

**Congregational Church of Birmingham  
United Church of Christ**



Photo by Greg Peterson

**Second Sunday of Advent**

**December 4, 2022**

**10:00 AM**

**Welcome Visitors!** Please take a moment to join us in signing and passing the Ritual of Friendship books in the pews. We welcome you to this church family.

**You May Contact** Rev. Ralph Brown for any pastoral request or emergency by phone call or text to 586-872-1618.

**Prayer Requests?** Text Rev. Brown (586-872-1618) by 9:30 AM Sunday for the Sunday morning prayers, and/or by 11 AM Sunday for the Weekly Prayers email.

**Get in the Loop!** Stay current on CCBUCC news. Contact the church office to receive our email communications.

**View Sunday Worship Live Streams** and all previously recorded services at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/c/CongregationalChurchofBirminghamUCC>

**OUR WORSHIP IS LIVE STREAMED** so those unable to be with us in person can worship online on our YouTube channel (see link above). We're happy to be accessible to everyone and are deeply grateful to CCBUCC member Chris Hiner for creating the technological set up! Our Media & Communications Specialist, Daniel Jaros, runs the streaming technology during the service. We invite others to be trained to monitor the sound and live chat. Interested in how it works? Observe Daniel and learn the ropes.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** All children (pre-K - 6<sup>th</sup> grade) are welcome. They will go to their lessons at the instructed time during the service each Sunday. Please pick them up from their classrooms at 11:15 AM after worship.

**REGISTRATION FORMS:** Please complete forms for ALL children & youth in our programming AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. The 2-sided form is on a table at the entrance to the worship area, on our website ([www.ccbucc.org](http://www.ccbucc.org)), or linked in the Weekly E-Update MailChimp. Drop forms in Carmel's mailbox, or email BOTH SIDES to her at [cedirector@ccbucc.org](mailto:cedirector@ccbucc.org)

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## **WORSHIP GUIDE**

(**Bold** indicates in unison.)  
[Live Streaming Begins Here]

WELCOME

**PRESERVICE CAROL SINGING**

**"Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates"**

(verses 1 & 2)

**CH #129**

**Lift up your heads, O mighty gates;  
behold the glorious Ruler waits!  
The Sovereign One is drawing near;  
the Savior of the world is here.**

**Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
make it a temple, set apart  
from earthly use for heaven's employ,  
adorned with prayer and love and joy.**

**"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"**

(verses 1 & 3)

**CH #150**

**Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King;  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"**

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings,  
mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth,  
born to give us second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"**

## LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF LOVE

Jeff Foust, Jake Zinke & Daniel

Today, we light the Candle of Love. In the Gospel of Matthew 1:18-25, we read:

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

*(Lighting of the second candle.)*

Joseph's love for Mary and for her child, Jesus, was both wonderful and courageous. In a society ruled by men and based on maintaining one's honor, Joseph chose to follow the instructions of the Angel of God and to wed Mary and raise the child, Jesus. He did not follow the conventional customs of how men treated women, but chose instead the ways of love and respect.

## **ADVENT PRAYER**

**All People**

Let us pray:

**God of Love, we thank you for the example of Joseph  
and all those who respect the dignity and rights of women  
and of people of every gender and expression.**

**Your love and care are not limited  
but are as expansive as the universe you have created.**

**Help us to embrace all people  
as we worship you in spirit and in truth. Amen.**

## **ADVENT HYMN**

**"Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear"**

**NCH #105**

**Women:** "Gentle Joseph, Joseph dear,  
stay with me, for the baby's near;  
God will surely your goodness hear,  
as you will love this newborn child," says Mary.

**Men:** "Gladly Mary, Mary mine,  
I will cradle the child divine;  
Here will heaven and earth combine,  
for you will bear God's child, O dearest Mary."

**All:** "Peace to all and God's goodwill,"  
heaven and earth with this song will fill;  
Soon will God, in the evening still,  
be born in Bethlehem, the child of Mary.

CCLI #741179

## THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Pastor Ralph and All

ONE: Who is invited to this table of Holy Communion?

**ALL: All are invited; the young and the old,  
the rich and the poor, the lowest and the least;  
sinners and saints together in communion.**

ONE: Come, find your place here,  
where there are no strangers or foreigners,  
only family members in the sight of God.

**ALL: Why do we give thanks at this table?**

ONE: We give thanks because Jesus showed us the way,  
we give thanks because Jesus is the Way.  
Jesus was a gift from God for the world.  
He was called Emmanuel, "God with us."  
Jesus lived a life of thankfulness.  
We give thanks for Jesus' life and sacrifice for all.

**ALL: Why do we eat and drink at this table?**

ONE: We eat because on the night before Jesus died,  
he ate with his friends. He gave them bread and said,  
"This is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me."  
At the same meal he took the cup of wine and said,  
"Drink this cup. This is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is poured out for many and for the forgiveness of sins."

(cont.)

