



*Carmen Lomas Garza, Posada (Inn)*

*Christmas Eve*  
*Thursday, December 24, 2015*  
*6:00 pm*

# Jesus Justice Prayer Peace

\* Indicates to rise in body or spirit

**Organ Concert**

Christian Marquess

**Prelude**

Hammered Dulcimer - Bonney Brown

**Welcome**

**Call to Worship**

**One:** Come away, come away, come today to Bethlehem.

Congregation: Come adore on bended knee, one whose birth the angels sing.

**One:** Come away, come away, from your noisy celebration to a place of quietness and peace.

**Congregation:** *Come with wonder. Come with awe. Take your place among the sheep, and cattle.*

**One:** Come sing with joy! The time of promise has come!

**All:** *Come away, come away, come today to Bethlehem*

**\*Hymn #135**

“O Come, All You Faithful”

**Lighting of the Christ Candle**

Calvin Allen & Maria Fire

**One voice:** Our time to wait is over. Christmas is here. We come here this evening as God’s people to celebrate again what Christ’s coming means to the world. We join with Christians all over the world who are celebrating tonight.

**One voice:** “And the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord” (Luke 2: 10-11).

**One voice:** Our circle of Advent candles is lit; tonight we light the central candle, reminding us that Christ is the light of the world, the center of our lives, the shining beacon of hope for all the universe. Christ is born. Praise God!

*(The congregation responds by singing, “Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo!”)*

## Sharing the Christmas Story

“All Paths Lead to Bethlehem”

Rev. Margot Pickett

*(All children are invited to come sit on the chancel steps to listen to the story.)*

### # 133 O Little Town of Bethlehem (verses 1 & 2)

Christmas in Syria

Linda Burke

### #133 O Little Town of Bethlehem (verses 3 & 4)

Christmas in England

Colin Covell

### #132 Joy to the World

Christmas in France

Megan Worrell-Lupton

### #125 Angels We Have Heard on High

Christmas in Jamaica

Yolanda Adams

**The Virgin Mary Had a Baby** West Indian Spiritual      Guitar: Larry Burke

*The Virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
The Virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
The Virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
And they say that his name is Jesus.*

*Refrain:*

*He came from the glory,  
He came from the glorious  
kingdom.*

*He came from the glory,  
He came from the glorious  
kingdom.*

*Oh yes, believer!*

*Oh yes, believer!*

*He came from the glory,*

*He came from the glorious  
kingdom.*

*The angels sang when the baby born,  
The angels sang when the baby born,  
The angels sang when the baby born,  
And proclaimed him the Savior Jesus.*

*Refrain*

*The wise men saw where the baby born,  
The wise men saw where the baby born,  
The wise men saw where the baby born,  
And they say that his name was Jesus*

*Refrain*

Christmas in Appalachia

Matthew Graham

I Wonder as I Wander

*(printed in bulletin at end of worship order)*

#129 Good Christian Friends Rejoice

**Call for the Offering**

**One voice:** On this holy night we celebrate the precious gift that God has given us.

**Many voices:** *Like shepherds who first heard the news from angels, and astrologers who foresaw the birth in the stars, we come tonight in wonder and praise, bringing our gifts to the Christ child, too.*

**Offertory**

**Prayer of Dedication**

**We Gather at the Lord's Table**

Gathering around the table as we celebrate new life borning,  
we remember so many stories shared around tables;  
tables where bread is broken and drinks are poured,  
where families gather and generations share,  
where stories are remembered, refined, reshaped.

Gathering around the table on this holy night,  
we remember the story of the sacred daring to share our life,  
the story of the holy taking on human flesh and dwelling among us,  
a story that is at once both ethereal and earthly.

Gathering around the table on this Christmas Eve,  
we break the bread and remember the paradox  
that it is in our brokenness that we become whole;  
we fill this cup and remember the abundance that is  
discovered in each new sharing of our sacred stories.

Together, around the table, we pray:

***Come, Holy Spirit, come.***

***Bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine.***

***Bless all of us in our eating and drinking  
that our eyes might be opened,***

*that we might recognize the Spirit rising in our midst indeed, in one another.*

*Come, Holy Spirit, come.*

### **Bread and wine**

On this night, we remember what our tradition says: at the end of a journey, among friends, gathered around a table, Jesus took bread, said a blessing, and broke it, saying, 'This is the bread of life, given to sustain the people of the world'.

