

The United Church of Northfield
Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 18, 2011

Prelude & Candle Lighting: Alison Cerutti

Choral Introit: UCN Choir

Words Of Welcome

Processional Drama

Call to Worship: (by Rev. Penny L. Lowes at UCC Worship Ways):

Leader: We come to witness a miracle.

People: We sing the miracle of God's steadfast love.

Leader: New life bursts forth in unexpected ways.

People: We shout the good news: God's covenant endures forever!

Leader: The desert blooms; what was barren is fertile!

People: With our mouths we proclaim God's faithfulness to all generations: God is the Rock of our Salvation! Amen!

Hymn of Praise: "My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise" NCH 106

Morning Prayer: (seated and in unison): (Worship Ways):

Holy God, Loving Christ, Living Spirit; You are present in the everyday occurrences; you are revealed in startling and wondrous encounters. Let the revelation of your mystery unfold again this day -- that we may see it together. Let the secret of the ages shed new light on our relationship to you, and each other, as we praise the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candle: after John 1:6-8 (Ranker Family):

One: Elizabeth conceived and bore a son, John, sent by God as a witness to testify to the light so that all might believe through him.

Two: John himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

Three: John proclaimed the true light which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

One: We rekindle the candles of paz, peace; amor, love; and espiritu, spirit. Today we light the fourth candle of jubilo, joy testifying to the light of Christ. Amen.

Prayer Response:

UCN Choir

Call to Confession: (Worship Ways):

Leader: Joy breaks through when we are unencumbered and free. God desires our joy. In this time we lay aside our transgressions and seek the healing joy of God's forgiving grace. Open your heart to God in prayer.

Prayer of Confession: (seated and in unison): (Worship Ways):

Too often we pride ourselves on our singular importance, our individual worth.

We credit ourselves with our successes and blame our shortcomings on others.

O God, you love us in spite of ourselves. You made a covenant with the faithful; you have never turned away from your promise. Forgive us our selfish ways, put contrite hearts within us. Anoint us with your Holy Spirit.

Silent Prayer

Words of Assurance: (Worship Ways):

Leader: God knows our weakness and our strengths. God loves us as we are, knowing we are yet works in progress.

God keeps all covenants; God keeps us.

Receive the anointing love of God's grace. You are forgiven! Rejoice!

The Congregation's Response:

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Holy, Holy, Holy, my heart, my heart adores you!

My heart is glad to say the words: you are holy, God.

Music Offering:

UCN Choir

A Time with Children

Sermon Hymn: "Angels We Have Heard on High"

PH 116

Scripture Reading

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 (NCH 678-679)

Old Testament: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 (Lauren Howard)

New Testament: Luke 1:26-38

Sermon: "Invitation to Joy"

Rev. Jennifer Kimball

Joys and Concerns: These are the joys and concerns of the people.
Please share what you would like us to be praying for including a person's name if appropriate.

Silent Prayer: We take a minute to be in silence to await God's peace.

Pastoral Prayer: (I will pause during this prayer for those who would like to lift up loved ones by name, or other thoughts.)

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; and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

The Offering: (The Christmas Fund offering): (Worship Ways):
God sent Jesus that we may not perish but have eternal life. As we bring forth our tithes, our offerings and our gifts, we testify to the Light of the World that glows within this congregation and spreads beyond its doors. Come give with the joy made real in Christ.

The Offertory

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication: (standing, in unison): (Worship Ways):
God's steadfast love is established forever – like the moon, an enduring witness in the skies. God's faithfulness is as firm as the heavens – like stars that never grow dim. May God bless this offering that Christ's light will shine throughout the ages. Amen.

***Passing of the Peace of Christ:** "May the peace of Christ be with you."
Response: "And also with you."

Closing Hymn: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" PH 110

Brief Announcements

Benediction: (Worship Ways):

Leader: Go from this place in peace.

People: Anointed by the Holy Spirit, we go to serve in God's grace.

Leader: Go from this place in love.

People: Bathed in the light of Christ, we go to proclaim God's joy!

All: Amen!

Choral Benediction: "Amen"

UCN Choir

Postlude:

Alison Cerutti

** Denotes standing if you are able. NCH is the New Century Hymnal with a black cover. PH is the Pilgrim Hymnal with a red cover.*

Giving for December 11, 2011: Pledge Income: \$487; Plate Offering: \$3.45; Heifer Offering: \$13.20, Total Heifer \$118.93, Goal: Tree Seedlings \$180. Thank you for your faithful giving.

Please return your Stewardship pledge with Time & Talent sheets. Thank you.

Ministry of The United Church of Northfield

Ministers to the World: The Congregation

Pastor and Teacher: Reverend Jennifer Kimball

Secretary: Laura Ranker **Sexton:** Arnold Nichols

Greeters: Brenda Cruickshank and Marilyn Bruce

Ushers: Judy Knapp and Leah Knapp

Choir Leadership and Pianist/Organist: Alison Cerutti

Childcare: Julia Hatch

CONTACT INFORMATION: Reverend Jennifer Kimball
mationjm@yahoo.com or home phone number (802) 778-0813
or cell (607) 434-5632.

OFFICE HOURS: Pastor's study is located in Howe's Hall

WEDNESDAY 9:00 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.

Other Hours available by appointment.

FRIDAY - PASTOR'S DAY OFF

Church Office Phone: 485-4431

Church e-mail: uccnorthfield@trans-video.net

Visit us at our website: www.unitedchurchofnorthfield.org.

SOS webpage-Visit us at: www.unitedchurchofnorthfield.org/sos

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund helps provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy families in need, and Christmas checks to hundreds of annuitants; administered by the Pension Boards. This special mission offering of the UCC is part of Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM).

The United Church of Northfield is a member of Vermont Conference, The United Church of Christ and is affiliated with the National Unitarian Universalist Association and the Northern New England District of the UUA. Historically we are united from Congregational and Universalist roots.



THIS WEEK AT THE UNITED CHURCH

December 18th to December 25th

Meetings occur in Howe's Hall unless otherwise noted.

TODAY: 2:00 P.M. Caroling with area churches at Mayo Manor/Mayo Nursing Home. Gather in the Dining Hall at Mayo.

Mon.: NO Bible Study this week (26th) or next week (Jan. 2nd). Bible Study will resume January 8th at the home of Judy Plumley.

7:00 P.M. Men's AA Meeting

Wed.: 9:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M. CV Building Bright Futures (play group) ages birth to 6 years.

7:00 P.M. Women's 12 Step AA Meeting.

7:00 P.M. Choir rehearsal in the church Sanctuary.

Thur.: NO Boy Scout Meeting; resumes January 5th.

SAT: 7:00 P.M. Christmas Eve Candle Light Service at UCN with special music and child care provided.

Pastor Jennifer Kimball will be on vacation from December 26th through January 2nd. Please contact Deacon Bev Knox at 485-4101 in case of pastoral emergencies. Chris Southworth will lead worship on January 1st. Communion will be held on January 8th.

On January 8, 2012 Pastor Jennifer Kimball and John Kimball will join the United Church of Northfield.