**Welcome!**

We are glad you are worshiping with us today! Since our founding in the 1950s, we at Little River United Church of Christ (UCC) have been called by God to celebrate diversity, independent thought, and faithful action. This call led us to become racially integrated in the segregated Virginia of the 1950s. That same call led us in 2001 to become open to and affirming of LGBTQ+ folks, including full access to the rites of ordination and marriage. Today, we build on our heritage of proclaiming God’s radically inclusive love to our congregation, neighborhood, and world by nurturing individual and congregational spirituality, serving our community, and advocating for all God’s creatures and creation. We’d love to have you join us in these sacred tasks! You may make your presence known by emailing us at office@lrucc.org. Welcome!

**Worship and Meeting Changes in Response to Coronavirus**

Due to the current spikes in COVID rates related to the Omicron variant, Little River has returned to online worship only via Zoom. Coffee hour socializing will continue to occur online via Zoom. The church will monitor statistics weekly through January to reevaluate reopening in the future. Meanwhile, all meetings and events will be online, and the church building will be closed. Staff will work remotely; please contact the church office by email or phone before visiting. For Pastor emergencies please contact Pastor Art on his cell phone: (619) 948-1777 or a Deacon.

**Service Credits**

The liturgy for today is adapted from Adapted from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2012* and the United Church of Christ Book of Worship. Today’s hymns are used with permission, reprinted under Onelicense.net A-715105.

**Communications at Little River UCC**

Little River UCC produces a weekly e-newsletter, *Current Tidings,* and periodically sends out *Alerts* (emails with significant, time-sensitive information). All submissions for the weekly Bulletin, *Current Tidings,* and online *Currents* should be submitted to the office by Wednesdays at noon. We also send out a monthly print newsletter, *Current Reflections.* To receive any of these communications, please send an email to currents@lrucc.org or call the church office to give us your contact information.

**Staff and Partners**

Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr., Interim Senior Pastor  
(619) 948-1777 | pastorart@lrucc.org
Craig Stapert, Director of Music and Communications  
craig@lrucc.org
Ashton Streavig, Children and Youth Choir Director  
ashton@lrucc.org
Kathy Heyman, Office Administrator  
kathy@lrucc.org
John Davis, Sexton/First Friday Coordinator  
john@lrucc.org
Yris Saenz, Liana Berbichasvili, Child Care Providers  
office@lrucc.org

Rev. Dr. Verne Arens, Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Hubert S. Beckwith, Founding Pastor
SERVICE OF CELEBRATION AND WORSHIP
CHRISTMAS EVE

PRELUDE
Good Christians All, Rejoice
Wilbur Held

WELCOME
Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr.

INTROIT
Break Forth, O Beauteous, Heavenly Light
J. S. Bach

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES
On this most holy night, move from darkness into light.
The birth of our Savior draws near and we rejoice.
Jesus, come among us as one of us.
Jesus, come among us as one with us.
Jesus, come among us and shine your light upon us.

CANDLE LIGHTING RITUAL
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 with child from the Holy Spirit.
Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and
unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, he planned to dismiss 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.”

RITUAL CANDLE LIGHTING OF CHRISTMAS
We light the Christ candle to bring light into a world of darkness.
With this light, Christ is called the “Prince of Peace.”
Christ is named Emmanuel, “God with us.”
Christ is here with us on this night of nights.
This is Christmas Eve.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP
Enlightened one! Burden-sharing one!
Helpless-as-us one! Given-for-us one!
Counseling one! Peace-bringing one!
Forever-and-ever one! Knit-us-together one!
The heavens are glad, fields exult, and trees sing out!
The earth rejoices at your coming, Holy Child of Bethlehem!
INVOCATION

Jean Wheelock

Holy One, Holy Three, Parent, Christ, and Spirit,
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,
We stand in awe of your greatest mystery once again:
that you would come to us as one of us, full of smiles and tears,
strengths and weaknesses, growing pains and griefs.
A child is given indeed!
A child is given that we know that heaven and earth are forever joined,
that no matter what we do, no matter who we are, no matter what we feel,
we are never alone.
Praise be to you, Holy One, Holy Three. Amen.

CHRISTMAS LITANY

Jean Wheelock

One: Every life in its particularity is precious to God,
who came to us in a particular body, in a particular time.
All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!
One: Black lives, queer lives, Indigenous lives – these are precious to God.
All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!
One: Trans lives, Palestinian lives, neurodivergent lives – these are precious to God.
All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!
One: Undocumented lives, disabled lives, migrant lives – these are precious to God.
All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!
One: All who face oppression, discrimination, war, and tumult are precious.
All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!
One: All who are burdened by mental unhealth
or by the stigma attached to it are precious.
All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!
One: All who find themselves outside of the inns of our society,
lonely and outcast are precious.
All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!
One: All those who, like the shepherds, labor and especially those who labor
during this day of celebration are precious.
All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!
One: Salvation is here! Taste and see!
All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!

