



**Ames United Church of Christ  
Sunday, December 17, 2017**

*Welcome to Ames UCC! Worship is the way we praise God and learn what it means to be a Christian. Services of worship are just that: a way that we serve the power that calls us together and sends us out to be the eyes, hands, and feet of justice in the world. We hope that you leave today feeling connected, renewed, and in relationship with the holy.*

*In keeping with the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome all people of any age, gender, race, culture, ability, sexual orientation, or gender identity into our community of faith and affirm the worth of all people as unique individuals made in God's image. We are open to the special gifts that each person brings and invite each one to participate in the life of our church.*

*Our deacon for today is Dan Coffey; our greeters and ushers are Janet Binder, Kevin Binder, and Jan Breitman. Steve Rogers-Smith is scheduled for building lockup.*

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Most announcements are in your bulletin, our weekly e-newsletter, and our quarterly print newsletter. To sign up for the last two, contact Katie Tschopp at either 515-232-9323 or [office@amesucc.org](mailto:office@amesucc.org).*

### **RINGING OF THE MEMORIAL BELL**

### **GREETINGS**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

*A formal, and mutual, invitation to move into the worship experience.*

One: The light shines in the darkness,  
**Many: And the darkness has not overcome it.**

One: The Word became flesh and lived among us,  
**Many: And we have seen his glory.**

One: The commandments were given through Moses;  
**Many: Grace and truth come through Jesus Christ.**

**HYMN** "Awake to Change" (insert) Kniker & Zeigler  
*Singing is one way to connect to God through our bodies. We stand up, breathe deep, and let loose. And as Augustine wrote, "(S)he who sings, prays twice."*

### **OUR ADVENT WREATH: The Candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love**

*Silent Preparation*

*Prayer*

One: Just as the prophet Isaiah knew the parching thirst for a love without end,

**Many: so we too thirst for waters  
to quench our yearning for a place in God’s loving family.**

One: We still yearn, but yearning leads to hope.

**Many: We light this candle as a sign that this hope never ends.**

One: And we light yet another,

**Many: trusting God’s peace will come.**

One: But the fourth, the flame of love, points to God’s infinite compassion—

**Many: the promise of God-with-us,  
the one to fill our souls with the endless life-giving waters of love.**

*Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love are Kindled*

*Silent Response to Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love*

*Sung Response to Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love*

**All: O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
embracing all things far and nigh:  
In strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way.  
Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

*Passing the Peace is an ancient Christian tradition in which we show we carry no weapons, only love. Please hang your ornaments of love on our tree.*

**CHILDREN’S CELEBRATION**

*Children are very important to our church. Each service they come forward for a special lesson just for them. We want all children to know they are welcome everywhere in our sanctuary, even – especially – at the very front. We sing the song below as they come forward.*

Watch and wait, lis-ten and pray. Je-sus will be born on Christ-mas day.

Watch and wait, lis - ten and pray. Lord, give us hope;

Lord, give us peace; Lord, give us joy; Lord, give us love to - day.

**CHRISTMAS CHOIR OFFERING** A Festival of Lessons and Carols, H. Hopson

Lesson In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. What has come into being in the Word was life, the life-light of all people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome the Word’s light. (John 1:1-2, 3b-5)

Carol “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (*choir and congregation*)

- choir & congregation*  
**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant.  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels.**

