

**Peace United Church of Christ  
December 7th, 2025  
Second Sunday in Advent  
10:30am**



*Hope Like a Dancer*, Lauren Wright Pittman  
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## Welcome and Announcements

## Ringing of the Bells

## \*Call to Worship &amp; Advent Candle Lighting

Don &amp; Mary Galloway

In a world full of fear, where do you see  
glimmers of peace?

**We see glimmers of peace in the quiet  
of early morning, when people shake  
hands, when loved ones say they're sorry,  
and when the church sings together.**

You are right. Even in a fearful world,  
peace is all around us.

Today we light the candle of peace as a  
reminder of this good news. May this  
flicker of light help us remember that  
even in a fearful world, peace is present.

We only have to look for it.

**Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## \*Song

*One Candle Is Lit*, verse 2

see insert

## \*Prayer of Confession

**God on the move, we have every reason to hold onto hope.**

**We have every reason to believe that spring will come,  
that flowers will bloom, that the sun will rise.**

**And yet, too often hope slips through our fingers.**

**With anxious hearts we cry out to you,**

**"Will change ever come? Will things ever get better?**

**Will I ever make a difference?"**

**Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places where the sun is shining.**

**With open hearts we pray. Amen.**

## \*Assurance of Forgiveness

Family of faith,  
in our honesty,

**we are heard.**

In our worries,

**we are held.**

In our failings,

**we are forgiven.**

In our fear,

**we are not alone.**

Friends, this is the good news of the gospel!

**When we're running out of hope, God is still at work.**

Thanks be to God!

**Amen.**

## \*Song

*Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn*#107, *New Century Hymnal*

**Awake! awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning,**

**sing out your joy, for Jesus is born, behold! the Child of our longing.**

**Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,**

**to open wide the heavenly door, and lives now inside us for ever.**

**To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a singing,**

**whose humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing.**

**Music to heal the broken soul and hymns of loving kind-ness,**

**the thunder of the anthems roll to shatter all hate and injustice.**

**In deepest night Christ's coming shall be, when all the world is despairing,**

**as morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring.**

**One without voice breaks forth in song, a lame one leaps in wonder,**

**the weak are raised above the strong, and weapons are broken asunder.**

**Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though cold the winter and cheer-less,**

**the rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless;**

**Love be our song and love our prayer, and love, our endless story,**

**may God fill every day we share, and bring us at last into glory.**

\*Passing of the Peace

Scripture Reading

Matthew 11:1-11, *The Message*

Laurie Berner, reader

Now when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.'

"Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God.**

Story for All Ages

Amanda McElray Hunter

Sending the Children

***Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt,  
Gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Immanuel) everywhere!  
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around: loaves abound!  
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again, pass the Word around: loaves abound!***

Contemporary Reading

*Tomorrow's Child*, Rubem Alves

What is hope?

It is the pre-sentiment that imagination is more real and reality is less real than it looks.

It is the hunch that the overwhelming brutality of facts that oppress and repress us is not the last word.

It is the suspicion that reality is more complex than the realists want us to believe.

That the frontiers of the possible are not determined by the limits of actual; and in a miraculous and unexplained way life is opening up creative events which will open the way to freedom and resurrection— but the two—suffering and hope.

Suffering without hope produces resentment and despair.

But, hope without suffering creates illusions, naïveté and drunkenness.

So let us plant dates even though we who plant them will never eat them.

We must live by the love of what we see.

That is the secret discipline.

It is the refusal to let our creative act be dissolved away by our need for immediate sense experience and a struggled commitment to the future of our grandchildren.

Such disciplined hope is what has given prophets, revolutionaries and saints, the courage to die for the future they envisage.

They make their own bodies the seed of their highest hopes.

Choir Anthem

*O Nata Lux*, Morton Lauridsen

*O Light born of Light,  
Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
with kindness deign to receive  
the praise and prayer of suppliants.*

*You who once deigned to be clothed in flesh  
for the sake of the lost,  
grant us to be made members  
of your blessed body.*

Sermon

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis

Song

*There's a Voice in the Wilderness*

#120, *New Century Hymnal*

***There's a voice in the wilderness crying, a call from the ways untrod:  
Prepare in the desert a highway, a highway for our God!***

***The valleys shall be exalted, the lofty hills brought low:  
make straight all the crooked places where Emmanuel may go!  
O Zion, who offers good tidings, to the height of the mountains dare!  
Lift your voice to the cities of Judah: "Behold your God!" declare.  
Like the flowers of the field we perish, our human works decay,  
the power and pomp of nations shall pass like a dream away.  
But the word of our God is forever, our Defender's will is strong;  
God stands in the midst of nations, to render right the wrong.  
Then God shall be as a shepherd, the lambs gathered to God's breast;  
and pastures of peace shall greet them, to give to the weary rest.***

Community Prayers and Pastoral Prayer

The Prayer of Jesus

**Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kin-dom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Sung Amen

Offertory

*Skating* Vince Guaraldi

\*Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise God all creatures here below,  
Praise God above ye heavenly host,  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen!**

Sacrament of Holy Communion

God be with you. **And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to God.**  
Let us give thanks to God. **It is a joy to give God thanks and praise.**

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing the Bread and Cup

*(In the United Church of Christ all are welcome to participate in Communion. Gluten free crackers are on the tray and we use non-alcoholic grape juice.)*

Prayer After Communion

**Loving God, in a fearful world, you gather us together. You set the table. You meet us here. You nourish our bodies as you nourish our spirits. You bring joy to this feast, and that joy triumphs over fear. So with renewed courage, with renewed hope, with renewed conviction, send us out into the world. Help us to feed others as you have fed us. With gratitude we pray, amen.**

\*Closing Song

*Come, O Long-Expected Jesus*

#122, *New Century Hymnal*

***Come, O long expected Jesus, born to set all people free;  
From our fears and sins release us; grant us your true liberty.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope to all the earth impart;  
Dear desire of every nation, enter every longing heart.  
Born all people to deliver, born a child, you came to reign!  
Born to rule on earth forever, come, be known to us again.  
By your own eternal Spirit, come to claim us as your own;  
By your all sufficient merit, let us share your cross and crown.***

\*Benediction

\*Postlude

*Christmas Is Coming*, Vince Guaraldi

Assisting in Today's Service:

Warren Post, Guy Hubert, Tom & Christine Day, Ushers  
Lyn Kaim and Nadine Hubert, Greeters

Heidi Olson and Silvee Romberg, Nursery Attendants

Patty Beech-Dziuk, Bridget Reistad, Amy Galarowicz, and Cathy Ameel, Coffee Hour Volunteers