RESPONSE

How Great Our Joy

arr. Morris Hart

Hand Bell Choir
THE CHRISTMAS STORY

THE PROPHECY

Micah 5:2–5a
Ruth Duncan

ANTHEM

O Little Town of Bethlehem
arr. Grant Cochran

THE ANGEL APPEARS TO JOSEPH

Matthew 1:18–21
T-Mac Wilbur

CAROL 149

Angels from the Realms of Glory
REGENT SQUARE

THE ANGEL GABRIEL APPEARS TO MARY

Luke 1:26–38
Barbara Lowery

ANTHEM

In the Bleak Mid-Winter
arr. H. Darke

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Luke 2:1–7
Chris Weakley

ANTHEM

Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem
John D. Horman
Combined Children and Youth Choir

THE ANGELS AND SHEPHERDS

Luke 2:8–16
Audrey Mireku

ANTHEM

The Shepherds’ Nowell
Anna Laura Page
Combined Children and Youth Choir

THE FIRST PROCLAMATION

Luke 2:17–20
Michael Alt

CAROL 162

What Child Is This?
GREENSLEEVES

THE WORD DWELLS AMONG US

John 1:1–14
Annelise Stapert

CAROL 150

Hark the Herald Angels Sing
MENDELSSOHN

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
   Thy kingdom come.
   Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
   Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
   Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.
Call to Offering

You can give your offering to Little River UCC by mailing a check to the church or by visiting the Donate Online page on our website. Thank you.

Prayer of Dedication

Thank you, O God, for the gifts from your people. Receive them and bless those who have given and those who are unable to give. Multiply this offering as it is used in service to others. Amen.

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host.

Carol 145

Silent Night, Holy Night

(see back of bulletin for music insert)

Benediction

One: A Child is born to us, named God with Us, Light of the World, and Ruler of Peace!

All: Christ is born! Merry Christmas to all!

One: And to all a good night! Merry Christmas!

Postlude

Meditation on ‘Silent Night’

David Conte

Christmas Offering

Please plan to include the Christmas Offering in your holiday giving! Half of the offering will go to the United Church of Christ Christmas Fund to assist retired UCC clergy experiencing financial difficulties. The other half will go to support the Congregation Action Network, a network of congregations in the Washington, D.C., area that provides support and solidarity to our immigrant and refugee neighbors who fear being detained, deported, and separated from their families. The church will gladly receive contributions by mail, or through the online giving button on the website. Please make your check payable to Little River UCC with “Christmas Fund Offering” in the memo line. The Board of Outreach and Social Justice thanks you for your generosity!
## Christmas Poinsettia Dedications 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given by:</th>
<th>In Memory of:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Hartzler</td>
<td>Bill Hartzler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth Duncan</td>
<td>Stuart C. Duncan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fran DuRocher</td>
<td>Siggi Moser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Wallace</td>
<td>Don Wallace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given by:</th>
<th>In Honor of:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrie Douglas</td>
<td>All the wonderful and dedicated staff and volunteers at Little River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilbur Family</td>
<td>Edward and Wanda Cottongim, Alan and Dardi McLeod and Warren Wilbur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Once in royal David's city stood a lowly
   cattle shed, where a mother laid her baby
2. Christ came down to earth from heaven, love incarnate
   for us all, and his shelter was a stable,
3. Jesus is our childhood's pattern; day by day like
   us he grew, he was little, weak, and helpless,
4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re-
   deeming love; for that child who seemed so helpless

in a manger for his bed: Mary was that mother
and his cradle was a stall; with the poor, the scorned, the tears and smiles like us he knew. Thus he feels for all our lives and reigns in heaven above; and he leads his children

mild, Jesus Christ her little child.
lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.
sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.
on to the place where he is gone.

WORDS: Cecil F. Alexander, 1848, alt.
MUSIC: Henry John Gauntlett, 1849; harm. Arthur H. Mann, 1919
1. 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;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

2. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,

sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

3. Child, for us sinners poor and in the manger,

we would embrace thee, with love and awe;
who would not love thee, loving us so dearly?
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born for our salvation,

Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!
Angels, from the Realms of Glory

1. Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2. Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
3. Sages, leave your contemplations brighter visions beam afar;
4. Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,
   you who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth.
   God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant light:
   seek the great Desire of nations, you have seen the natal star:
   suddenly the Lord, descending, here among us shall appear:

Refrain

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the new-born King.

WORDS: James Montgomery, 1816
MUSIC: Henry T. Smart, 1867
REGENT SQUARE
87.87.87
1. What Child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?
2. Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, rich and poor, to own him,

Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here the silent Word is pleading,
the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.

Refrain

This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:

haste, haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

WORDS: William C. Dix, c. 1865
MUSIC: English melody (16th century)
1. Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the
   Righ-teous-ness!
   He is risen with healing
   in his wings.
   His glo-ry by,
   rec-on-ciled!"

2. Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the ev-
   new-born King; peace on earth, and mer-cy mild, God and sin-
   last-ing Lord! Late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the
   Righ-teous-ness! Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal-
   Virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the God-head see;
   in his wings, mild he lays his glo-ry by,

3. All hail the Sun of
   Hail the Sun of

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt.
MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. William H. Cummings, 1856;
desc. Paul Liljestrand

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Benson Music Group, Inc.
no more may die;
join the triumphant skies;
with the angelic heavens
hail the incarnate deity,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us

born to raise us from the earth to second birth.
host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
from the earth, born to give us second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing to the newborn King.
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”
Silent Night, Holy Night

1. 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.
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

2. Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Christ, the Savior, is born,

3. Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
   radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
   with the angels let us sing, alleluia to our King;

4. Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
   with the dawn of redeeming grace, with the angels let us sing, alleluia to our King;
   sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
   Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

WORDS: Joseph Mohr, 1818; tr. John F. Young, 1863
MUSIC: Franz Gruber, 1818

STILLE NACHT
Irr.