



**ST. PETER'S**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

JOHN 3:16

**Fourth Sunday in Advent**  
**December 22, 2024**

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

*\*(Stand as you are able.)*

## GATHERING MUSIC

*Greeting      Announcements      Birthdays      Anniversaries*

PASTOR: *"This is the day the lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it."*

PRELUDE: *"I heard the Bells on Christmas Day", Trad.*

\*CALL TO WORSHIP: *\*(Stand as you are able.)* Patty Knepper

One: We become a community when we show  
each other love and acceptance.

**All: Let us now gather in God's community,  
for God has done great things for us.**

One: God has looked with favor on us.

**All: May we strive to be as generous as God.  
May our house be welcoming and open to all.**

One: God has lifted up the lowly and filled the hungry  
with good things.

**All: May we give our good things, our best things,  
back to God.**

\*CALL TO GOD: *\*(Stand as you are able.)* Patty Knepper

One: O God, you are with each one of us.

**All: You are with the young, the elderly, the disenfranchised,  
the war weary, the content, and the discontent.**

One: You give freely and exuberantly to all of us.

**All: No matter who we are, no matter what stage of life  
we are in, we each receive your gift.**

One: We gather to receive your gift with gratitude  
and songs of praise.

**All: We gather to live in the fullness of life which you  
have given to us.**

\*HYMN OF PRAISE: #157 *“Away in a Manger”*

CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY: Patty Knepper

Leader: O God, we light the fourth candle of Advent. We hear your angel Gabriel and witness the faith of Mary. Fill us with your grace and light.

**People: We recall the times we have struggled but overcome our adversity. We know times when God has filled us and our world with blessing. We remember that we have struggled, but God has given us hope and love and peace.**

Leader: Mary was a young, strong, spiritual woman. Even though her life was not easy, she heard God’s voice and said YES. Her song was a prayer that would uplift those who were downtrodden. Her words of the song shattered the proud and called the world to change. She would bear within her the promised child, Jesus, the Light of the World.

**People: This Advent, we respond to God’s beckoning to us as well.**

Leader: Revealing God, visit us and fill us with your Spirit. Bring your good news to life within us.

**People: Give us courage to carry your light into the shadows of this world, and as the Prophet Micah has inspired us to do, let us act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. Come to us, O Christ the Light. Amen.**

Leader: We now light the candle of LOVE.

Choral Response: *“A Thousand Candles” #159 vs. 1-4 (sung by choir)*

**\*MORNING PRAYER/INVOCATION** (Unison) Patty Knepper

ONE: Some people have little, and others have too much.  
Such is the sin of humankind.

**ALL: Our outsized appetites and our wants deny others their just due.**

ONE: We pay cheaply for shiny trinkets. Yet, the other – the low-wage worker, the child laborer – pays dearly with their time and lives to make these trinkets.

**ALL: Help us to remember the other in this season, O God.**

ONE: Help us to value the minutes of their lives, just as we value our own.

**ALL: Help us to honor all in your fold, our world, God's community.**

\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE (*Unison*) Patty Knepper

ONE: As Mary, the mother of Jesus, sang: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my savior," let us also rejoice! For God will redress the grievances of those who have been wronged.

**ALL: Grace will be given power and authority. Praise be to God!**

Choral Response: "*Gloria Patri*" #623

*(Please be seated)*

HYMN OF MEDITATION: #128 "*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*"

**PASTORAL PRAYER      LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom 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. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Choral Response: #126 "*A Nativity Prayer*" (*sung by choir*)

**TIME OF LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD** Patty Knepper

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: MICAH 5:2-5a #756

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: LUKE 1:39-55 #831

CHOIR ANTHEM: *“What Child Is This”*

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION: *“Transformed by Extravagant Welcome”*

## **A TIME OF GIVING**

PASTOR: OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Doxology *\*(Stand as you are able.)* #625 unison prayer of dedication  
praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise God all creatures here below;  
praise God above ye Heavenly host; \*\*  
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen. *(Please be seated.)*

*(\*\*alternate: Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen)*

PASTOR: OFFERTORY PRAYER

## **A TIME OF GOING OUT**

THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*(We offer one another the peace of Christ for the week ahead.)*

Choir leads the Congregation in *“We Wish You a Merry Christmas”*

*We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
And a Happy New Year!  
Good tidings to you wherever you are.  
Good tidings for Christmas and a Happy New Year!  
We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
And a Happy New Year!*

