

Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

December 24, 2022



GOD IS STILL SPEAKING

,

*NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S
JOURNEY YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!*

Worship Leadership

The Rev. John J. Ward-Diorio

The Rev. Allyssa A. Boyer

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Eric R. Dundore

Choristers' Director: Jonneke A. Dundore

Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore

Organist: Sarah A. Myers

Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller

Ministry of Audio and Video

Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service

Acolytes: Grace Simpson, Elsa Riesmeyer

Worship Welcome Team Leader: Sherry Spencer

Worship Welcome Team:

4:00PM: Paula Boyer, Steve Roush, Rebecca Drazba,

Dennis & Bonnie Plymette, Becky Thompson

11:00PM: Kim Pirtle, Chris Grice

Lesson Readers:

4:00PM: Becky Thompson, Ben Anderson, Paula Boyer, Ivonne McFarland

11:00PM: Kathy Williams, Shirley Keith Knox, Jonneke Dundore, Don Dupes

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Herrold

Ministers

The Entire Congregation



St. Paul's Online Giving

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS EVE 4:00 & 11:00PM

December 24, 2022

**Those who are comfortable doing so are invited to stand.*

THE RINGING OF THE CHIMES

THE WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE ORGAN PRELUDE: 4:00PM "Ring The Joyous Christmas Bells"
11:00PM "Away in a Manger"

Lani Smith
Dorothy Wells

*THE PROCESSIONAL CAROL "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

**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.**

Refrain: **O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

**Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest. Refrain**

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLES

Christ Candle Lighting: 4:00 PM The Miller Family 11:00 PM The Grice Family

ONE: We have gathered at this wreath
all this Advent season to light candles.

ONE: We claim that Emmanuel, God with us
is Light and Darkness in a world
that must work and rest
be generous and self-careful,
experience tears and laughter,
in order to share
both the hurt and humor of others.
from the deep place of knowing it.

ALL: Let us light these candles on this holy night.

ONE: I light the candle of hope,
and hopelessness cannot hide. (light one purple candle)

ONE: I light the candle of peace,
and expose hatred as fear turned inside out. (light a second purple candle)

ONE: I light the candle of joy,
and everyone is welcome with a smile,
a moment of beauty or wonder. (light the pink candle)

ONE: I light the candle of love,
and hands are clasped around the world. (light the last purple candle)

ALL: THIS IS CHRISTMAS
The evergreen singing aloud its poem of constant renewal,
The festive mood spreading lilted magic everywhere,
The gifts of recollection calling to heart the graces of life,
The star in the sky calling to mind the wisdom of hope,
The warmth of candlelight glowing against the darkness,
The birth of a child linking past to future,
The symbol of love absorbing all violence
THIS IS CHRISTMAS

ONE: O Holy God, we light the Christ candle.
It shines on smiles and tears.
It shines into the lives of everyone.
It shines and we remember the story.
It shines around angels
who sing for the most vulnerable,
and guides the long traveling
of those from far away.

ONE: It shines on a manger,
a child and parents,
with animals gathered all around.
It shines on here and now people
just like Bethlehem long ago. (light the white candle)

ALL: It can never be extinguished,
because, Christ, you are tonight's candle,
and we promise –
to lift our wicks to tomorrow's flame.

THE SUNG RESPONSE (to the tune of #143)

On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring;
On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring.
News of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our gracious Ruler's birth.

THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

Glorious, giving God, You gifted us with Your son Jesus. You trusted us with Your Child.
You continue to trust and bless us. Thank you. May our gift to You, be our love and
service to others, especially those most vulnerable of Your Children. Amen.

THE CALL TO AND PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

God cannot stand to be separated from us. God comes to us in many ways, over and over again. We confess that because we allow our minds and hearts to be elsewhere, we often miss or refuse the gifts of God's presence, wisdom and guidance. Let us join in the silent Prayer of Confession.

THE SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

THE WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive)

MINISTER: God forgives us and brings Christmas no matter what.

ALL: Let us accept the gift of God's presence; be transformed by God's Spirit; and share with the world God's vision for hope, peace, joy, and God's all-embracing, all-encompassing love. Amen.

*Please note: we will not be shaking hands or hugging.
If you are able, please rise and greet one another with other signs of Peace.*

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 11:1-10

THE ANTHEM

4:00 PM

"Christmas Songs of Joy"

Martin

Choristers

11:00 PM

"Ain't This Boy a Wonder"

Vincent

Eric Dundore & Kevin Neidig

THE SECOND LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

THE CONGREGATIONAL CAROL "What Child Is This, Who Laid to Rest"

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?

Refrain: This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing: Haste, haste to bring him laud, The babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?

Good Christian, fear: for sinners here the silent Word is pleading. Refrain

THE THIRD LESSON

Luke 2:8-14

THE CONGREGATIONAL CAROL "Angels We Have Heard On High"

Angels we have heard on high Sweetly singing o'er the plains,

And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;

Come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. Refrain

THE FOURTH LESSON

Luke 2:15-20

THE OFFERTORY	4:00 PM	“Sleep, Little Lamb” Youth Choir	Martin
	11:00 PM	“To Thee My Heart I Offer” Chancel Choir	Hagenberg

*DOXOLOGY

*From all who dwell beneath the skies,
Let the Creator’s praise arise!
Let the Redeemer’s name be sung.
Through every land, by every tongue! Amen.*

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We give because You have given so much to us. We give because we believe in the way of peace that Christmas proclaims. We give to build right relations among us and with You. We give to build a peaceful world. May Your shalom reign here and spread through all those causes and persons whom we equip with our offerings. Amen.