**refrain: O come, let us adore Him; O come, let us adore Him;  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

	<p>2. <i>choir &amp; congregation</i>  <b>True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal.</b>  <b>Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes.</b>  <b>Son of the Father; begotten, not created. (refrain)</b></p>	
	<p>3. <i>choir</i>  Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation.  Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  Glory to God, all glory in the highest.  Venite adoremus Dominum.</p>	<p>The Pharisees sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to question John the Baptist. John denied being the Messiah, the Anointed One; Elijah; or the prophet awaited by his own people. John restated Isaiah’s prophecy, saying, “I’m the voice of one shouting in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the Lord’s highway.’” (John 1:19-23)</p> <p>Carol “Comfort, Comfort, O My People”</p> <p>Lesson And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen His glory; the glory befitting the Creator’s only Son, full of grace and truth. From the Son’s fullness we have all received grace upon grace. Just as the Teachings were given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but it is God’s Son, who is close to the Creator’s heart, who has made God known. (John 1:14, 16-1)</p>
	<p>4. <i>choir &amp; congregation</i>  <b>Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning.</b>  <b>Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv’n.</b>  <b>Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing. (refrain)</b></p>	
Lessons	<p>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them has light shined. (Isaiah 9:2)</p> <p>John the Baptizer was sent from God as a witness to testify to the light, so all might believe. John himself was not the light, but came to testify to the true light. The true light, who enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. (John 1:6, 8-9)</p>	<p>Carol “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” (<i>choir and congregation</i>)</p> <p>1. <i>choir &amp; congregation</i>  <b>Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice.</b>  <b>Now give heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today!</b>  <b>Ox and ass before Him bow, and He is in the manger now.</b>  <b>Christ is born today, Christ is born today!</b></p>
Carol	<p>“Creator of the Stars of Night”</p>	<p>2. <i>choir</i></p>
Lessons	<p>Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. A voice shouts: “In the wilderness prepare the Lord’s way, make a highway in the desert for God. The valleys, mountains and uneven ground shall be leveled and smoothed. Then the Lord’s glory shall be revealed to all people.” (Isaiah 40:1, 3-5)</p>	<p>Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice. Now we hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this! God has opened heaven’s door, and we are blest forever more. Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!</p>

### 3. choir & congregation

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice.  
Now we need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!**

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*Our Communion table is open to all: young and old, faithful and dubious. No one will be turned away. We serve the bread and the juice through "intinction," which means dipping the bread into the juice. Your server will offer each to you with the phrases "the Bread of Life" and "the Cup of Blessing." If you are unable to come forward but would like to participate in the meal, simply wait for your row to be empty, then raise your hand. A server will come to you. The bread is free of gluten, soy, and dairy. If you have brought canned goods for the Little Free Pantry we share with Holy Transfiguration please set them at the Communion table before being served.*

### Invitation

One: The prophets foretold it: the desert burst into bloom. Angelic messengers delivered news: a priest lost his speech; a young woman found her voice. In this season of Advent, the scriptures revive old stories and bring new understandings.

**Many: In the face of critics and skeptics,  
our faith cries out, resilient,  
like a baby from a manger bed.**

One: From that Bethlehem beginning, Jesus, baptized in the Jordan, spent his life serving others that all might know the compassionate attention of a loving God.

**Many: Today, Jesus serves us yet again  
as we gather at this Table he prepares for us.**

### Prayer

One: Dear Jesus of Advent, you remain a sacred mystery to us. You have brought Good News for all the people and we will not be afraid, for you are here. We hunger for your love which surpasses all our understanding; we thirst for your spirit that never runs dry. In this meal nourish our souls, feed our minds, quench our deepest longings and forgive our debts, that we may glorify you every day of our lives.

**Many: Amen.**

### Blessing of the Feast

One: Gathered with his friends, Jesus took bread, broke it and said:

**Many: "Take and eat, all of you:  
This is my body, surrendered for you."**

One: And pouring the wine:

**Many: "Take and drink, all of you:  
This is the seal of a new covenant, my poured-out life."**

### Sharing of the Meal "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

From [A Festival of Lessons and Carols](#)

*The original two verses first appeared in a 1599 German hymnal as "Es ist ein Ros entsprungen." The text describes Christ's birth as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 11:1), using the "Ros" (rose) to symbolize Mary, Jesus' mother. Some sources interpret Mary as the "Ros/Roselein" (rose/little rose) and Jesus as the "Blumlein" (floweret). A third verse, added in 1844, uses "Blumelein" (flower/bloom) to describe Jesus.*

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

**All: Holy Creator, Bread of Life, Everlasting Salvation,  
a light shines in the night and the night will not overcome it.  
In this meal we have been replenished and strengthened,  
the light of your love rekindled within.  
We will boldly carry this light into the world.  
Thank you for reviving your glow within us.**

**You are the power source that never gives out,  
eternally renewable and eternally creative.  
Thank you God; Thank you Christ; Thank you Spirit. Amen.**

## OFFERING OUR GIFTS

*In 2017, nine percent of our total budget helps to fund local, regional, and national charitable programs. On the third Sunday of each month, when we have Holy Communion, loose change and bills are designated for a Communion Fund, which supports Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance (75%) and our in-house Pastoral Emergency Fund (25%). In 2018, the full collection will remain in-house to be distributed through the Pastoral Emergency Fund.*

