



*Christmas Lovefeast*  
*Sudbury United Methodist Church*  
*Sudbury, Massachusetts*

# Christmas Lovefeast

*Glory to God in the highest heaven!  
And on earth peace among those whom he favors!*

*Herald Angels*

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 of the skies,  
with the angelic host proclaim,  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

***Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King!”***

Christ, by highest heaven adored;  
Christ, the everlasting Lord!  
late in time behold him come,  
off-spring of a virgin’s womb.  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see;  
hail the incarnate Deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel. ***Ref.***

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth,  
born to give us second birth. ***Ref.***

*Adeste Fideles*

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.***

True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,  
lo, he shuns not the Virgin’s womb;  
Son of the Father, begotten, not created; ***Ref.***  
Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;  
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; ***Ref.***

**ISAIAH 9:2-7 and LUKE 2:1-20**

*The First Noel*

The first Noel the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds  
in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.

***Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,  
born is the King of Israel.***

They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east,  
beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night. ***Ref.***

And by the light of that same star  
three Wise Men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went. ***Ref.***

This star drew nigh to the north-west,  
o’er Bethlehem it took its rest;  
and there it did both stop and stay,  
right over the place where Jesus lay. ***Ref.***

Then entered in those Wise Men three,  
full reverently upon the knee,  
and offered there, in his presence,  
their gold and myrrh and frankincense. ***Ref.***

**ANTHEM**

**BLESSING**

Come, Lord Jesus, our Guest to be,  
and bless these gifts, bestowed by Thee.  
Bless our dear ones everywhere,  
keep them in Thy loving care. Amen.

**ANTHEM (Partake)**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie;  
above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary;  
and gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars together,  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to all on earth!

How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is given!  
so God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heaven.

No ear may hear his coming,  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him,  
still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin, and enter in,  
be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;

O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel!

*What Child Is This*

What child is this who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,  
while shepherds watch are keeping?

***This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary.***

## PRAYER AND OFFERING

### ANTHEM

*(Please stand as able. The congregation  
will sing the words in bold type.)*

*Morning Star*

Morning Star, O cheering sight!  
Ere Thou cam'st, how dark earth's night!  
**Morning Star, O cheering sight!**  
**Ere Thou cam'st, how dark earth's night!**  
Jesus mine, **In me shine;**  
In me shine, **Jesus mine;**  
**Fill my heart with light divine.**

Morning Star, Thy glory bright  
Far excels the sun's clear light:  
**Morning Star, Thy glory bright**  
**Far excels the sun's clear light.**

Jesus be, **Constantly,**  
Constantly, **Jesus be**

**More than thousand suns to me.**

Thy glad beams, Thou Morning Star,  
Cheer the nations near and far.

**Thy glad beams, Thou Morning Star,**  
**Cheer the nations near and far;**

Thee we own, **Lord alone,**  
Lord alone, **Thee we own,**

**Our dear Saviour, God's dear Son.**

Morning Star, my soul's true light,  
Tarry not, dispel my night.

**Morning Star, my soul's true light,**  
**Tarry not, dispel my night.**

Jesus mine, **In me shine;**  
In me shine, **Jesus mine;**

**Fill my heart with light divine. Amen**

*Away in a Manger*

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes:  
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky  
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay  
close by me forever, and love me, I pray;  
bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

*Carol*

It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth,  
to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,  
from heaven's all-gracious King."  
The world in solemn stillness lay,  
to hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,  
by prophet seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold;

when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendors fling,  
and the whole world send back the song  
which now the angels sing.

*Es Ist Ein Ros*

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming  
from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming, as those of old have sung.  
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,  
when half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;  
with Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.  
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,  
when half spent was the night.

O Flower, whose fragrance tender  
with sweetness fills the air,  
dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.  
True man yet very God,  
from sin and death now save us,  
And share our every load.

### CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

*Joy to the World*

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ;  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

### BENEDICTION

## Lovefeasts and the Christmas Candle

The early Christians met and broke bread together to signify their union, fellowship, and love. In 1727 the Moravian Church revived this practice and established the custom of celebrating the partaking together of a simple meal known as a "lovefeast." The Lovefeast service also includes music, primarily singing hymns of love and fellowship. After the Lovefeast, lighted candles are distributed to each worshiper.

