

Christmas Eve 2023



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

"The key for understanding incarnation is to think small.

How Ironical,
In a culture that prides itself on thinking
BIG, BOLD, And BRASH –
Especially at this time of the year –

We have to retrain ourselves to look for God
In the small and unexpected."

Craig Kocher, preacher at Duke University Chapel

PRELUDE “Mary, Did You Know?”
“Ding! Dong! Merrily on High”
“What Child is This”
“Go Tell it on the Mountain”
“O Holy Night”
“Were You There on That Christmas Night?”

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

How does a weary world hold onto hope, practice peace, spread joy, or know love?

How does a weary world combat cruelty?

How does a weary world shine a light into our bleakest night?

We do all these things with God’s help.

For tonight, a child is born in Bethlehem.

Tonight, Christ draws near.

Tonight, we light the Christ Candle.

Tonight, we are not alone.

God is near. Love has drawn close.

Rejoice! For God loves this weary world.

Amen

INTROIT – “Do Not Fear”

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

There is room for you here. If you are weary and worn or hopeful and patient.

If you are tired and lost or wrapped up in hope.

If you are new to this place or have been here before.

Come in, come in. There is room for you here.

The angels are singing,

“Be not afraid.”

The angels are singing,

“Good news and great joy!”

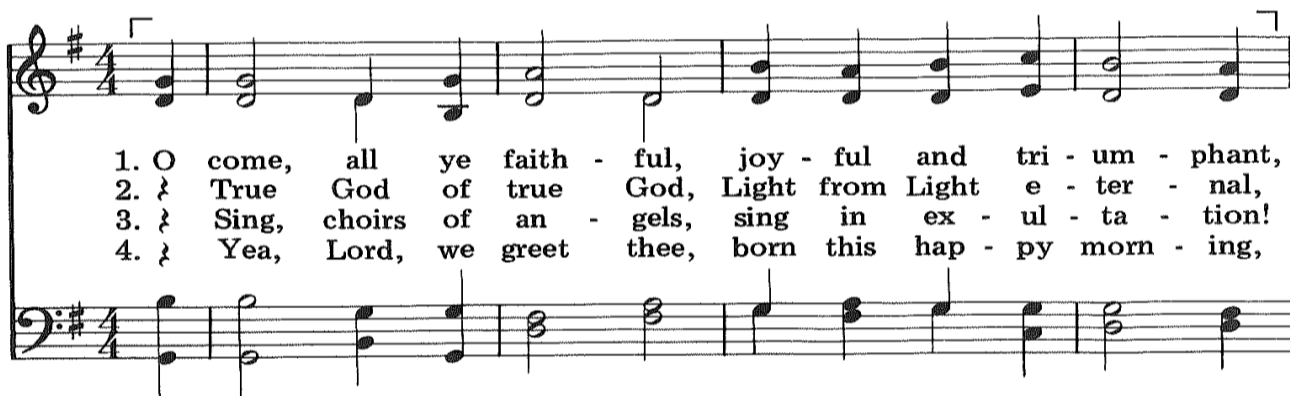
So come in, come in!

There is room for us here.

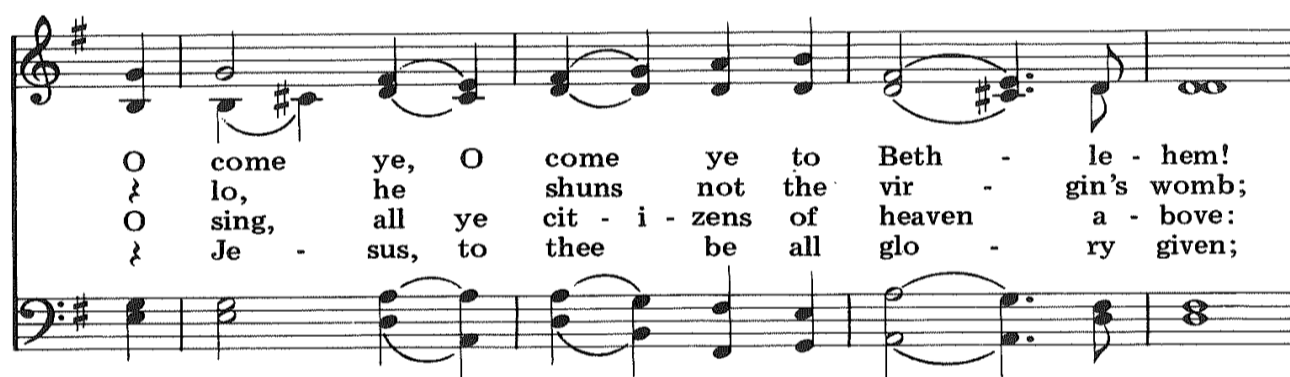
HYMN 173 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