*Today we also receive the Christmas Fund, one of the United Church of Christ's five yearly national special offerings. Donations to this offering provide financial assistance to retired UCC clergy and lay employees, groups that are historically (and often still) underpaid and unable to save for retirement. This offering funds pension and health premium supplementation, Christmas "thank you" gift checks, and even emergency grants for active or retired clergy and employees. An envelope is available in your bulletin to designate your gift for this fund.*

## CHORAL OFFERING "There Is No Rose of Such Virtue"

From A Festival of Lessons and Carols

*In this 15<sup>th</sup>-century carol text originally titled "There is no rose of swich vertu," the "rose" symbolizes Mary, Jesus' mother. "Virtue" derives from the Middle (medieval) English "vertu" which has several potential meanings, including: a plant's life-sustaining force, divine power and moral goodness. The text also includes Latin phrases from a Roman Catholic Christmas hymn: "res miranda" (wonderful thing, event), "pares forma" (of equal form, nature) and "transeamus" (to go across, to cross from worldly to heavenly).*

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION: PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

*The basics of the Lord's Prayer appear in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. It may be familiar to you in this form, or with "sins" or "trespasses" toward the end. We also support the use of traditional or contemporary language for addressing the holy and naming the holy's realm.*

**Our Father/Creator who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom/  
kin-dom come, thy 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. Lead us not  
into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom/kin-dom, the  
power, and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.**

## HYMN OF SENDING "Angels We Have Heard on High" From A Festival of Lessons and Carols

1. *choir & congregation*  
**Angels we have heard on high  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
echoing their joyous strains.**

**refrain: Glo---ria, in excelsis Deo!  
Glo---ria, in excelsis Deo!**

2. *choir*  
Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song?  
**All: refrain**

3. *choir*  
Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing.  
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.  
**All: refrain**

- 4: *choir & congregation*  
**See Him in the manger laid,  
whom the choirs of angels praise.  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid  
while our hearts in love we raise. (refrain)**

## BENEDICTION

*From the Latin of "well" and "to speak," this is one final good word to send us off. Afterward, please join us next door in the parlor for coffee, tea, treats, and community.*

## POSTLUDE

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

And now we wait. Now we wait a week for light in the darkness, for the bells at the dawn. Notice how you feel: tired, anxious, excited, expectant? Take each sensation to God in prayer. Bring them as gifts to a lowly manger.

On Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24, we will not meet for our 10:30 a.m. Sunday morning worship. Instead, please join us for our **Christmas Eve 7:00 p.m.** service. We will celebrate Christ's birth through song, scripture, reflection, and candle lighting.

On **Christmas Day**, Monday, December 25, **please return at 9:30 a.m.** We will gather for song, scripture, and continued celebration. Feel free to come just as you are, rumpled and receptive, to this glorious morn.

Selections for today's message in song, presented by the Christmas Choir, are taken from A Festival of Lessons and Carols by Hal Hopson. Our thanks to flutist Liz Morse, tenor soloist Bradley Duckstein, and reader Eric Abbott for their contributions to the service.

Thank you to our Christmas Choir:

<b>SOPRANO</b>	<b>ALTO</b>	<b>TENOR</b>	<b>BASS</b>
Melissa Asklof	Laura Deal	Bradley Duckstein	Jan Flora
Linda Best	Amanda	Shawne Goodman	Terry Potter
Barb Fisher	Petefish-Schrag	Greg Lamont	David White
Dinah Kersieck	Kelsie Poe	Greg Wool	Richard White
Laurie Olk	Pat Spangler	Bill Yungclas	
Kristin Shields	Katie Tschopp		<b>TREBLE</b>
Carol Smith			Blackbird Fisher
Liz White			Eli Schrag

## Calendar for the Week

Tuesday, December 19

*Pr. Eileen away*

Wednesday, December 20

*Pr. Eileen away*

12:00 p.m. Bell Ringing

6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, December 21

*Pr. Eileen away*

Sunday, December 24

**No Morning Worship**

7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

Monday, December 25

9:30 a.m. Christmas Day Service

### Be In Touch with Ames UCC

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515-232-9323

Mon 8:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Tues-Thurs 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

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