**CENTER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

**December 24, 2024 4pm**

**Christmas Eve Service**

**Deacons on Duty for December:** *Bobby Valenti, Rhonda Strycharz, Deb Prokrinchak and*

 *Tina Hazzard*

*Prelude***Matt Valenti**

**†** *Please stand if you are able.*

Welcome and Announcements **Reverend Averill**

Meditation Moment*(soft music played while congregation reflects on their blessings)*

First Reading (NRSV) ***Luke 2:1-7***  **Rev. Averill**

2 In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. **2**This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. **3**All went to their own towns to be registered. **4**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. **5**He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. **6**While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. **7**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.

Special Music ***All is Well*     Rhonda Strycharz and Matt Valenti**

Second Reading **(NRSV)** ***Luke 2:8-14* Rhonda Strycharz**

**8**In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. **9**Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10**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: **11**to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. **12**This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ **13**And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,**14**‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’

*All Hymns are from the Red Hymnal*

**†**Hymn **134 *O Little Town of Bethlehem* Matt Valenti**

Third Reading **(NRSV)** ***Luke 2:15-20***  **Rev. Averill**

**15**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.’ **16**So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. **17**When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; **18**and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. **19**But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. **20**The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**†**Hymn **141 *The First Nowell* Matt Valenti**

Reading of the Christ Candle **The Gioias**

*Our Gifts, Tithes, and Evening Offerings*

Offertory Anthem  **Matt Valenti**

Doxology **Matt Valenti**

Prayer of Offering **Rev. Averill**

*Dear Lord, we offer up to you these gifts to the Christ Child, both monetary and spiritual, which are given this Christmas Eve in this your church.*

Special Music ***Mary Did You Know?*   Matt Valenti**

Fourth Reading **(NRSV)**  ***Matthew 2:1-11*** **Rhonda Strycharz**

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, **2**asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’ **3**When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; **4**and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. **5**They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: **6**“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.”’ **7**Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. **8**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.’ **9**When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10**When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. **11**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.

**†**Hymn **130** ***Joy to the World* Matt Valenti**

Christmas Message **Rev. Averill**

Lighting of the Candles

**†**Hymn **135**  ***Silent Night***  **Matt Valenti**

Postlude **Matt Valenti**

 ***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,
Shepherds quake at the sight.

Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, loves pure light

Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