173 O Come, All Ye Faithful

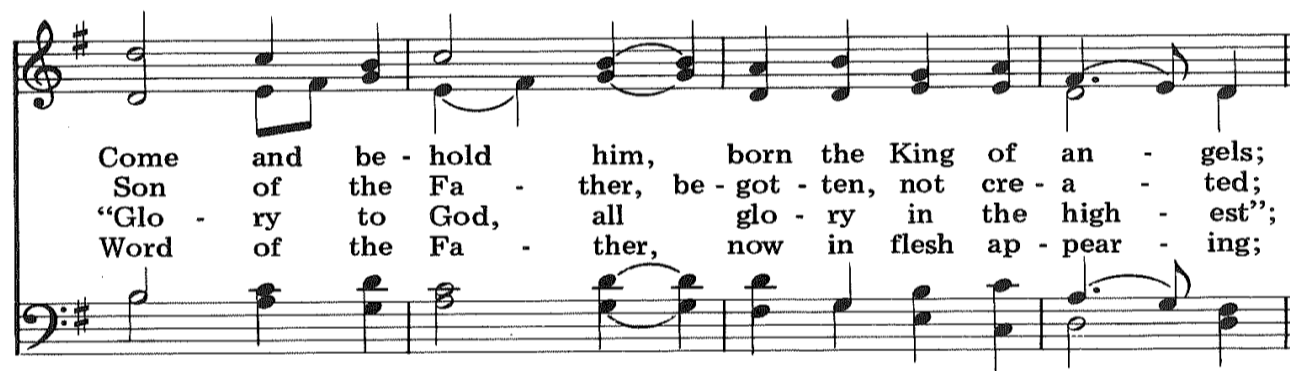
"Let's go to Bethlehem" . . . Lk. 2:15



1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant,
 2. ʒ True God of true God, Light from Light e - ter - nal,
 3. ʒ Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion!
 4. ʒ Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing,

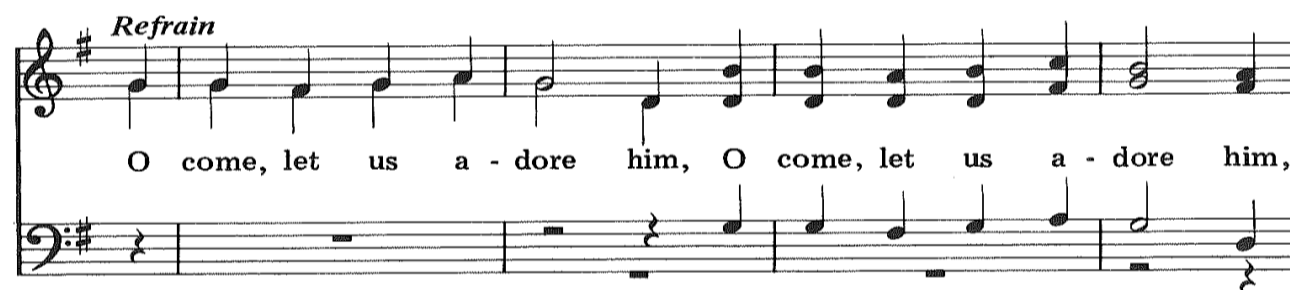


O come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem!
 ʒ lo, he shuns not the vir - gin's womb;
 O sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove:
 ʒ Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry given;



Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
 Son of the Fa - ther, be - got - ten, not cre - a - ted;
 "Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est";
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

WORDS: Latin hymn, attr. John F. Wade, 1751; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841, and others, alt.
 MUSIC: John F. Wade's *Cantus Diversi*, 1751

ADESTE FIDELES
 Irregular

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a God who makes room for us – who opens the door, pulls up a seat, puts the kettle on and says, “Tell me everything.”

