

*O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here;
Love stir within the womb of night, and death's own shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!*

*O come, Desire of Nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
Make envy, strife, and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!*

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

*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!**

*Prayer of Dedication

*Closing Song *Comfort, Comfort O My People* #101, *New Century Hymnal*

***“Comfort, comfort O my people, tell of peace,” thus says our God;
Comfort those whose hearts are shrouded, mourning under sorrow’s load.
Speak unto Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;
Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over.***

***For the herald’s voice is calling in the desert far and near,
Bidding us to make repentance since the realm of God is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise in meeting and the hills bow down in greeting.***

***Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain!
Let your hearts be true and humble, for Messiah’s holy reign.
For God’s glory evermore shall be known o’er all the world;
And all flesh shall see the token that God’s word is never broken.***

*Benediction

*Postlude

Assisting in Today’s Service:

Lyn Kaim, Greeter
Pam Kramer, Darlene Leafgren, and Cindy Macaulay, Ushers
Silvee Romberg and Kate Dean, Nursery Attendants
Aryn Bergsven, Janell Kohls, and Loni Cran-Hovis, Coffee Hour Volunteers

**Peace United Church of Christ
November 30th, 2025
First Sunday in Advent
10:30am**



Zechariah and the Angel, Hannah Garrity
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Prelude		
Welcome and Announcements		
Ringing of the Bells		
*Call to Worship & Advent Candle Lighting	Eric Lemke	
In a world full of fear, where do you see hope? We see hope when we look to the next generation. We feel hopeful when we gather together. We know hope, deep in our bones, when we dream of a better world. You are right. Even in a fearful world, hope is all around us. Today we light the candle of hope as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that we have reason to hope. Thanks be to God! Amen.		
*Song	One Candle Is Lit, verse 1	see insert
*Prayer of Confession		
Ever-present God, we long to feel you close. We long to feel your presence in our lives. We long for you to break through the chaos and suffering of this world. However, if we're honest, we rarely stand still long enough to feel you in our midst. Forgive our rushing and distractions. Forgive our wandering hearts, and center us in this space. Remind us that even in the time of Herod, even on the longest nights, you are always there. Amen.		
*Assurance of Forgiveness		
Family of faith, even when we doubt God's presence, even when we fail to notice God's fingerprints in this world, God is always moving closer to us. Hear and believe the good news this Advent season: Nothing can keep God's love away. We are seen. We are forgiven. We are not alone. Amen.		
*Song	Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates	#117, New Century Hymnal
Lift up your heads, O mighty gates; behold the glorious Ruler waits! The Sovereign One is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here. Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart From earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy. Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to you; here, Christ, abide! Let me your inner presence feel; your grace and love in me reveal. So come, my Sovereign; enter in! Let new and nobler life begin; Your Holy Spirit guide us on, until the glorious crown be won.		
*Passing of the Peace		
Scripture Reading	Luke 1:5-13, The Message	Phyllis Cook, reader
In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest assigned service in the regiment of Abijah. His name was Zachariah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron. Her name was Elizabeth. Together they lived honorably before God, careful in keeping to the ways of the commandments and enjoying a clear conscience before God. But they were childless because Elizabeth could never conceive, and now they were quite old.		

It so happened that as Zachariah was carrying out his priestly duties before God, working the shift assigned to his regiment, it came his one turn in life to enter the sanctuary of God and burn incense. The congregation was gathered and praying outside the Temple at the hour of the incense offering. Unannounced, an angel of God appeared just to the right of the altar of incense. Zachariah was paralyzed in fear.

But the angel reassured him, “Don’t fear, Zachariah. Your prayer has been heard. Elizabeth, your wife, will bear a son by you. You are to name him John. You’re going to leap like a gazelle for joy, and not only you—many will delight in his birth. He’ll achieve great stature with God.”

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 *In the Time of Herod, Rev. Sarah A. Speed*

I didn’t live during Herod’s time—that brutal, murderous king, God save his soul.
But even hundreds of years later, I know the prayers of his people.
I know the prayers of the mothers and the children under his rule.
I know the prayers of the young men under his angry arm.
I know their prayers, because anyone who has ever lived in this soft world for more than two days knows how to pray for a miracle.
We rub our hands together.
We fold weary shoulders in,
a cage of bone to protect our bleeding hearts.
We sing, we shall overcome and bind my wandering heart to thee.
We walk across bridges and in front of powerful buildings.
We cover our cars in stickers that scream, we will not give up!
We allow a hungry cry to slip from our lips,
giving our lament a life of its own (with room to dance!).
And when all of that is said and done, we whisper to our creator,
God, break through the yelling and the fear. Break through the violence and the oppression.
Get past the Herods of this world, and come be here.
Like every bleeding heart before, we pray for a miracle.

Special Music

Sermon Rev. Laurie Crelly

Song O Come, O Come, Emmanuel #116, New Century Hymnal

***O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Child of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!***

***O come, O Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show, and help us in that way to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!***

***O come, O come, O Adonai, who came to all on Sinai high,
And from its peak a single law proclaimed in majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!***

***O come, O shoot of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny,
From depths of hell your people save, and give them victory o’er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!***

***O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide your heavenly home;
Make safe the path to endless day, to hell's destruction close the way.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!***