**ALL: What do we remember at this table?**

ONE: We remember Jesus' birth and his presence as God with us.  
We remember Jesus' suffering and death,  
his resurrection and the promise of life.

**ALL: We are waiting in hope for Jesus to return again.**

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Pastor Ralph

God of Grace, thank you for this bread and cup, and for the gift of yourself in Jesus Christ. Fill us with your Spirit today that we might have the wisdom to accept the mystery of this table, and the depth and height and breadth and length of your love for us. Through this meal, strengthen us to be followers of Jesus, a community of peace in a broken world. Amen.

SHARING THE SACRAMENT (All elements are gluten free.)

(All are welcome at this table. As you are invited, open and hold the bread until we eat together and the same with the juice.)

**RESPONSE**

**"As We Gather at Your Table"**

(verse 1)

**NCH #332**

CCLI #741179

**As we gather at your table,  
as we listen to your word,  
help us know, O God, your presence;  
let our hearts and minds be stirred.  
Nourish us with sacred story  
till we claim it as our own;  
teach us through this holy banquet  
how to make Love's victory known.**

ONE: Take and eat.

**RESPONSE**

**"As We Gather at Your Table"**

(verse 2)

**NCH #332**

CCLI #741179

**Turn our worship into witness  
in the sacrament of life;  
send us forth to love and serve you,  
bringing peace where there is strife.  
Give us, Christ, your great compassion**

**to forgive as you forgave;  
may we still behold your image  
in the world you died to save.**

ONE: Take and drink.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Let us give thanks:

**Bountiful God, we give you thanks for feeding us at your table.  
Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another,  
and send us out into the world full of love  
and ready to help our neighbors near and far. Amen.**

A SIGN OF LOVE

Pastor Ralph

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Dr. Carmel Tinnes,  
Director of Christian Education

**THE PRAYER OF JESUS**

**All People**

**Abba God, your name is holy.  
May your community come and your way be followed  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us, today, our daily bread.  
Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For yours is the way, the power and the glory,  
now and forever. Amen.**

(Pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade children may now go to their lessons.)

THE WORD IN MUSIC

"Joseph's Song"  
CCBUCC Chancel Choir

Larson

OUR CONVERSATION

"God Had Other Plans"

Rev. Ralph Brown

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor Ralph

We Continue to Pray for:

- Barry McBride, continuing to face health challenges with such courage
- Cindy Kyle and family, grieving the death of mother, Annabelle
- David, brother of Paul von Oeyen, gratefully in remission from leukemia, and dealing with lingering complications from decreased immunity
- John Lindstrom & Cindy Kyle, as they deal with John's health concerns
- Melissa & Brenda Crook and family, separated from Calliope
- Ruth Biersdorf, in treatment for cancer
- All victims and refugees of war, violence and natural disasters, everywhere
- Brittany Griner, Paul Whelan, and all those wrongly imprisoned in Russia
- Oxford and Uvalde families, students, teachers, school staff and all community members, grieving in the wake of gun violence
- Youth and adults with mental health challenges

OUR GIFTS & SERVICE

Pastor Ralph

Your offering is welcomed in support of our ministry and may be made online at [www.ccbucc.org](http://www.ccbucc.org); placed in the offering plate at the entrance to the worship area (before, during, or after worship); or mailed to us Attn: Treasurer.

**HYMN**

**"Christians All, Your Lord Is Coming"**

**CH #136**

(verses 1 & 2)

**Christians all, your Lord is coming,  
drawing near in holy birth.  
Ring the bells and sound the trumpets,  
let your music fill the earth.  
Dance and move to show God's glory;  
kneel and pause to hear God's word.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Rise and let your songs be heard.**

**Christians all, your Lord is coming,  
calling you to serve in deed.  
See the ones who hurt and suffer,  
hear their cry and act with speed.  
Set all selfish ways behind you.  
Purge your hearts of sinful greed.**

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**  
**Christ in you will meet their need.**

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Pastor Ralph and All

Be loving people.

Do not let convention or honor constrain your heart,  
but share the love which is ours in Christ with all you meet.

**Having received God's love ourselves  
we promise to share God's love within our families,  
our community, and our world.**

May God bless you and keep you,  
may God's face shine upon you and give you love.

**Amen.**

POSTLUDE

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

Traditional French  
Melody, arr. Larson

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**WE THANK** our greeters, ushers, Advent candle lighters & readers, communion helpers, choir, Tech Team: Daniel Jaros & Chris Hiner, Worship Design Team: Leslie O'Day-Benyo, Margherita Fisher, Cynthia Martin & John Benyo, and Music Team: Joe Bentley & Yalan Piao, for all their help with today's service.

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JOYS, CONCERNS & MINISTRY UPDATES

Pastor Ralph

(Please sign and pass the Ritual of Friendship pad.)