We believe that God not only treats us this way but also makes room for our neighbors, for strangers, and for our enemies.

Jesus modeled this kind of room-making love when he said, “Let the children come to me,” and “Let me wash your feet,” so we try to follow suit.

In a world of closed doors, we believe in saying, “There is room for you here.”

TAIZÉ MEDITATION 152 “Angels We Have Heard on High” (2 times)

*“Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving Christ, scripture tells us that you were born in a stable because there was no room in the inn. There was no room in the inn for a woman in need, no room in the inn for an innocent baby. Forgive us! We should have learned our lesson by now, but just as others turned their backs on you we continue to turn our backs on one another. Teach us how to make room for one another. Teach us how to make room for you. Carve out space in our hearts to love as you love, to care as you care, and to work for your kingdom. With hope and honesty, we pray. AMEN.

OUR REQUEST FOR MERCY “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” (Verse 2)

*Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.*

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Unto us a child is born.

Unto us a child is born.

Unto us grace is given.

Unto us grace is given.

Unto us hope is restored.

Unto us hope is restored.

May this good news change the very fabric of our lives.

Christ has made room for all of us. Thanks be to God. Amen.

THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER

ANTHEM "How Dark the Night"

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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 for them in the inn.

In that 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 God favors!” 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. But 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, as it had been told them.

MEDITATION - How Does A Weary World Rejoice?
“We Make Room”

ANTHEM “The Beautiful Impossible”

THE GREAT MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION John 1:1-14



HYMN 164 "Silent Night"

Silent Night! Holy Night! 164

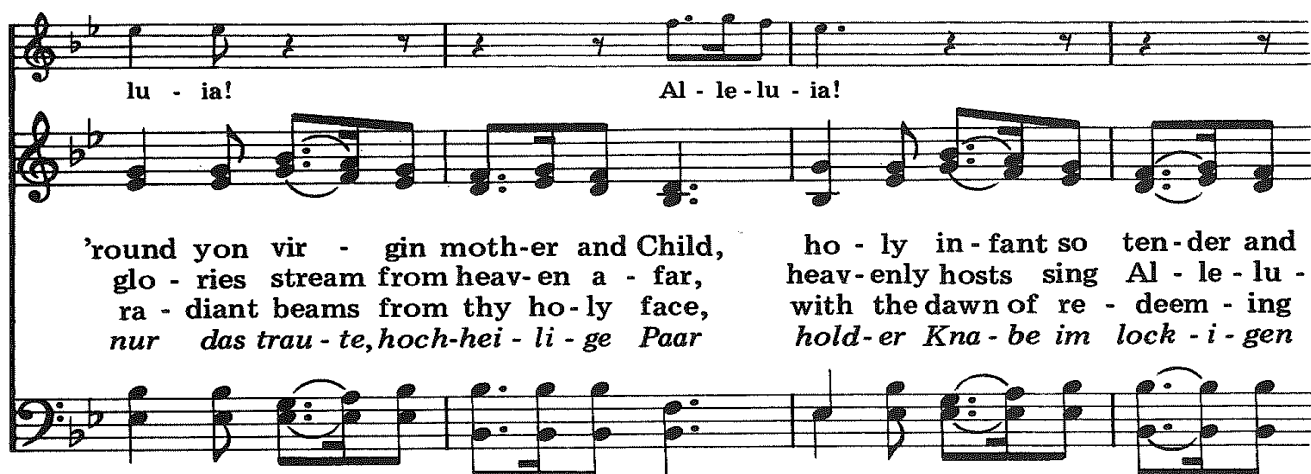
So they . . . found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. Lk. 2:16

Descant



3. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-

1. Si-lent night! ho-ly night! All is calm, all is bright
 2. Si-lent night! ho-ly night! Shep-herds quake at the sight,
 3. Si-lent night! ho-ly night! Son of God, love's pure light,
Stil-le Nacht! hei-li-ge Nacht! Al-les schläft, ein-sam wacht



lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!