A CHRISTMAS STORY

THE CONGREGATIONAL CAROL “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.**

**How silently, how silently, The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of his heav’n
No ear may hear his coming, But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still The dear Christ enters in.**

CHRISTMAS CREED FROM LATIN AMERICA

I believe in Jesus Christ and in the power of the Gospel which began in Bethlehem.

**I believe in the One whose spirit glorified a small village,
of whose coming the shepherds saw the sign,
and for whom there was no room in the inn.**

**I believe in the One whose life changed the course of history,
for whom the kings of the earth had no power,
and who was not understood by the proud.**

**I believe in the One to whom the poor, the oppressed, the discouraged,
the afflicted, the sick, the blind and the leprous gave welcome
and accepted as Savior.**

**I believe in the One who, with love, changed the hearts of the proud,
and with his life, showed that it is more important to serve than to be served,
and that the greatest joy is in giving your life for others.**

**I believe in peace, which means justice among all peoples and nations
and love among all.**

I believe in reconciliation, forgiveness and the transforming power of the Gospel.

**I believe that Christmas is strength and power, and that this world can change
if, with humility and faith, we kneel before the manger.**

I believe that I must be the first one to do so. Amen.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CAROL “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 earth! The Savior reigns: Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**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
wonder, wonders of his love.**

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

John 1:1-18

***THE PASSING OF THE LIGHT**

The ushers will light the candle of the worshipper nearest the aisle. Candles should be secure before lighting. Dip only the unlit candle when lighting your candle from your neighbor's. Please help younger children. Always hold your candle in an upright position and maintain a safe distance between the candle and yourself and other people and things. Keep your candle lit until the conclusion of the service. As you leave the Sanctuary, please place the candle and holder in the receptacle in the Narthex. Thank you. Let us now sing.

***THE CONGREGATIONAL CAROL “Silent Night”**

**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 a far, heav'nly host 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.**

***THE BENEDICTION**

***THE ORGAN POSTLUDE** 4:00PM “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” James Denton
 11:00PM “And The Glory Of The Lord” (from “The Messiah”) G.F. Handel

References:

The words for the Advent Candle Lighting this year are from a Blog by Maren C. Tirabassi: "Gifts In Open Hands", posted November 21, 2021. This is based on Howard Thurman's "I will Light Candles this Christmas" and "This is Christmas" from The Mood of Christmas and Other Celebrations. Maren writes: "I have spent the year reflecting on the words of Howard Thurman, some of the less familiar ones. It has been a profound blessing."

The Prayer of Dedication is from "Fresh Winds of the Spirit" by Lavon Baylor. The Pilgrim Press, 1986.

A Christmas Creed from Latin America was shared by the Rev. Quinn Caldwell in a Still Speaking Devotion 1/2/12

The Poinsettias are Presented by:

Daniella & Joshua Benfer	In memory of those lost in the struggle for freedom in Ukraine and around the world.
Herb & Melba Bomberger	In memory of loved ones.
Chris & Tina Bowers	In memory of Robin Lynn Rupp.
Chris & Tina Bowers	In memory of Anne Paris Davidson.
Paula & Mark Boyer	In memory of our parents.
Leann & Tim Davinroy	In honor of family.
Leann & Tim Davinroy	In memory of Leann's parents and Tim's father.
The Dickensheets Family	In honor of Charles & Samantha Dickensheets.
The Dickensheets Family	In memory of Stacey's father, Dick Shearer.
Michael J. Gray	In memory of parents Mary Lou & Richard Gray.
Rick Holtzapple & Fenton Fox	In honor of Melissa, Matt, Jared, Julia Holtzapple & Dawn Fox.
Rick Holtzapple & Fenton Fox	In memory of Curvin & Martha Holtzapple and Sidney & Ferne D. Fox.
Debra Kassahun	In honor of Alex, Nicholas, & Benjamin.
Martha Keith	In memory of Gene Keith's Family.
Glenn Kline	In memory of Esther Kline.
Jenn Martek	In memory of Dad & Grammie.
Brian Medkeff-Rose	In honor of my grandchildren.
Brian Medkeff-Rose	In memory of Lee Jackson.
Elaine & Chris Royer	In memory of Marian Royer & Mary Daly.
Anna Thompson	In honor of children and grandchildren.
Sue & John Ward-Diorio	In honor of Evelyn Diorio.
Sue & John Ward-Diorio	In memory of Jackie, John, Bob & Evelyn Diorio and Kelly MacCarthy.
Jeff & Randy Whitman	In honor of Doris Heckman.
Jeff & Randy Whitman	In memory of Doris Whitman.

The Advent Offerings are Presented by:

Robert & Diane Freeman	In memory of our daughter, Danielle.
Michael J. Gray	In memory of Mary Lou & Richard Gray.
Sandra Heckman	In memory of Donald Heckman, John & Shirley Knisley.
Gloria Hoffman	In memory of my husband Richard L. Hoffman, who passed away January 20, 2021. We were married for 63 years.
Linda Miller & William Murray	In memory of our parents & son, Nathan.
Carolyn Rutherford	In memory of Jere Rutherford.
Wendi Taylor	In memory of Marion Patton.
Janet Wotring	In memory of John Callaghan.