

The Congregational Church of Salisbury  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



**PRELUDE**

*Oratorio de Noël, Op. 12*

Camille Saint-Saëns

**WELCOME**

⌘ **HYMN #104**

“O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?”

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

(⌘ *The congregation may rise, in body or in spirit.*)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS | JOYS AND CONCERNS | SILENT PRAYER**

**THE ADVENT WREATH** (from Isaiah 7:10-16)

Angela Lomanto and Dave Heck

ONE: Come. The days are long, the nights are longer.

If you are tired, seek a sign of God.

**ALL: Can a sign make it all better?**

Come. Here are honey and bread for comfort.

**Waiting for God’s fulfillment can be discouraging.**

Come. Here is the promise of Immanuel, God-With-Us,  
who is Love’s Own Self.

**Pay attention to the signs.**

Come: God knows that we need a sign.

Be prepared and welcome the signs —

in words, in music, in the gathering of friends and neighbors,

in the flicker of candlelight.

*Four Advent candles are lit*

## RESPONSE IN SONG

## “Light the Candles”



1. Light one can-dle to watch for Messi - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness. Mes-
2. Light two can-dles to watch for Messi - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness. Mes-
3. Light three can-dles to watch for Messi - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
4. Light four can-dles to watch for Messi - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness. Mes-



-si - ah shall bring new hope to the peo - ple: God ful - fills the prom - ise.  
-si - ah shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.  
Lift up your heads and lift high the gate-way for the ru-ler of glo - ry.  
-si - ah is com - ing: tell the glad ti - dings! Let your lights be shin - ing.

*TEXT: Wayne L. Wold, 1984, adapt. Music: Yiddish folk song, arr. Wayne L. Wold, 1984.  
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## CALL TO RECONCILIATION

How easily we lose our way on the road to Bethlehem! How quick we are to miss — or dismiss — the dreams our God has for us in this holy season. Let us approach the One who is approaching us, ready to swaddle us in forgiveness and grace, as we pray together, saying,

## UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

**Come now, Reconciler of the nations:**

**for our world, our lives, need your love now, as much as ever.**

**Come, Caller to discipleship:**

**for we aspire to follow, in spite of our fears and fatigue.**

**Come, Word-Gifter:**

**for we hunger to hear your voice once again, and always.**

**Come, Silence of our nights and Holiness of our hearts, and forgive us:**

**for turning your compassion into commercials;**

**your joy into jingles, your hope into hollow words;**

**your love into longing for the short-lasting offerings of the world.**

**May we find our way to the One born simply, born gracefully, for us –**

**Jesus, the Child of wonder, love’s own self.**

*(Silence is kept)*

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ONE: We may not notice them there, at the back of the pile of presents, but there they are!: God's love and light, the true gifts we receive each and every moment.

**ALL: We give thanks to our gracious God, who has forgiven us and blessed us. Amen!**

## RESPONSE IN SONG

“Until Jesus Comes”



Un-til Je-sus comes, un-til Je-sus comes, I'll be watch-ing and  
wait-ing un-til Je-sus comes. Un-til Je-sus comes, un-til Je-sus  
comes, I'll be watch-ing and wait-ing un-til Je - sus comes.

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## RESPONSIVE PSALTER: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

ONE: Give ear, O Shepherd of the people,

**ALL: You who lead the divided people like a single flock!**

You who are enthroned above all creation,

**Shine forth,**

**Before the scattered tribes.**

Awaken Your might, and come to save us!

Restore us, O God, to Your goodwill;

**Let Your face shine upon us,**

**That we may live.**

O Holy One, God Almighty,

How long will You fume

Against Your people's prayers?

**You have fed them with the bread of sorrow,**

**And given them bitter tears to drink.**

You make us a source of discord to our neighbors;

**Our enemies deride us.**

**Restore us, O God Almighty;**

Let Your face shine upon us,

That we may live.

**Let Your hand rest upon the one at Your side,**

**The one You nurtured for Yourself.**

We will never turn back from You;

Revive us that we may continue to appeal to You, in Your constancy.

**Restore us, O God Almighty;**

Let Your face shine upon us,

**That we may live.**

## A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

### THE LORD'S PRAYER (*debts/debtors*)

*Hymnal, p. 35*

✕ **HYMN** (insert)

**"Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear"**

RESONET IN LAUDIBUS

*All attending Sunday School may leave as we sing the hymn.*



1. "Gen - tle Jo - seph, Jo - seph dear, stay with me, for the  
2. "Glad - ly Mar - y, Mar - y mine, I will cra - dle the  
3. "Peace to all and God's good - will," heaven and earth with this



ba - by's near; God will sure - ly your good - ness hear, as  
child di - vine; Here will heav - en and earth com - bine, for  
song will fill; Soon will God, in the eve - ning still, be



you will love this new - born child," says Mar - y.  
you will bear God's child, O dear - est Mar - y."  
born in Beth - le - hem, the child of Mar - y.

*Refrain*

God came a - mong us at Christ - mas - time, at  
 Christ - mas - time, in Beth - le - hem; let us bring him from  
 far and wide: Love's di - a - dem. Je - sus, Je - sus,  
 lo, he comes, and loves, and saves, and frees us!

14th century German carol  
 Paraphrase by Carol Birkland, 1993

## OFFERTORY

### THE LIGHT OF SERVICE

*Offerings not specifically designated for the Church (including any checks with “Light of Service” or “LOS” in the memo line) will be given to an organization doing compassionate work that complements our church’s mission. This week, we share our gifts with **Salisbury Housing Trust** and **Salisbury Housing Committee**.*

ONE: God has poured gifts into our lives; we now return our tithes and offerings.

**ALL: Let us gather our gifts with grateful praise,  
 and offer them to God’s purposes.**

### RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

*Our church welcomes every size gift, and thanks you for your generosity.*

### ANTHEM

from *Magnificat*

G.B. Pergolesi

Magnificat anima mea Dominum,  
 et exultavit spiritus meus  
 in Deo salutari meo,

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
 my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,*

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae: *Who has looked favorably on His humble servant:*

ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent  
omnes generationes.

*From this day all generations  
will call me blessed.*

Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est, et  
sanctum nomen eius.

*The Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is His Name.*

✠ **DOXOLOGY**

OLD 100<sup>TH</sup>

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise Christ, all people here below;  
praise Holy Spirit ever more;  
One God of grace, whom we adore! Amen.**

✠ **UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**O Resident of all the insignificant places of our world, may our gifts be  
joined with those of our sisters and brothers to offer grace to the  
lonely, to bring hope to those who despair, and to plant peace in the  
fields of war and weariness. This we pray in the name of Jesus: Amen.**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

Matthew 1:18-25  
Isaiah 7:10-16

*New Testament p. 1  
Old Testament p. 778*

**SERMON**

“Constructing Christmas”

Pastor John A. Nelson

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

✠ **HYMN #107**

“Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn”

REJOICE, REJOICE

**BENEDICTION and SUNG AMEN**

**POSTLUDE**

*Mary, Did You Know?*

Arr. Mark Hayes



**Welcome to Church!**

Gathered in 1744, the Congregational Church of Salisbury is an Open and Affirming member of the United Church of Christ, in a “net zero” building powered by clean energy.

Our church is also a welcoming home to people from a great variety of church backgrounds and life experiences. Your presence is a gift to us! We hope you will feel God's Spirit here today through our worship and fellowship.

*We seek to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds and love our neighbors as ourselves. This Church is **Open** to all for participation, membership, leadership and employment regardless of race, ancestry, class, gender identity, physical and mental ability or sexual orientation. We **Affirm** each individual as a child of God, celebrating the total identity of each person.*

*As an **Open and Affirming** Congregation, we commit to work toward ending ignorance, fear, hatred, prejudice, and discrimination against any person.*

*Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!*

If you are visiting us, Welcome! Please sign our guest book and introduce yourself to our Pastor or to one of the Deacons. Fill out a welcome card in the pew to join our email list.

**Kindly set phones to silent (unless you're expecting a call from Jesus).**

## Today's Worship Leaders

*Ushers: Anne Williams & Joanne Taber Reader: Janet Kaufman • Deacon: Pat Palmer  
Fellowship host: Youth Group*

*Thanks to Rosanne Lamson and Janet Kaufman, for arranging the poinsettias.*

Today's liturgy is adapted and reprinted from *Lectionary Liturgies* by the Rev. Thom Shuman © 2025 (lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com); used by permission.

Psalm adapted from *The Psalms in Worship*, Mary Susan Gast, © 2002; used by permission.

## Our Ministry Team

**Ministers:** All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

**Music Director:** David Baranowski

**Bell Choir Director:** Mary Davidson

**Sunday School Coordinator:** Holly Tierney

**Sunday School Assistant:** Stephanie Tierney

**Youth Group Leader:** Dan Baker

**Youth Group Assistant:** Sarah Lesch

**Church Administrator:** Catherine Chatham

**Sexton:** Richard Tietjen

**Church Officers:** Charlie Noyes, *moderator*;  
Janet Offensend, *treasurer*; Liz Wing, *clerk*

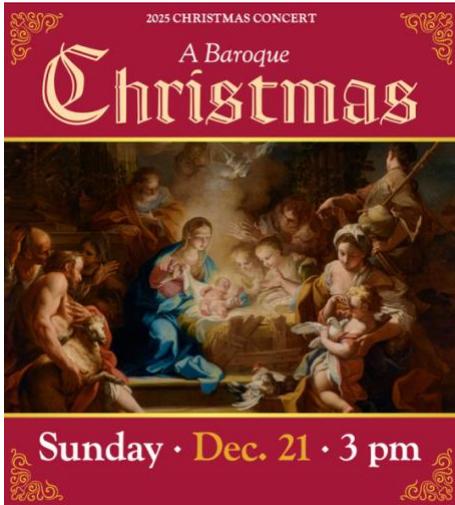
**Pastor and Teacher:** The Rev. Dr. John A. Nelson

## This Week at Salisbury UCC

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### SUNDAY, 21 DECEMBER

10AM Worship and Sunday School  
11:10AM Christmas Pageant  
3PM Christmas Concert



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### MONDAY, 22 DECEMBER

11:30AM Duplicate Bridge Club

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### WEDNESDAY, 24 DECEMBER

#### CHRISTMAS EVE

5:30PM Handbell Choir Prelude  
6PM Service of Lessons and Carols

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### THURSDAY, 25 DECEMBER

**CHRISTMAS DAY** — Church offices closed

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### FRIDAY, 26 DECEMBER

Church offices closed

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### SUNDAY, 28 DECEMBER

10AM Worship led by the Board of Deacons  
and Sunday School



*Please Recycle this Bulletin!*



The Congregational Church of Salisbury

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*Meeting in Grace • Transformed by Love • Serving with Joy*

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Office Hours: 8:30am – 1:30pm • Monday, Tuesday, Friday