



Central Reformed Church
10 College Avenue NE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
616.456.1773
centralreformedchurch.org

Central Reformed Church
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2024
7:00 p.m.

Connecting all people to God and to one another through scripture, sacrament, song, and service.

REFLECTION

For those who believe in the transcendence and total otherness of God, it radically diminishes him. For those who do not believe in God, it is the ultimate absurdity. For those who stand somewhere between belief and unbelief, it challenges credulity in a new way. It is not a theory that can be tested rationally because it is beyond reason and it is not a theory, not something theologians have thought their way to. The claim is, instead, that it is something that has happened, and reason itself is somehow tested by it, humankind's whole view of what is possible and real. Year after year the ancient tale of what happened is told—raw, preposterous, holy—and year after year the world in some measure stops to listen.

Frederick Buechner
"Emmanuel" from *A Room Called Remember*

Sources and Credits:

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"Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" J. S. Bach, arr. Dan R. Edwards; commissioned by the Central Handbell Choir in honor of Robert and Jane Dykstra in 2003.
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CENTRAL REFORMED CHURCH
PRESENTS

NEW YEAR'S EVE CONCERT

FEATURING CONCERT ORGANIST
CHRISTOPHER HOULIHAN

Music of J.S. Bach, Louis Vierne, Jonathan Dove, and more...



December 31, 2024 | 7:30 p.m.

Free Admission | Ample Parking Space

10 College Avenue NE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
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Christopher Houlihan is represented in North America exclusively
by Phillip Truckenbrod Artists, LLC | www.concertartists.com

This concert is cosponsored by the Grand Rapids Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

"WHAT CHILD IS THIS"

Em G D Em Am B

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, pea - sant, king, to own him.

Em G D Em B Esus Em

Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

Bm G D Em Am B

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;

Bm G D Em B Esus Em

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 hail, hail for Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y.

Words: William C. Dix (1837-1898), P.D.
 Music (GREENSLEEVES 8.7.8.7.6.8.6.7): English ballad, 16th c., P.D.



ORDER OF WORSHIP | CHRISTMAS EVE | DECEMBER 24, 2024 | 7:00 P.M.

GATHERING IN LOVE

The prelude is a call for personal preparation for the worship of God.

- Prelude** "Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella" | Traditional French Carol, arr. Matt Hyzer
 "O Holy Night" | Adolphe Adam, arr. Stephen DeCeare
 "The Coventry Carol" | Traditional Carol, arr. Brad Nix
 "Sing We Now of Christmas" | Traditional French Carol, arr. Lee Dengler
 "In the Bleak Midwinter / Away in a Manger" | William Baron
 "Silent Night" | Franz Gruber, arr. Robert Ivey
- *Processional Hymn** "Once in Royal David's City" | 49, v. 1 soloist; interlude; congregation standing for v. 2, 3, 4
- *The Bidding Prayer**
- *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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.
- *Bidding Carol** "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" | 28
- *The Peace**
 One: The peace of the Lord be always with you.
 Many: **And also with you.**

**Please stand in body or in spirit.*

LISTENING IN EXPECTATION

First Lesson	God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. Genesis 3:8-15
Anthem	"Christ the Appletree" Stanford Scriven <i>The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green; the trees of nature fruitless be, compared with Christ the appletree.</i> <i>This beauty doth all things excel, by faith I know but ne'er can tell the glory which I now can see, in Jesus Christ the appletree.</i> <i>For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought; I missed of all but now I see 'tis found in Christ the appletree.</i> <i>This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive; which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the appletree.</i> <i>I'm weary'd with my former toil, here I will sit and rest awhile, under the shadow I will be of Jesus Christ the appletree.</i>
Second Lesson	God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed. Genesis 22:15-18
Hymn	"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" 9
Third Lesson	Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah. Isaiah 9:2, 6-7
*Carol	"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" 31
Fourth Lesson	The prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem. Micah 5:2-4
Carol	"O Little Town of Bethlehem" 44 (v. 1, 2, 4)
Fifth Lesson	The angel Gabriel salutes the virgin Mary. Luke 1:26-38
Hymn	"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" 2



POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS

GIVEN BY

Bea Nagel

Ken & Bonnie Noorman

John & Nancy Norden

Helen E. Phillips

The Shults Family

Tom & Lisa Smith

Jim & Terry Sporte

Stu & Kathy Stewart

Tom & Vivian TerMaat and family

Stephen Timmer & Paul Bukaweski

Patsy & Paul Troost

Burt & Kathy VanderLaan

Ethan & Angela Wheeler

The Witmer Family

David Wright

IN MEMORY OF

John & Clara Nagel
Marty Nagel & Ellie Haverkamp

Our parents

Jim & Helena Riekse
Jim Riekse Jr.
Marshall & Patricia Norden

Mom, Dad & Barb

Our grandparents

Bob Dykstra, Mary Anne Smith,
Carole Van'tHof
Roger Winkels

George & Louise Skar
John & Nell Sporte

Lauren Stewart

Richard TerMaat

John & Kathy Timmer
Ellen Bukaweski

Paul & Jean Troost
Elke Walswoorth

Our parents

Great grandparents: Steve & Anna Berklan;
Van Moore
Grandparents: Charles & Margaret Wheeler;
Albert & Grace Singleton; Sharon Pondel;
Steve & Lorraine Berklan;
Parents: David and Karen Wheeler;
Uncles: Gary Pondel, Tim Pondel, Charles
Wheeler & Raymund Singleton;
All of our loved ones near & far & our entire
church family.

