



ST. PETER'S
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

ISAIAH 40:3-5

Second Sunday in Advent

December 8, 2022

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: *“Come thou long expected Jesus”, Walther*

*CALL TO WORSHIP: **(Stand as you are able.)* Sally Readinger

Leader: It’s impossible to picture the things the prophet Isaiah, for they are not simply so. Wolves and lambs do not lie down together. Bears and cows do not eat side by side. Lions are anything but vegetarian. And no toddler would be allowed to venture anywhere near the hole of an asp. The stakes are too high. The consequences too great.

People: It is in the very nature of the snake to bite, the wolf to feast, the lion to enjoy a meal of red meat. And yet, the prophet uses these opposites to paint a picture of a time when it will all be different.

Leader: It is in this season of Advent we yearn for this coming possibility of One who sits things right—that time when animals and humans alike will only experience peace in the presence of one another. But in the meantime? Even as we watch and wait, it appears that the responsibility lies with us. Not only to cry out in horror or dismay, but to be those who judge with righteousness for the meek and the poor even now.

People: We look at the world, with its propensity to violence and separation, we yearn to make things right when and where we can. For that Spirit has been given to us, to you and me, for precisely this time. Amen.

*HYMN OF PRAISE: #120 *“The Advent of our God”*

(Please be seated.)

CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY:

Sally Readinger

Leader: How does a weary world find peace?

People: We find peace when we train our ears, and eyes to listen for-and see God's word and will for our lives.

Leader: We promise to spend time in silence and prayer so that we may discover the gift of God' blessed peace in our lives.

People: We find peace through our willingness to offer forgiveness to ourselves and others without expectations. We find peace by acknowledging the full worth and value of all of God's people.

Leader: Today we light the candle of Peace so that God's light can shine through the darkness of hate and the tragedy of indifference.

People: May the light of this candle of peace inspire us to attune our hearts and minds to the power that comes from loving all of God's people, and to the blessedness of receiving Christ's message of peace: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid." (John 14:27) Amen.

Leader: We now light the candle of PEACE.

Choral Response: *"A Thousand Candles" #159 vs. 1&2 (sung by choir)*

***MORNING PRAYER/INVOCATION** *(Unison) Sally Readinger*

Gracious God, we are your fragile people. We yearn for peace—between nations, within our families, with our neighbors and friends. And peace within ourselves. Why are we so harsh with each other. Down deep inside, we long for a greater sense of peace. And our text this morning offers us a recipe. To be filled with the Spirit of the Prince of Peace. And right relationships grounded in forgiveness. And justice for all. Isaiah was a dreamer of peace. May we love again the possibilities God has given us in the birth of the child. Amen.

Choral Response: *Gloria Patri* #623

(Please be seated)

HYMN OF MEDITATION: #141 *“O Little Town of Bethlehem”*

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: *“A Nativity Prayer”* #126

A TIME OF LISTENING TO GOD’S WORD

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: MATTHEW 3:1-12 Sally Readinger

Choir Anthem: *“Come Thou Long-expected Jesus”*

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION: *“The Lion and the Lamb in All of Us”*

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: #133 *"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: *"Allegro"*, Walther

(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

Guest Minister

Organist

Zoom Director

Worship Producer

Handbell Choir Director

Choir Director

Scripture Reader

Ushers

Rev. Keith Stuart

Allen Cadwallader

Mary K. Kirsch

Brian Schieferstein

Shelley Harmych

Jennifer Wasilk

Sally Readinger

Linda Gatz, Geoff Gatz

Shelley Harmych, Karen Geduldig

Church News

Our guest minister today is R. Keith Stuart, a retired minister in the United Church of Christ. A published author, Keith is finishing his second book of fiction. He serves on the Pathways board of directors, an institution that helps students who cannot attend seminary prepare for ministry. He is an avid reader. He and his wife, Cynthia, live in Westlake, OH. They have two children and twin grandsons.

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

Good Shepherd making **Care Packages** that will include food, plus a gift card. They're asking for donations of stuffing, instant potatoes, gravy (bottled or canned), and canned pumpkin pie mix or puree. Thank you for your help!

Circle Six December Events

On **Tuesday, December 10 at 7:00 pm**, we are very fortunate to have **violinist Mary Beth Ions** returning to entertain us in the Sanctuary. Mary Beth has performed with the Cleveland Pops Orchestra and in the orchestra pit for Broadway shows at Playhouse Square as well as other notable venues. She plays anything from Beethoven, to Beatles, Broadway, country fiddle, classical concertos and beyond. This wonderful event is open to the congregation and the public so please pass this information

along to your neighbors and friends. **Tickets are free and are available from any Circle Six member or in the church office.** Donations will be accepted and refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall following the program.



Circle Six will be holding our **annual Christmas cookie sale** in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, **December 15.** Be sure to mark your calendar!

Sat., Dec. 14 Giant Eagle Bell Schedule

- 9-10 Ken and Cindy Bring
- 10-11 Geoff and Linda Gatz
- 11-12 Fred and Lynda Helyes
- 12-1 Eleanor Traster and Judy McCurdy
- 1-2 Sue Conkle and Sam Bonfiglio
- 2-3 Lewis and Vicki Zeller
- 3-4 Walter and Luena Beale
- 4-5 Tom and Lynn Hollstein
- 5-6 David Rice

We have one more Sat. slot 5-6 and afternoon on Friday. Please see Don Ramsey if you're interested in helping. Thank you!

Preschool Christmas Program

The children's Christmas program will be held on December 18 at 6:30 pm. in the Sanctuary. *Everyone is welcome!* Refreshments to follow in the fellowship hall.

Please keep Kaye Koler and her family in your prayers in the loss of her beloved husband, Jim who went home to be with the Lord. May they be surrounded and uplifted by God's tender love and comfort during the difficult days ahead.

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



T h i s W e e k ' s E v e n t s

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| Mon., Dec.9 | Communion Visits, 1-4 PM |
| Tues., Dec. 10 | Music Program, Violinist Mary Beth Ions
7 PM in the Sanctuary, refreshments follow
Bible Study, Zoom, 7 PM |
| Wed., Dec. 11 | YOGA with Mary-K, 8:30-9:45 AM
Coffee Chats, Sandstone, 9-11 AM |
| Thurs., Dec. 12 | YOGA with Mary-K, 6:00-7:15 PM
Handbell Choir Rehearsal, 7 PM |
| Sun., Dec. 15 | Worship Service, 10 AM |

H o w T o R e a c h U s

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

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Please visit our website, **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 UCC in your estate planning.