**Community Congregational Church of Clinton Heights, UCC**

**December 18, 2022**

**Rev. Kathy Johnson**

**Welcome**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**No matter where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!**

**Call to Worship:**

One: On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, we are prepared for the coming of the Christ-child.

**All: God of the Angels, your unconditional love is our salvation.**

One: The presents are wrapped, the tree is decorated, the cards are sent and the food is prepared.

**All: God of the Angels, your unconditional love is our salvation.**

One: We turn our thoughts to the anticipated birth of Jesus Christ as foretold by your angels.

**All: God of the Angels, your unconditional love is our salvation.**

One: We remember that Your beloved son was sent to earth for our salvation.

**All: God of the Angels, your unconditional love is our salvation.**

**All: Amen.**

**Opening Prayer:**

**Dear Earthly Mother and Heavenly Father, we come to you this day with thoughts of the Christ Child, who in his one life was fully earthly and yet also fully heavenly. We give thanks for this day to worship this season of anticipation and waiting, knowing that the miracle of Jesus’ birth is almost upon us. Through your gift of His birth and life, we learn how to be fully human while bringing Your love into our hearts. We begin to learn how to find Heaven on Earth, where our salvation lies. With such gratitude, we say thank you, thank you, thank you! Amen.**

**Hymn – Away in the Manger, 147**

**Children’s Sermon: Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle**

**Scripture Readings: Matthew 1:18-25**

**Hymn - Ancient Words**

**Sermon: Love and Angels**

**Hymn – Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, 150**

**Prayers for others and ourselves**

**Lord’s Prayer** (using debts/debtors)

**Offering**

**Doxology**

**Hymn - O Little Town of Bethlehem, 144**

**Announcements**

**Commission and Benediction Postlude**

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**Manage your giving online:**

Community Congregational Church is excited to announce that you can now manage your giving online! Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Simply follow these easy steps:

1) Visit the church website at **www.clintonheightsucc.org**,

2) Click on the **Donate Now** button,

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4) Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and to schedule your recurring contribution.

Scripture Reading from The Message Translation

# **Matthew 1:18-25**

### The Birth of Jesus

**18-19**The birth of Jesus took place like this. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. Before they enjoyed their wedding night, Joseph discovered she was pregnant. (It was by the Holy Spirit, but he didn’t know that.) Joseph, chagrined but noble, determined to take care of things quietly so Mary would not be disgraced. **20-23**While he was trying to figure a way out, he had a dream. God’s angel spoke in the dream: “Joseph, son of David, don’t hesitate to get married. Mary’s pregnancy is Spirit-conceived. God’s Holy Spirit has made her pregnant. She will bring a son to birth, and when she does, you, Joseph, will name him Jesus—‘God saves’—because he will save his people from their sins.” This would bring the prophet’s embryonic revelation to full term:

Watch for this—a virgin will get pregnant and bear a son;  
They will name him Immanuel (Hebrew for “God is with us”).

**24-25**Then Joseph woke up. He did exactly what God’s angel commanded in the dream: He married Mary. But he did not consummate the marriage until she had the baby. He named the baby Jesus.