God’s Word.

We resist the temptation to give up or give in.

We remember Mary’s song.

We gather for worship.

We hope.

We hope.

Against all odds, we hope.

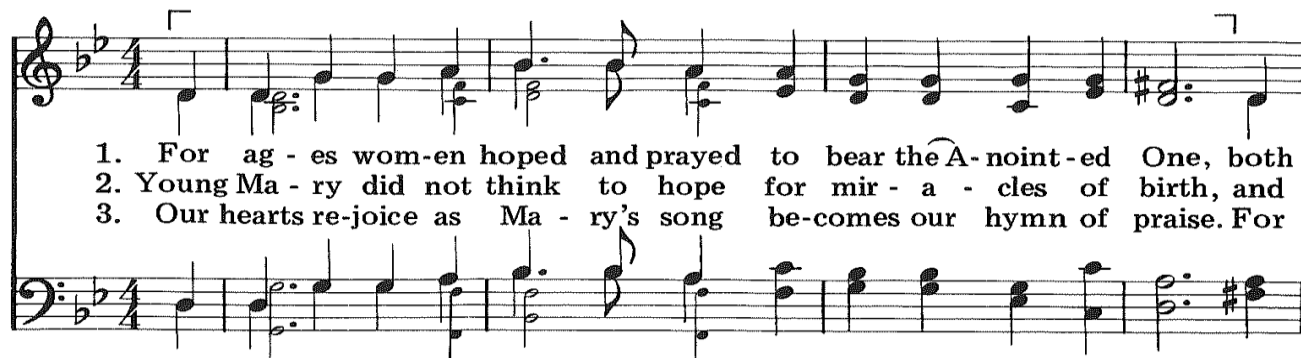
Friends, this is the day that the Lord is still making.

Let us worship our holy God.

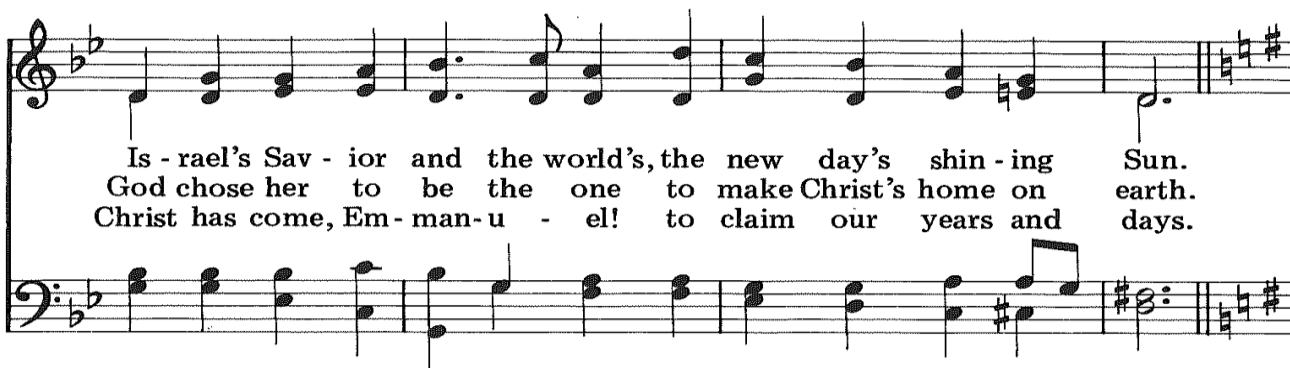
* HYMN 143 "For Ages Women Hoped & Prayed"

143 For Ages Women Hoped and Prayed

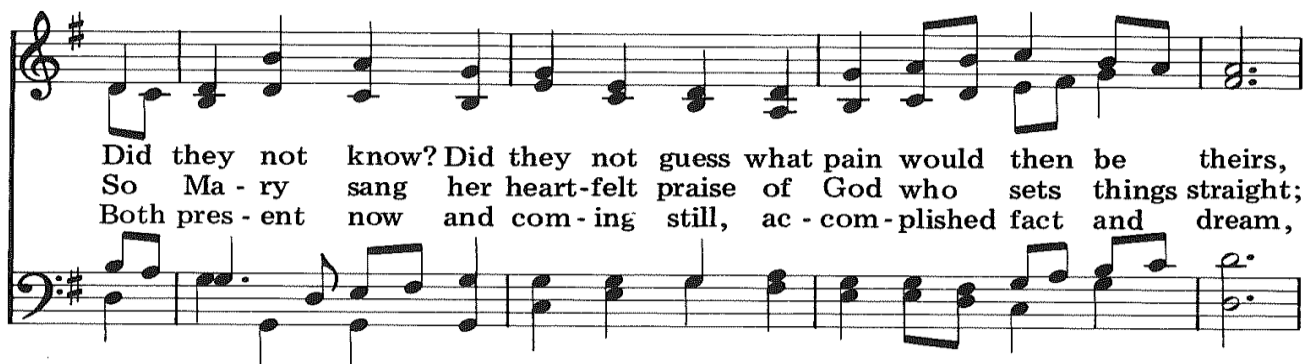
"Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Lk. 1:28