Martin & Nancy Bolt

Don Drior, J.G. & Syble Wright

*A most sincere thank-you for the generosity of those who contributed to the splendor of our Sanctuary with the purchase of Christmas flowers. **Please** take your plant(s) home following the Christmas Eve Candlelight service.*





POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS

GIVEN BY

Brian & Jennifer Andrew

Dan Ballast

Willa Brown

Nancy & Ron Hager

Helen E. Phillips

Rick and Janice Overway

Steve & Monica Pierce

Tom & Lisa Smith

Paul & Patsy Troost

Jack VanHouten

IN HONOR OF

Emma & Owen Andrew

My family: Linda, Brad & Matt

My grandchildren: Justin, Mark,
Oscar, Simon, Gabe, Arden & Jan

Ava, Roman, Adelaide, Delilah, Colvin

Caleb; Liam & Barbara; Owain & Rhys;
Ashley, Anna & Lindsey; Ian; Elizabeth
& Benjamin

Our kids & grandkids

Our children- Campbell, Leighton & Graham

Nathan & Allison

Ann & Paul Collin Trost
Sydney Troost & Josh Everingham

Sue VanHouten

GIVEN BY

David & Ruth Brouwer

Willa Brown

Carol & Ellen Bylsma

Ingrid Gerger

Martha Norden-Harvey

The Hoezee Family

The Keizer Family

Bill & Pat Mills

Gary & Faye Myers and Family

IN MEMORY OF

Al & Phyllis Brouwer & Irv and Norma Lemmen

George Brown, Jr. & Sarah Brown

Peter G. Bylsma

Ed Gerger

My father, Rev. Russell L. Norden

Edward Hoezee
Morrie & Sylvia Tubergen

Tom Keizer

Our parents

Harvey & Ella DeGood
Maynard & Evelyn Myers
Patricia Dickenson & Harvey J. DeGood



Sixth Lesson

Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-23

Carol

"What Child Is This" | see end of order

Seventh Lesson

The shepherds go to the manger.

Luke 2:8-16

Anthem

"Torches" | John Joubert

*Torches, torches, run with torches all the way to Bethlehem!
Christ is born and now lies sleeping; come and sing your song to him!
Torches, torches, run with torches all the way to Bethlehem!
Christ is born and now lies sleeping; come and sing your song to him!*

*Ah, Roro, Roro, my baby, ah, Roro, my love, Roro;
Sleep you well, my heart's own darling, while we sing you our Roro.
Sing, my friends, and make you merry, joy and mirth and joy again;
Lo, he lives, the King of heaven now and evermore. Amen.*

*Carol

"Angels We Have Heard on High" | 23

Eighth Lesson

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Matthew 2:1-11

Carol

"The First Nowell" | 56 (v. 1, 3, 5)

Ninth Lesson

John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation.

John 1:1-14

The Christmas Sermon

Anthem

"Sussex Carol" | Traditional, arr. Dale Wood

*On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the news the angels bring,
news of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.*

*Then why should we on earth be so sad since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty?*

*When sin departs before his grace, then life and health come in its place,
angels rejoice with us and sing, all for to see the newborn King.*

*All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night,
"Glory to God and peace on earth, now and forever more, Amen."*

RESPONDING IN FAITH

Reflection

When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among people,
to make music in the heart.

—Howard Thurman

Silent Meditation

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life’” (John 8:12). The light of our Lord shines through us wherever we go. By lighting candles, we are reminded of the many gifts he gives us, especially the “light of life.” We invite you to pass the light from the Christ Candle to the person at the end of each pew, then down the pew. Dip only the unlit candle when lighting from your neighbor’s candle. Please hold burning candles upright. Children may participate with their parents’ permission.

Carol

“Silent Night” | Franz Xaver Gruber

Choir:

*Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht. Alles schläft; einsam wacht;
Nur das traute hochheilige Paar. Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh, Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!*

(the congregation will stand at the interlude)

***All:**

**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.”**

**Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace.
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

**Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.**

*The Christmas Blessing

One: May the song of the angels, the joy of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ child be with you tonight and always. Merry Christmas!

Many: **Merry Christmas!**

*Carol

“O Come All Ye Faithful” | 41 (v. 1 and 3)

Postlude

“Finale on ‘Vom Himmel hoch’” | Walter L Pelz

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Principal Organist: Norma de Waal Malefyt

Director of Music Ministries: Taemin Han

Cellist: Martin Werner

Violinist: Sara Witmer

Flutist: Jodi MacLean

Pianist: William Baron

Celebration Ringers

Chancel Choir

Liturgist: Pastor Matt Shults

Readers: Bill Mills, Jess Shults, Ingrid TerMaat,

Willa Brown, Helen Phillips, Patsy Troost,

Brian Andrew, Sally Bulthuis

Preacher: Pastor Steve D. Pierce

Video Tech: Michael Beachy

Sound Tech: Tom Smith

WELCOME

This Sunday: Thank you for joining us for worship tonight! Join us this coming Sunday, December 29 for worship at 10:00 am. Live Stream will be available. Pastor Matt Shults will be preaching on the subject, “The Great Antiphons: O Morning Star” based on Revelation 22:15-17 and Romans 13:11-14. We look forward to seeing you this Sunday!

Stewardship: Your financial gifts help Central fulfill its mission of connecting all people to God and to one another. As your situation allows, please consider a gift to Central. Offering baskets have been placed by the sanctuary doors. Gifts given tonight will be given to Addie’s Pantry to help us fight hunger here in Grand Rapids. Also, to make a one-time or recurring gift, either via credit card or via your bank account, please visit Central’s online giving platform: bit.ly/centralgive, also accessible via QR code.