*(The bread is broken)*

**All:** *Let us share this bread and be strengthened to bring grace and mercy to our broken world.*

Later Jesus poured a cup of wine, blessed it and said, 'This is the cup of life, given to sustain the people of the world'.

*(The wine is poured)*

**All:** *Let us share this cup in solidarity with all the peoples of the world, daring to believe peace and justice may prevail everywhere.*

### **Sharing the Bread and Wine**

*All are welcome at this table. Please come down the center aisle, take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, and return by one of the side aisles. Each station has a gluten free option. The dark liquid is wine, the lighter liquid is juice.*

*If you are in the balcony, a communion station will be available to you there.*

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**One:** Let us give thanks that we could share in this meal. May it remind us that we are part of a huge company of people throughout history and around the globe seeking to bring grace and peace into our world. May it sustain us in our desire to be followers of Jesus in our own time and place.

**All:** *We give you thanks, Mighty and Mysterious God for granting us your presence in this meal and in the birth of Jesus. Increase your love and compassion in our hearts. Strengthen our faith and our resolve that we may serve a suffering world with renewed energy,*

*courage, and determination. And may peace be our portion and the portion of all who live on this small planet which we call home. Through Jesus Christ whose birth we celebrate this evening, Amen.*

### **Silent Night**

*Candles are lit aisle by aisle*

*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.*

*(hold your candle up for 3<sup>rd</sup> verse.)*

*Silent night, holy night, Child of God, love's pure light.  
Radiant beams from your holy face bring the dawn of redeeming grace; Jesus Christ at your birth, Jesus Christ at your birth.*

### **Responsive Benediction**

**Leader:** Gabriel foretold it.

**People:** *The angels heralded it.*

**Leader:** The shepherds came to see for themselves.

**People:** *The magi bowed in worship.*

**Leader:** And it is true. God is with us through Jesus Christ, the baby born in Bethlehem and our resurrected Lord.

**People:** *The world will never be the same; we ourselves will never be the same.*

**Leader:** Go then and tell the world—  
Jesus Christ is born!

**ALL:** *Merry Christmas!*



Nativity Scene, He Qi, China

# I Wonder as I Wander

*Appalachian Carol*  
John Jacob Niles

I WONDER AS I WANDER *Irregular*  
John Jacob Niles  
Harm. by John Ferguson, 1973

Unison Gm Cm

1. I won-der as I wan-der, out un-der the sky, How  
 2. When Mar-y birthed Je-sus, 'twas in a cow's stall, With  
 3. If Je-sus had want-ed for an-y wee thing, A  
 4. I won-der as I wan-der, out un-der the sky, How

Gm D7 Gm

Je-sus the Sav-ior did come for to die For  
 wise men and farm-ers and shep-herds and all. But  
 star in the sky or a bird on the wing, Or  
 Je-sus the Sav-ior did come for to die For

Gm G

poor ord'-nary peo-ple like you and like I; I  
 high from God's heav-en a star's light did fall, The  
 all of God's an-gels in heav'n for to sing, He  
 poor ord'-nary peo-ple like you and like I; I

Gm Gm Cm

won-der as I wan-der, out un-der the sky.  
 prom-ise of a-ges it did then re-call.  
 sure-ly could have it, 'cause he was the King.  
 won-der as I wan-der, out un-der the sky.

Welcome! WE ARE...

*AN LGBT OPEN and AFFIRMING Congregation of the United Church of Christ  
and a Just Peace Church.*

*We are a progressive, risk-taking Christian faith community.*

*We follow the way of Jesus as the Christ and are welcome, open, and affirming to all.*

*We believe God is vibrant, alive, and still speaking to us!*

*We believe that God encourages us to engage the world through acts of mercy, peace, and justice.*

**First Congregational  
UCC is located at 20 Oak  
Street in downtown  
Asheville.** Please send all mail  
to PO Box 3211 Asheville, NC  
28802

**[www.uccasheville.org](http://www.uccasheville.org)**

**828-252-8729**

**Please join us  
Sunday mornings for  
adult Sunday School at  
9:15 and Worship at  
10:30!**

**For Today's Service**

**Greeters and Ushers:** Jim  
Rutherford, Beaver Wyatt, Randall  
Bowman, Mary Kancevitch  
Sharon Stepp (Handicap Door)

**Communion Prep:** Matt Graham and  
Calvin Allen

**Communion Servers:** Terry Kaeser,  
Jacque Wuelling, Holly Sutter, Amy  
Davis, Julie Everett, Judy Slater



*J K Richards*