

Peace United Church of Christ
Rev. Tom Williams
Sandy Eickert, Pianist
Christmas Eve – December 24, 2017
4:00 p.m.

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CANDLE LIGHTING:** Fourth Candle Lit: **LOVE**

Lois Schwahn: We have lit three candles—for hope, for peace, and for joy. Today we light the fourth candle—the candle of love. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, but that we recognize in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires, stronger than grief or despair, stronger even than death. We love, because God loves us.

(The fourth candle, “Joy” is lit by Roger Schwahn)

All: Loving God, we open ourselves to you this Christmas season. As these candles are lit, light our lives with your imagination. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that comes from justice. Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared. Magnify your love within us. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

***CAROL #42** (Notebook) “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

***FIRST LESSON** Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19 (Bob Lowe)

CAROL #38 (Notebook) “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

SECOND LESSON Genesis 22:15-18 (Aubrie Williams)

CAROL #6 (Notebook) “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

THIRD LESSON Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 (Lois Schwahn)

***CAROL #34** (Notebook) “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

***FOURTH LESSON** Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9 (Tony Reese)

***CANDLE LIGHTING:** Christ Candle Lit

Tammy Williams: Hope, peace, joy, and love. Four candles, four promises continually offered to us by God, and all of them manifest in this one we light tonight: the Christ candle. In Christ we find the hope of transformation, the peace that follows justice, the joy of self-fulfillment in community, and the love that encompasses us in all our diversity, empowering us to make our own unique contribution to this world. In Christ we find light and life, and the courage to be like him, answering his call and following in his footsteps. *(The Christ candle is lit by Carol Reese)*

All: We rejoice in God’s steadfast presence in our lives, and in God’s unique presence in the life of Jesus of Nazareth—born of Mary, growing through childhood into an adult ministry, in all his life manifesting the peace, love, and justice of God; his voice undimmed by the centuries his call and his promise as clear to us as it was to his disciples so long ago. Come to us, Lord Jesus, Be born in us this night, in our hearts, our minds, our lives. May the light of your life be kindled in us, And lead us to the shining truth, of God with us, God for us, God in us. Amen.

WE CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

A brief Communion Meditation on the Journey to Christmas.
(Please see bulletin insert for the Communion Litany)

EVERYONE is welcome to share in this sacrament of love. There are no restrictions on the Lord's Table.

Please hold each element until all are served.

***FIFTH LESSON** Luke 1:26-35, 38 (Brynn Williams)

***CAROL #22** (Notebook) “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

SIXTH LESSON Luke 2:1-7 (Trae Williams)

CAROL #23 (Notebook) “Away in a Manger”

***SEVENTH LESSON** Luke 2:8-16 (Morgan Janas)

***CAROL #48** (Notebook) “Angels We Have Heard on High”

EIGHTH LESSON Matthew 2:1-11 (Bob Lowe)

CAROL #46 (Notebook) “We Three Kings of Orient Are”

(And as we sing Ushers will receive our Offering)

CHRISTMAS PRAYERS – Pastoral and Silent

***NINTH LESSON** John 1:1-14 (Joselyn Heritage)

***CAROL #27** (Notebook) “Silent Night, Holy Night”

(And as we sing, ushers will share the light from the Christ Candle for our candles)

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

** When you see an * in the bulletin, you are invited to stand in body or in spirit.*