**OUR MINISTRY UPDATES**

**A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR OUR CHURCH:** As your generous hearts assemble Christmas gift lists, please include our faith family among those whom you remember this season TODAY and next Sunday, December 11. The Funding for Ministry Team invites you to: use the "CCB Christmas Offering" envelopes on the table at the back of the Sanctuary; mail a check to the church with "CCB Christmas Offering" in the memo line; or use our online option for giving through *myEoffering* at [www.ccbucc.org](http://www.ccbucc.org). Thank you for your generous support.

**LAST CHANCE TO ORDER POINSETTIAS** in honor or in memory of loved ones. You may also designate your donation for other seasonal decorations in the Sanctuary. Please find the order and dedication form in this bulletin and return it to the church office no later than tomorrow, Monday, December 5.

**CCB WOMEN!** Plan to join us for a fun Christmas afternoon gathering at CCB this Wednesday, December 7, at 1:00 PM. The event includes a light luncheon followed by a Christmas music program featuring Yalan Piao and including Christmas carol singing. See the MailChimp invitation sent out Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup> for complete details. Please RSVP right away to Pat Parker at [rparker281914MI@comcast.net](mailto:rparker281914MI@comcast.net).

**JOIN US FOR A CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DOUBLE-FEATURE!** "Sacred Spaces" Session 3 next Sunday, December 11, 11:15 AM to 12:15 PM in the Sanctuary. Including:

- Pilgrimage Follow-Up – Discuss our diverse impressions gained from visits to Birmingham Unitarian Church and Temple Beth El. All are welcome, regardless of whether you joined the visits on October 23rd. Eric Hill will provide some comparative photography to facilitate discussion.
- Preparation for Next Pilgrimage – In early 2023 we'll visit two prominent Catholic churches in the area: the National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica and the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, both down the Street on Woodward. Visit date, or dates, are pending confirmations. Eric will provide an architectural overview in preparation for this outing.

**TOY BOX COLLECTION FOR TRINITY-ST. MARK'S UCC:** We continue our annual tradition of providing toys to children in Southwest Detroit this Christmas. Trinity St. Mark's UCC (TSM) is again partnering with Bennett Elementary School to identify families in need. Like last year, the pandemic prevents us from collecting and distributing actual toys. Instead, \$50 gift cards will be provided to the families. TSM hopes to provide gift cards for at least 50 families. Our collection is NOW through next Sunday, December 11. To contribute please write a check to CCB with "Toy Box" in the memo, or donate online at [www.ccbucc.org](http://www.ccbucc.org) through the *myEoffering* link choosing "Toy Box Collection." Questions? Contact Greg Panzica at (313) 215-5767.

The complete church calendar is on our website: [www.ccbucc.org](http://www.ccbucc.org)

# Celebrate Christmas in the Sanctuary



We invite you to offer a poinsettia to decorate our Sanctuary for Christmas or designate your donation for other seasonal decorations in the Sanctuary. Poinsettias can be ordered for \$14.00 per plant (about 7-10 blooms). You may take your plant home after our Christmas Eve late night service (on a first come, first served basis).

**Please turn in BY TOMORROW, Monday, December 5.**

You may put your donation in the offering plate with this form, place it in the mail slot on the church office door, or email it to the church and pay by E-offering as Sanctuary Flowers. Please write "Sanctuary Decorations" on the memo line of your check.

*Thank you for your generous support!*  
Worship Ministry

\*\*\*\*\* Tear off and return entire page to the Church Office. \*\*\*\*\*

I/We offer \_\_\_\_\_ poinsettia(s) x \$14.00 ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total

In lieu of poinsettias, I/We donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to keep our Sanctuary festive in every season.

Please complete this dedication for the Bulletin:

Your Name/s \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

# A Just World for All

**Second Sunday of Advent.....December 4, 2022**

## **Welcome to CCBUCC an "Open and Affirming" Church**

We warmly welcome everyone to worship and into the full life and leadership of the church. Whatever your background - your race, your nationality, your physical or mental condition, your gender, your sexual orientation - whoever you are and wherever you come from, we welcome you in love as Jesus Christ welcomes all. Gathered by the Holy Spirit, may the comfort and challenge of God's presence renew and inspire us all throughout the coming week. Again, welcome!



## **A Stephen Ministry Congregation**

Contact a Stephen Minister Leader:  
Dr. Paul von Oeyen 248-646-0837

## **THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BIRMINGHAM**

1000 CRANBROOK ROAD (@ WOODWARD AVE)  
BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICHIGAN 48304-2725



a just  
world  
for all  
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**MICHIGAN CONFERENCE WEBSITE:** [www.michucc.org](http://www.michucc.org)  
**DENOMINATIONAL WEBSITE:** [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)

## **CHURCH LEADERSHIP & STAFF**

### **Ministers - The Congregation**

**Dr. Carmel Tinnes**, Director of Christian Education

**Dr. Yalan Piao**, Accompanist

**Beth Prevost**, Church Administrator

**Rev. Ralph Brown**, Bridge Pastor

**Dr. Joe Bentley**, Choral Director

**Daniel Jaros**, Media & Communications Specialist

**Office Hours:** Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM