

# Christmastide Commitments Sunday, December 26, 2010



225 East Exchange Street  
Spring Lake, Michigan 49456  
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*We are an inclusive spiritual community  
with an open exchange of ideas.  
Whether your background includes a  
chapel, mosque, synagogue or no faith at all,  
you have found your spiritual home.*

C3 is an open and affirming spiritual community. We are grateful to have you with us today. We invite you to introduce yourself to a staff member or Community Life Council host. Welcome!

**Ian Lawton**  
*Executive Minister, Teaching and  
Theological Inquiry*

**Bob Kleinheksel**  
*Minister of Care and Community Life*

**Ted Poulton**  
*Director of Administration*

**Brad Vander Ark**  
*Audio/Visual and Online Ministry*

**Roger Schuring**  
*Facility Maintenance*

**Kim Bazy**  
*Youth Program*

**Marsha Mason**  
*Children's Program*

**Cheryl Van Abbema**  
*Activities Coordinator*

**Malea Nicolet**  
*Communications and Membership*

**Barb Kelly**  
*Nursery Care*

**Brian Drabczyk**  
*Sound Technician*

Office Reception Hours  
Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Building Hours  
Monday - Thursday 7:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.

## Gathering Music

Variations on O Come, All Ye Faithful

**Betty Van Till**  
*- arr. R. Taylor*

## Welcome and News of the Community

## Musical Expression

Promises to Keep

*- Trans-Siberian Orchestra's "Christmas Eve and Other Stories"*

**Julia Yob**

*Christmas time on a cold December morning  
All is calm, and the world is still asleep  
Christmas lights that have been caught without warning  
Gently glitter on stars to wish upon  
All the world is at peace.*

*Christmas time and the year will soon be leaving  
Cloaked in time 'til it's just a memory  
Christmas stays if we don't forget its meaning  
Days go quickly by; years they multiply  
And we go searching for thee.*

*And the dream is still alive  
From that first December morning  
And it always will survive  
As long as we can see  
That the dreams we find in life  
Are the dreams we tend to seek  
And Christmas has its promises to keep.*

*Christmas time and the moment's just beginning  
From last night when we'd wished upon a star  
And if this kindness we feel is just pretending  
If we pretend long enough, never giving up  
It just might be who we are.*

## Participants:

### **Teacher and Liturgist**

Bob Kleinheksel

### **Musicians**

Betty Van Till  
Julia Yob

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### **Sound booth**

Brian Drabczyk

### **Video Cameras**

Brad Vander Ark

### **Ushers**

Wayne Johnson - Captain  
Joe Miller  
Debbie Gianetti  
Alice Lyons  
Sara Yob  
David Miller  
Betty Porter  
Hugo Lawton  
Kate Remlinger

*The white team ushers next Sunday.*

### We appreciate your offering

This is a community-led organization that relies primarily on the support of individuals. Donation envelopes are available in the pews. For your convenience, we invite you to join the vast majority of our members who give regularly via automatic checking withdrawal, credit card, and online donations. Indicate your interest on a white pew card and place it in the offering plate and our office will contact you. **Your generosity makes the work of this community possible.**



## **Gathering Words**

**One:** We clap hands and welcome the Peace of Christmas.

We beckon this good season to wait a while with us.

We, Baptist and Buddhist, Methodist and Muslim, say come.

Peace. Come and fill us and our world with your majesty.

We the Jew and the Jainist, the Catholic and the Confucian,

Implore you, to stay a while with us,

So we may learn by your shimmering light

How to look beyond complexion and see community.

**All: Peace, My Brother. Peace, My Sister. Peace, My Soul.**

**One:** We, Angels and Mortals, Believers and Non-Believers,

Look heavenward and speak the word aloud.

Peace. We look at our world and speak the word aloud.

Peace. We look at each other, then into ourselves

And we say without shyness or apology or hesitation.

**All: Peace, My Brother. Peace, My Sister. Peace, My Soul.**

*- Amazing Peace: A Christmas Poem, by Dr. Maya Angelou*

## **\*Congregational Carol**

Now Is the Season of the Year

*- Words by Bridgett Payne, Tune: 19th Century English Carol*

Now is the season of the year, in which we celebrate the birth of one who taught that love has pow'r to cast out hate, who through his life gave all of us example good and great.

O, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;

O, tidings of comfort and joy.

Not we alone, the sages all, the same great truth declare, that if we work in harmony and have the will to dare, then we can make life paradise and all of life more fair.

O, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;

O, tidings of comfort and joy.

Then let us join in amity, with all who live on earth, for everyone the world around is born of equal worth, and if with love we share our lives then sorrow turns to mirth.

O, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;

O, tidings of comfort and joy.