'round yon vir-gin moth-er and Child, ho-ly in-fant so ten-der and
 glo-ries stream from heav-en a-far, heav-enly hosts sing Al-le-lu-
 ra-diant beams from thy ho-ly face, with the dawn of re-deem-ing
nur das trau-te, hoch-hei-li-ge Paar hold-er Kna-be im lock-i-gen



Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Je-sus, Lord, at thy birth.

mild, sleep in heav-en-ly peace, sleep in heav-en-ly peace.
 ia; Christ the Sav-ior is born, Christ the Sav-ior is born.
 grace, Je-sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je-sus, Lord, at thy birth.
Haar, schlaf in himm-lisch-er Ruh, schlaf in himm-lisch-er Ruh!

WORDS: Joseph Mohr, 1818; tr. John F. Young, 1863
 MUSIC: Franz Gruber, 1818; desc. Donald P. Hustad, 1989
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STILLE NACHT
 Irregular

THE PROMISE John 3:16-17

RESPONSE 146 "Joy to the World!"

Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come 146

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Ps. 98:4

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come; let earth re-
2. Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns; let all their
3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in -
4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
songs em - ploy; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous - ness,

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
(1.) and heaven and na - ture sing,

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.
heaven and na - ture sing,

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE



WORSHIP TEAM

Worship Leader
Rev. Robert Hoffman

Elder of the Day
Karl Coté

Deacon of the Day
Jessica Kaercher

Liturgist
Vicki Lane

Sound and Lighting Technician
John Lombardo

Video Director
Cameron Kaercher

Welcome Hosts
Karl and Lori Coté

Director of Music Ministries
Benjamin April

Soloists
Tina Bottini
Michelle Braunguard
Alex Huiest
Kevin Ingalls
Marissa Lombardo
Brian Rhode

Choir
Tina-Marie Bottini
Michelle Braunguard
Terry Cranfield
Maggie George
Kaaren Haushalter
Marvin Helf
Kevin Ingalls
Pam Izzo
Marissa Lombardo
BJ Todd
Debi Todd

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Music: William Chatterton Dix &
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Music: Greg Habegger, arr. Molly Ijames
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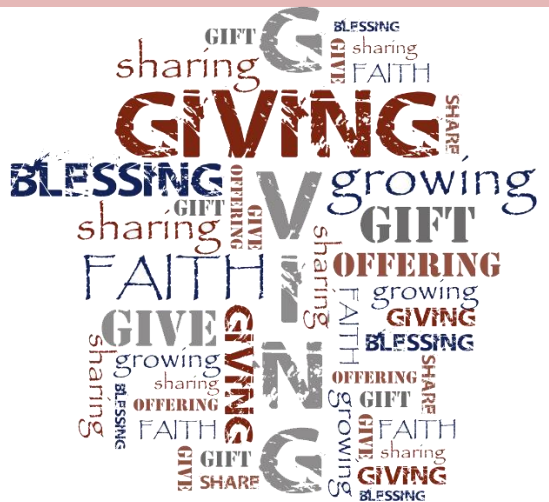
The Beautiful Impossible

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Silent Night! Holy Night!

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Website:

www.communityreformedchurch.com

Mailing Address:

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

COMMUNITY REFORMED CHURCH OF COLONIE

STAFF AND CONSISTORY

STAFF E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Rev. Robert Hoffman, Interim Pastor
rev.robert.hoffman@gmail.com

Lori Coté
Church Administrator & Bookkeeper
crcclori@gmail.com

Ben April,
Director of Music Ministries
benapril27@gmail.com

Sarah Huiest,
Youth Coordinator &
Communication/Media Coordinator
crccsarah@gmail.com

Cameron Kaercher
Technical Director
camkaercher@gmail.com

CONSISTORY

Elders

Karl Coté
Ana Crosbourne
Linda Murphy
Melody York

Deacons

Kevin Bottini
Marvin Helf
Kevin Ingalls
Jessica Kaercher



Prayer E-Chain

Please email prayer requests to:

Sandy Cornwell
crccsandy@gmail.com
Karen Latta
kmlatta@nycap.rr.com



701 Sand Creek Road, Colonie, NY 12205
Telephone: 518-869-5589

Website - www.communityreformedchurch.com

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