Moravians brought this service with them as they came to America first in Savannah, Georgia (1735); then in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania (1741); and Bethabara (1753) and Salem (1766) North Carolina. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, took part in a Moravian Lovefeast in 1783 and introduced it to his fellow Methodists the following year.

The candles are handmade of bees-wax and tallow with a red non-flammable paper frill around the bottom. Some say the bees-wax and tallow symbolize the humanity of Christ; the lighted wick Christ's divinity; and the red frill Christ's atonement. Others say the lighted candle reminds us of Jesus' words:



**"I am the light of the world," and  
"Ye are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that,  
that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven."**

The Christmas Candle thus reminds us that the one whose birth we celebrate came to be the light of the world. Also that we, Christ's followers, are to be lights in the world, letting our lights so shine that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father Who is in heaven.



The beeswax candles are a gift from Sudbury United Methodist Church to take home and enjoy.

## Sudbury United Methodist Church

December 24, 2017

### Welcome, Guests!

Are you visiting Sudbury UMC today? Welcome! If you have time after worship, please pause in the narthex to meet our pastor and a few of our church's leaders. We hope you enjoy your visit and invite you to come back soon!

### Christmas Services of Worship for Today, Tonight, and Next Sunday

- **Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship** at 9:30 a.m. led by Pastor Joel in Davison Chapel.
- Church School **Christmas Pageant** at 10:30 a.m. led by Kristin Murphy and Eric Magnuson in the Sanctuary with a cast of fifty children and angels! *(Note new time!)*
- Sixth Annual **Christmas Eve Lovefeast** at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary with Pastor Joel, Wind Ensemble, and Dieners. Family service with carols, cookies, beeswax candles.
- Christmas Eve **Service of Word and Table** at 8:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Choir music, Pastor Joel's Christmas sermon, Holy Communion, and candlelit "Silent Night."
- **Epiphany Service of Word and Table** at 9:30 a.m. on December 31. Dedication of new choir chairs in memory of longtime choir member, Mr. Lee Goodstone.

### Led by a Star to Give to a Child

A blazing star led the Wise Men to give their gifts to the Christ Child. That's why stars have been shining over our heads in the sanctuary since Advent began three Sundays ago. The stars are there to lead us to make a 2018 financial pledge to the children and teens of Sudbury UMC *no later than today*. Each star is named for one of the 109 children and teens in our church who we have promised to "surround with a community of love and forgiveness that they may be true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life." Each year, Sudbury UMC invests almost \$1,000 per infant, toddler, child, and teen in the total cost of Christian Education programming and the salaries of the staff members who reach and teach them. Beyond that, funds totaling more than \$100,000 extend our church's annual outreach regionally, nationally, and globally. Christmas is here! If you would like to cast a vote for abbreviating or even cancelling January's month-long pledge drive, please fill out a 2018 pledge card today! A basket of pledge cards can be found at the center-aisle end of your pew. After completing it and signing your name, please add it to your Christmas offering!



### Where Is the Rest Room?

A unisex rest room is located in the southeast corner of the narthex, behind the back row of pews on the pulpit side of the sanctuary. There is another rest room just past the side door of the sanctuary closest to the pulpit and three steps up.

### Do You Need Hearing Assistance?

Individual hearing assistance units are available. An usher will help you to borrow one.

### If Our Shopping Cart Could Talk

Food donations made to the shopping cart outside the O'Reilly Room are delivered to Open Table, our partner in Maynard. If our shopping cart could talk, it would politely say, "Thank You!" to all who visit. Or, it might drop hints like, "Don't be a stranger!" and "I always need solid white tuna in cans, spaghetti sauce in jars, mixed vegetables in cans, pineapple in cans, raisins, dried beans in bags, bread crumbs, condensed milk, rice pilaf, and instant coffee."

### Please Recycle This Bulletin

The Worship and Music Commission has placed blue recycle bins near the church's three entrances. Materials not needed at home, along with other clean papers, may be recycled in these bins. Please dispose of paper soiled by food or anything else in wastebaskets.

### Quiet Time for Spiritual Growth

Want to make spiritual growth a New Year's resolution? Quiet time with *The Upper Room* can lead to a growth spurt! Monthly booklets are available at no cost in the narthex. Or visit *The Upper Room* online at <http://devotional.upperroom.org/>.

