



Yokohama Union Church

December 28, 2025
First Sunday After Christmas

Order of Worship

**Those who are able, please stand*

(Children's packets are available in the back for children to use during the service.)

Words of Welcome:

Prelude: “*He is Born*” Miho Kobayashi, piano

(Please be in quiet meditation as the acolyte lights the candles representing the Light of Christ.)

***Call to Worship :** Liturgist: Jessie Dang

Leader: Arise, people of God, for the Light has come—a Light that moves with those who flee danger, a Light that comforts those who weep, a Light that dreams of justice and peace.

People: We come seeking the God who travels with the vulnerable.

Leader: In a world of Herods and holy families, of violence and visions, of grief and guidance, God calls us to awaken.

People: We come as people who long to listen—to our dreams, to the cries of the suffering, to the whisper of God in unexpected places.

All: Let us gather with openness, with courage, with hope.

***Opening Hymn:** “*Once in Royal David’s City*” #183 Miho Kobayashi, piano

Prayer of Confession:

Holy One, we confess that too often we turn away from the vulnerable ones you cherish. Like Herod, we cling to our comfort. Like Joseph, we sometimes hesitate to trust the dreams you place within us.

We confess the times we have ignored the cries of Rachel— the cries of grieving parents, displaced families, children in danger, communities oppressed by violence. Forgive us for choosing convenience over compassion, fear over courage, silence over truth.

Wake us up, O God. Help us to listen for your voice in the dark corners of our world and in the quiet corners of our hearts. Make us brave like Joseph, compassionate like Mary, and open to transformation as we follow Jesus, your refugee Son. Amen.

Words of Assurance:

Leader: Beloved of God, hear the good news: God does not abandon us to our fear. God does not leave us in the shadows. Just as God guided Joseph through dreams, God guides us through grace. Just as God traveled with the Holy Family, God travels with us today. In Christ, our refugee Savior, we are forgiven, restored, and made new.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

Welcome to Our Guests in Worship:

We welcome everyone to YUC this morning. If there is anyone who has not been here before or has not been to YUC in a long time, please stand up and introduce yourself by saying your name and where you are from. Please also fill out the welcome cards and drop them in the offering bag.

Passing of the Peace:

Leader: We have received the peace of God through the Gospel. Let us now share it as a sign of our love and unity in Christ. The Peace of the Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Pass the peace of Christ with one another by saying, "Peace be with you."

Children's Time: Rev. Claudia Genung-Yamamoto

(“Jesus Loves Me” played as children come forward; played again as children return to their seats and scripture readers come forward.)

Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:13-23

English: Shawn Perevalov Japanese: Kana Perevalova

13 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” 14 So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, 15 where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.” (Hosea 11:1) 16 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. 17 Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 31:15) was fulfilled: 18 **“A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”** 19 After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt 20 and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.” 21 So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, 23 and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

マタイによる福音書/ 2章 13-23 節

13 占星術の学者たちが帰って行くと、主の天使が夢でヨセフに現れて言った。「起きて、子供とその母親を連れて、エジプトに逃げ、わたしが告げるまで、そこにとどまつていなさい。ヘロデが、この子を探し出して殺そうとしている。」14 ヨセフは起きて、夜のうちに幼子とその母を連れてエジプトへ去り、15 ヘロデが死ぬまでそこにいた。それは、「わたしは、エジプトからわたしの子を呼び出した」と、主が預言者を通して言われていたことが実現するためであった。16 さて、ヘロデは占星術の学者たちにだまされたと知って、大いに怒った。そして、人を送り、学者たちに確かめておいた時期に基づいて、ベツレヘムとその周辺一帯にいた二歳以下の男の子を、一人残らず殺させた。17 こうして、預言者エレミヤを通して言われていたことが実現した。18 「ラマで声が聞こえた。激しく嘆き悲しむ声だ。ラケルは子供たちのことで泣き、／慰めてもらおうともしない、／子供たちがもういないから。」19 ヘロデが死ぬと、主の天使がエジプトにいるヨセフに夢で現れて、20 言った。「起きて、子供とその母親を連れ、イスラエルの地に行きなさい。この子の命をねらっていた者どもは、死んでしまった。」21 そこで、ヨセフは起きて、幼子とその母を連れて、イスラエルの地へ帰って来た。22 しかし、アルケラオが父ヘロデの跡を継いでユダヤを支配していると聞き、そこに行くことを恐れた。ところが、夢でお告げがあったので、ガリラヤ地方に引きこもり、23 ナザレという町に行って住んだ。「彼はナザレの人と呼ばれる」と、預言者たちを通して言われていたことが実現するためであった。

Reader: May God bless our scripture reading for today.

People: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Sermon: "God on the Move" Rev. Claudia Genung-Yamamoto

Short explanation on today's scripture reading:

"A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

This passage refers to the biblical lament from Jeremiah 31:15 and Matthew 2:18, where Rachel, the ancestral mother of Israel, weeps inconsolably for her children—first during the Babylonian exile (Jeremiah) and later reinterpreted by Matthew as the mothers in Bethlehem mourning their babies killed by King Herod the Great in his search for baby Jesus. (It is known as "the Massacre of the Innocents" or the "Slaughter of the Innocents")

Hymn of Response: "A Voice Was Heard in Ramah" (Tune: "Lead On, O King Eternal" #508)

Miho Kobayashi, piano

A voice was heard in Ramah that could not be consoled,
As Rachel wept for children she could no longer hold.
For Herod ruled the nation, yet feared the Infant King.
How great the devastation that fear and anger bring!

O God, we hear the crying for little ones of yours;
For many still are dying in conflicts and in wars —
In every troubled nation, on every violent street,
How great the lamentation when fear and anger meet!

Whenever one is weeping, the whole world suffers, too.
Yet, Jesus, as we serve them, we're also serving you.
So may we not ignore them, nor turn our eyes away,
But help us labor for them to bring a better day.

O Prince of Peace, you lead us in ways of truth and grace.
May we be brave to practice your peace in every place —
To love each fear-filled nation, to serve each troubled street.
How great the celebration when peace and justice meet!



Biblical References: Matthew 2:13-23; Romans 12:15; Matthew 25:31-46; Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 85:10

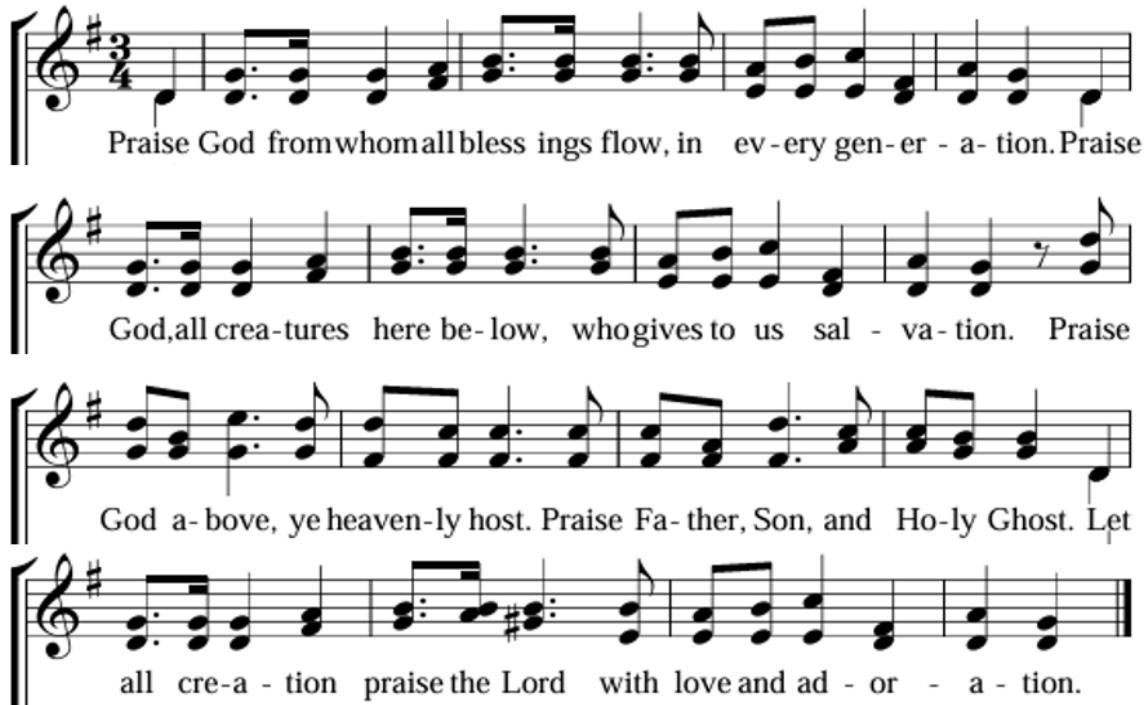
Tithes and Offerings / Special music: "Gesu Bambino" Yoko and Mitsuhiro Irie, Miho Kobayashi piano

("Gesu Bambino" in English means "Baby Jesus" or "The Infant Jesus," a beloved Italian Christmas carol by Pietro Yon (1917))



***Christmas Doxology:** (please stand)

Christmas Doxology



Praise God from whom all blessings flow, in every generation. Praise
God, all creatures here below, who gives to us salvation. Praise
God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Let
all creation praise the Lord with love and adoration.

Offertory Prayer:

Prayers of the People:

The Lord's Prayer: (please say in your own language or tradition or use this one below.)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

***Closing Hymn:** “*The First Noel*” #229 (verses 1-3) Miho Kobayashi piano

***Benediction:** (remain standing)

Postlude: “*Still Still Still*” Miho Kobayashi piano
(The acolyte takes out the light of Christ to the world.)

THOSE SERVING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Ministers: All of us at YUC.

Senior Pastor: Rev. Claudia Genung-Yamamoto

Usher: Kenny DaSilva Fellowship: Etsuko Fukuoka and Fumi Ohnuma

YUC Board Members: Michael Magee, Fumi Ohnuma, Jessie Dang, Ran Oji, Ayako Maenosono, Miho Kobayashi, Pastor Claudia, Pastor Debbie

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ *Members and regular attendees at YUC. Please remember to wear your name tags so new people will get to know your names. If you do not have a name tag, please write down your name and give to Ayako or Pastor Claudia.*
- ◆ *Church Newsletter: If you are not receiving it, let Pastor Claudia have your email so she can add you to the weekly YUC newsletter list.*
- ◆ *Sunday School: Resumes January 11, 2026 @ 9:10am.*
- ◆ *Fellowship Time Snack Box: We are asking for snack donations for our church. We will need snacks for this New Year. 2026. Please give to Miho Kobayashi or place in Pastor Claudia's office.*
- ◆ *Please sign up to be an usher, be a liturgist, read scripture, bring snacks for fellowship or share a testimony.*
- ◆ **January 4** *Epiphany Sunday. Scriptures: Matthew 2:1-12; Isaiah 60:1-6*
- ◆ **January 11** *Baptism of the Lord Sunday Rev. Maki Fushii preaching.*
- ◆ **January 18** *Rev. Toshi Yamamoto Christian Seminar will be held upstairs in the manse from 12:10pm.*

Offering Information

“...for God loves a cheerful giver.” – 2 Corinthians 9:7

In-person and online options for offering are available at Yokohama Union Church. See Jessie Dang or Michael Magee for offering envelopes or feel free to use the direct deposit option with Bank of Yokohama.

Bank: Yokohama Bank/ 横浜銀行 **Branch:** Motomachi/元町支店

Type of account: ordinary/普通口座 **Account number:** 1150200

Donate via Credit Card: goyuc.com/give

On Sunday December 21, 2025 we received 72,411 yen for our in-person worship offering.
Attendance: total 66 (54 adults, 11 children)

On Wednesday December 24, 2025 we received 123,600yen for our in-person worship offering.
Attendance: total 104 (89 adults, 15 children)

YOKOHAMA UNION CHURCH is a church where all are welcome. YUC was founded in 1863 and is an ecumenical and international congregation of English-speaking Christians. The word “union” is used to indicate the membership is composed of Christians from many churches and nationalities who are united through a common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yokohama Union Church is independent and financially self-supporting; it is an associate member of the National Christian Council in Japan (NCCJ).

YUC WEBSITE: <https://yokohamaunionchurch.org/>