## **Children's Time**

**Connie Farell**

## **Readings**

**Linda Bengston**

This is the good news about Jesus. It began just as it was written in the book of Isaiah: "I am sending a messenger to get the way ready for you. In the desert, someone is shouting, get the road ready for the Lord. Make a straight path for him." So John the Baptist showed up in the desert and told everyone, "Turn back to God and be baptized! Then your sins will be forgiven. John also told the people, "Someone more powerful is going to come. And I am not good enough even to stoop down and untie his sandals. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

*- Mark 1:1-4; 7-8*

We began with the Enlightenment to think that ancient peoples ("other" peoples) told dumb, literal stories that we were now smart enough to recognize as such. Not quite. Those ancient people told smart, metaphorical stories that we were now dumb enough to take literally.

*- John Dominic Crossan, A Long Way from Tipperary p. 148*

The Christmas story is not the literal account it seems to be on the surface; it is about the birth, in the heart of every human being, of the Christ. It is a supreme telling of the central myth of all religion - the incarnation of the divine into human flesh.

- Tom Harpur, *The Pagan Christ, Is Blind Faith Killing Christianity*, p. 143

## \*Congregational Carol

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

- Mendelssohn

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 in the skies;  
With angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Come, Desire of nations, come, fix in us Thy humble home;  
Oh, to all Thyself impart, formed in each believing heart!  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King;"  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!"

## Meditation

Bob Kleinheksel

## Musical Expression

Julia Yob

Who is This Child?

- Trans-Siberian Orchestra's Beethoven's Last Night

*Who is this child that I've never seen before?  
Who is this child that I've not seen till this day?  
Who dares to fall asleep outside my door?  
If we should wait a while I'm sure she'll go away*

*To be involved with this would surely not be wise  
For in the final word she means nothing to me  
I learned the trick is that we just avoid her eyes  
And the question what she means to...*

*What is this life? There will be other lives  
Soon to arrive surely some will survive  
She is but one and there are many more  
Each the same as any other*

*Who is this child? What does she mean to me?  
I close my eyes and still her face I see  
She is but one her kind is everywhere  
Can't you see there's no way I should care?*

*I need a moment now I have to clear my mind  
Is there a limit Lord just to being kind?  
There is no way in life that each child can be saved  
Should I be looking with regret at every grave*

## Today

9:00 a.m. - Awakenings

9:00 a.m. - Coffee & Conversation

10:00 a.m. - Gathering

The C3Exchange offices will be closed on Monday, December 27.

## Fellowship in the Parlor

We encourage you to engage and exchange your stories and conversations in the parlor where you'll find beautiful artwork from our talented C3 community, relevant and intriguing books, DVD's of teachings, music, and coffee and refreshments to refuel you.

## The Newcomer Nook

If you are newly attending C3 or visiting today, please find the Newcomer Nook in the Lobby. You may pick up our latest news, learn more about C3Exchange, and be WELCOMED into this affirming community.

## What's Happening?

What happens outside of Sunday gatherings? LOTS! Visit us at [www.c3exchange.org](http://www.c3exchange.org), and via Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/c3xchange>.

## Upcoming Gatherings

**Universal Values** - In January we will look at universal values through the eyes of different spiritual traditions. This is not interfaith dialogue in the sense of comparing and contrasting traditions; rather it is an attempt to live more peaceful lives and build a more peaceful world, while looking to different traditions for inspiration. Some of these universal values include unity, compassion, cycles, action and balance.

January 9 - Balance

January 16 - Cycles

January 23 - Surrender

January 30 - Expectation

February 6 - Integrity

## Upcoming Musical Guests

January 9 - Checkers Morton, Kathy LaMar

January 16 - Julia Yob

January 23 - Tony Reynolds

January 30 - Kathy LaMar and Bob Van Stee

February 6 - Tony Reynolds

C3 is an inclusive spiritual community  
connected by a sense of mystery  
and love that many call God.  
Inclusive grace moves us to  
embrace all with unconditional love  
and gracious acceptance, celebrating  
ethnicity, gender, age,  
and sexual orientation.  
We honor all spiritual paths, and celebrate  
the universal truths such as  
peace and unity  
found in all traditions.  
Please join us as we strive for greater  
love and peace in the world  
inspired by Jesus and social activists  
through the centuries who  
challenged the status quo.  
Join us to be the change we wish to see in  
the world, respecting earth's patterns,  
and honoring wellness in its many forms.  
We are a community of open  
mind and warm heart,  
valuing the human journey,  
where all are encouraged  
to honor their minds and  
unique spiritual path,  
ask questions in good company,  
and embrace the peace  
of inner wholeness.  
We invite all to join us in this exciting  
adventure of humanity.

## Reflection

The Born Again Myth

Bob Kleinheksel

## Community Offering

Gloria in Excelsis Deo

Betty Van Till  
- arr. R. Seward

## \*Congregational Carol

O Come all ye Faithful

- John Francis Wade

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,  
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord

Yea, Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning,  
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,  
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord

Sing, choir 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,  
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord

## \*Affirmation

Be devoted to truths, the eternal lessons of love and how bridges are built between people and nations. Let go of trying to find all the facts, especially if they are unknown or elusive. Be aware of and celebrate what is born in you today!

**Say together:** I commit to living out my true essence, my fullest wonder...to be gentle, kind and fair with all I meet.

## \*Musical for Celebration

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Betty Van Till  
- arr. Alfred Fedak