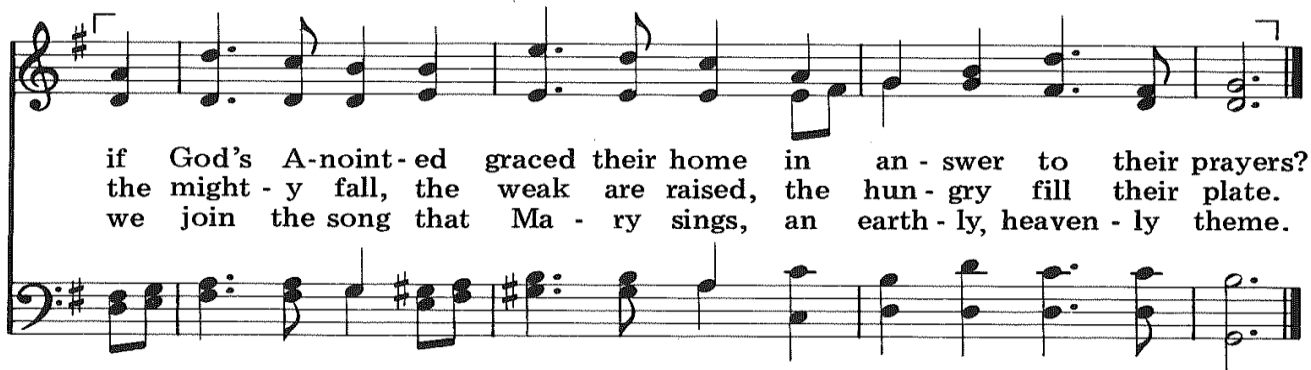
1. For ag - es wom-en hoped and prayed to bear the A-noint-ed One, both
 2. Young Ma - ry did not think to hope for mir - a - cles of birth, and
 3. Our hearts re-joice as Ma - ry's song be-comes our hymn of praise. For



Is - rael's Sav - ior and the world's, the new day's shin - ing Sun.
 God chose her to be the one to make Christ's home on earth.
 Christ has come, Em-man-u - el! to claim our years and days.



Did they not know? Did they not guess what pain would then be theirs,
 So Ma - ry sang her heart-felt praise of God who sets things straight;
 Both pres - ent now and com - ing still, ac - com - plished fact and dream,



if God's A-noint-ed graced their home in an - swer to their prayers?
 the might - y fall, the weak are raised, the hun - gry fill their plate.
 we join the song that Ma - ry sings, an earth - ly, heaven - ly theme.

WORDS: Jane Parker Huber, 1986

MUSIC: John B. Dykes, 1868

Words © 1986 Jane Parker Huber

VOX DILECTI
C.M.D.

UNISON READING - (Verse 3 from "Lift Every Voice and Sing" words by
James Weldon Johnson)

*God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee.
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand, true to our
God, true to our native land.*

TAIZÉ MEDITATION "Sing Praise and Bless the Lord"

*Sing, praise and bless the Lord.
Sing, praise and bless the Lord.
Peoples! Nations! Alleluia!*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Holy God,
More days than not, hope feels like the rain.
We try to hold onto it with cupped hands,
But eventually, it slips right on through.
Forgive us for holding hope so loosely.
Forgive us for allowing the realities of today to define tomorrow.
We know that this world needs people of hope,
so today we pray: turn us into those people.
Teach us how to sing Mary's song of hope for the world.
With open hearts 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

I am God’s beloved.

I am God’s beloved.

I am forgiven.

I am forgiven.

I am blessed and sent to serve.

I am blessed and sent to serve.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that hope can change the world. We believe that God can use ordinary people, like an unwed teenage mother, for extraordinary good. And we believe that each of these ordinary people can make a difference. We know that grief, fear, and suffering abound. We know that suffering quells joy and makes it harder to hope. But we choose to hope anyway. In the face of hardship, we hope together. We hope with God. We hope for a better world. This is our song. We believe; help our unbelief. In Christ’s name, we believe in hope.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE – Lisa Gillan

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 "Mary Did You Know?"

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Luke 1:67-80

Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all

our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.


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

THE MORNING MESSAGE: How Does a Weary World Rejoice?


“We Sing Stories of Hope”




*HYMN "If I Could Visit Bethlehem"




If I could vis - it Beth - le - hem what pres - ents would I bring?
 I'd learn some sim - ple word to speak in Ar - a - ma - ic tongues.
 I'd say, "He'll nev - er hurt or kill, and joy will fol - low tears.



If I could see what hap - pened then, what would I say or sing?
 I'd cra - dle him, and kiss his cheek, and say, "I'm glad you've come."
 We'll know his name and love him still in twen - ty hun - dred years."



I would-n't take a mod - ern toy but gold to pay for bread,
 If Ma - ry asked me who I was and what her child would do,
 I can - not vis - it Beth - le - hem but what I can, I'll do:



some wine to give his par - ents joy and woll to warm his bed.
 I would-n't talk a - bout the cross or tell her all I knew.
 I'll love you, Je - sus, as my friend, and give my life to you.

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
Tina Bottini

Elder of the Day
Linda Murphy

Deacon of the Day
Marv Helf

Liturgist
Lisa Gillan

Sound Technician
Mike York

Video Technician
Alex Huiest

Soloist
Marissa Lombardo

Choir
Tina-Marie Bottini
Michelle Braungard
Maggie George
Kaaren Haushalter
Marvin Helf
Kevin Ingalls
Pam Izzo
Marissa Lombardo

Welcome Host
Cynthia Placek and
Joan Baker

Coffee Hour Host
Deb Helf

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Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence
French Melody, arr. John Carter
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For Ages Women Hoped and Prayed
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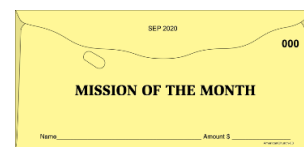
Mailing Address:

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 crcclori@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



Prayer E-Chain

Please email prayer requests to:

Sandy Cornwell

crccsandy@gmail.com

Karen Latta

kmlatta@nycap.rr.com

COMMUNITY REFORMED CHURCH OF COLONIE STAFF AND CONSISTORY

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