\*HYMN SENDING FORTH: #131 *“Angels from the Realms of Glory”*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: *“I Saw Three Ships”*, Willcocks  
*(Please remain seated “quietly” during the postlude.)*

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*Everyone is Welcome!*

**Feel at home, for Christ Jesus is our host. If you are visiting for the first time, we are delighted to have you here!**

**WORSHIP TEAM**

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|-------------------------|--|
| Guest Minister          | Rev. Gary Halstead                                   |
| Organist                | Allen Cadwallader                                    |
| Zoom Director           | Mary K. Kirsch                                       |
| Worship Producer        | Brian Schieferstein                                  |
| Handbell Choir Director | Shelley Harmych                                      |
| Choir Director          | Jennifer Wasilk                                      |
| Scripture Reader        | Patty Knepper  |
| Ushers                  | Geoff Gatz, Linda Gatz,<br>Walter Beale, Luena Beale |

# Church News

***Help Feed our Children!***



*Needed items for* **CHILDREN'S WEEKEND BACKPACK PROGRAM**

- . Single Serving PB & Jelly
- . Peanut Butter Crackers
- . Canned Soup (Pop top lids)
- . Spaghetti-Os (Pop top lids)
- . Mac & Cheese (Microwavable)
- . Individual Cereals
- . Granola Bars
- . Fruit Cups & Jello Cups
- . Oatmeal Packages
- . Small Bag Pretzels
- . Small Bag Chips

There's a great need for the following items for the Food Pantry:

- 1. Peanut Butter**
- 2. Spaghetti Sauce**
- 3. Canned Tuna or Chicken**

Please leave your donations in the drop off boxes at the church. Pam Miskov will make sure donations are delivered. Thanks to Pam and everyone for all you do in helping others!



## Flowers on the Altar

Flowers on the altar are given by Terry Deliman *in loving memory* of his beloved mother, Bev Mischka, and sister Susan Deliman. May God continue to comfort the hearts of



family and friends during the holidays.

*“Perhaps they are not stars in the sky, but rather openings where our loved ones shine down to let us know they are happy.”* -Eskimo Saying

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The other two vases of flowers were from the funeral of **Sherry Spratt** from her family. Please keep her family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.

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## Today we receive our Christmas Fund Offering

## Front Steps will be closed January & February

For safety reasons the front steps to the sanctuary will be closed for the months of January and February. The elevator and west Walker lobby doors will be open.

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Please fill out the Participation cards and drop into the offering plate. *Cards should be filled out weekly.* Thank you!

Help us continue to move forward in faith by submitting your pledge card, if you have not already done so. Thank you.

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At St. Peter's we work together in love to build strong foundations for our lives in Christ. This firm foundation allows us to put **“Arms and Legs on Christ's love in the world.”** We believe that God is calling you to be embraced by God's radical love and to be a part of this foundation of faith.

Join us LIVE on **Facebook: St. Peter's UCC Amherst, OH**

**Zoom: Meeting ID: 524 411 3917 | Passcode: 379205**  
(or call in with phone: 1 929 205 6099)

The service will be posted at a later date to view on our  
**YouTube channel: St Peters UCC Amherst**



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### **This Week's Events**

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|-----------------|---|
| Tues., Dec. 24  | Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7 PM       |
| Wed., Dec.25    | Christmas Day <i>office closed</i>            |
| Thurs., Dec. 26 | Christmas Holiday <i>office closed</i>        |
| Fri., Dec. 27   | Office will be open                           |
| Sun., Dec. 29   | Worship Service, 10 AM, Choir Rehearsal, 9 AM |

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### **How To Reach Us**

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**Office Hours:** Mon.–Fri. 8:30-12:30 PM *and* 1-2:30 PM

**Address:** 582 Church St. Amherst OH 44001

**Website:** [www.stpetersamherst.org](http://www.stpetersamherst.org)

**Phone:** 440-988-4965

*We are currently searching for a new pastor. If you need help, please contact either Christine or Kaye at the phone numbers below.*

Christine Burman, Church Council President  
[president@stpetersamherst.org](mailto:president@stpetersamherst.org) 440-988-4965

Kaye Oswald, Church Office Administrator  
[admin.ofc@stpetersamherst.org](mailto:admin.ofc@stpetersamherst.org) 440-988-4965

Please visit our website, **[www.stpetersamherst.org](http://www.stpetersamherst.org)**  
*to make your donation electronically via Breeze or Paypal.*  
**Also, we now have the ability to accept donations by TEXT!**  
For more detailed information, contact the church office.

**ST. PETER'S**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*Please remember St. Peter's UCPC in your estate planning.*