## **Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Breakfast – The Verve Crowne Plaza Hotel, Natick**



The annual MLK, Jr. breakfast hosted by the Greater Framingham Community Church will begin at 8:00 a.m. on January 15. The keynote speaker, the Rev. Dr. Robert A. F. Turner, will share his thoughts about “Where Do We Go from Here? You will also be treated to special music, a hearty breakfast, and lively conversation. Tickets are available now or at the door: Adults - \$35, Youth 13-18 - \$10, Children 5-12: - \$5. Contact Romelle Herring at 508-626-2118.

## **“Remember His Words” during Boston’s MLK Breakfast**

Greater Boston’s MLK breakfast will reemphasize Dr. King’s vision of a “Beloved Community” with this year’s theme, “Remember His Words.” Shayna Seymour, co-anchor of WCVB’s award-winning, nightly news magazine, Chronicle, will serve as mistress of ceremonies. Boston dignitaries will speak briefly. Live music will fill the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. Finally, this year’s keynote speaker, Bakari Sellers, a CNN political analyst, lawyer, and activist, will deliver an inspirational address. General admission tickets are available now for \$50 and may be purchased on line at <https://on.slingo.com/e/mlkboston>

## **Social Justice and Christian Education Commissions to Host Series on Anti-Racism**

A recent Globe investigation of racism in our communities highlighted ongoing structural inequality including racial hierarchy, poverty, health care and academic achievement. Concurrently, the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church has asked all of its local churches to engage in a series of “*Vital Conversations*” about racism with an emphasis on deconstructing the system that supports and perpetuates it. Starting January 14 with the celebration of MLK Weekend, and continuing for 4 weeks, the Social Justice and Christian Education Commissions will present a series of videos and conduct facilitated conversations about racism. On January 21, Robin Miller, educator and specialist in African American Heritage art, will preach during worship at 9:30 a.m. and participate in a talk-back session after worship. Watch for emerging details in The Chronicle and the Sunday bulletin insert.

## **Grand-Friends and Prayer Pals – Keep Saying Your Prayers!**

The key word for Week 16, December 24-30, is Hope. “But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

## **Adult Bible Study Begins in January**

St. Paul’s First and Second letters to the Corinthians will be the focus of a new Bible study for adults to be led by John McKinney and Jim Empfield. Classes will take place January 7, 14, 21, 28, and February 4 and 11 from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. In his letters to Corinth, Paul discusses practical, down-to-earth challenges that most Christians grapple with. For more information, or to register, please contact Eric Magnuson at [eric@sudbury-umc.org](mailto:eric@sudbury-umc.org) or 978-443-4351.

## **Tis the Season when Friends and Neighbors May Need Care**

Even the holidays can trigger loneliness, sadness, or anxiety. Do you know a family member, a friend, or a neighbor who could benefit from a caring relationship? Ten of Sudbury UMC’s 13 active Stephen Ministers are available to offer support. To ask about beginning a relationship, speak to Pastor Joel, Richard Smith, or Lori Granger. Or consider praying with a Stephen Minister after worship in the O’Reilly Room. Richard Smith is today’s volunteer.

## **An Announcement from the Staff-Parish Relations Committee**

Assistant custodian Phil Lenentine has announced his plans to complete more than 20 years of employment at Sudbury UMC on December 31, 2017. Sherry Stonebraker, Staff-Parish Relations Committee chairperson, says, “Phil’s service to our church will be celebrated during the coffee hour on Sunday, January 7. Cards, notes, and gifts of appreciation are welcome.” Applicants for this part-time position are encouraged to send a letter and a resume to the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, 251 Old Sudbury Road, Sudbury, MA

## **How to Make a Year End Donation to Sudbury UMC**

When a calendar year ends, members of Sudbury UMC often make donations of appreciated stock, life insurance cash-outs, distributions from IRAs, or Donor Advised Funds. When making these gifts, please notify business manager Mike Greb ([michael@sudbury-umc.org](mailto:michael@sudbury-umc.org)) with your name, the name of your broker, dealer, bank, insurance company, or mutual fund company. Remember: All 2017 Annual Fund and Pave the Way donations must be received by December 31, 2017, in order for you to take a tax deduction in 2017.