

Mt. Zion United Church of Christ
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Rev. Amy E. Northridge, Pastor
Louis Allison, Tech Director
Travis Pinci, Accompanist, Children's Music Coordinator, & Church Administrator

December 7, 2025

9:45 AM

Second Sunday of Advent
In the Dark Streets Shineth: The Light of Peace

Thank you for worshiping with us today. If you are a guest, we invite you to take a moment to complete a visitor's card located in the back of the pew in front of you and place it in the offering plate when it is passed. We also invite you to sign your name in our guest book located in the back entrance of the sanctuary.

We welcome infants and children and all their wiggles & voices in our worship! For your comfort, we also have a children's corner in the back narthex where your child can relax and play and you can still participate in the worship experience. We have children's books and activity bags for them to enjoy! Additionally, after the children's message, children from 3 years old—6th grade are invited to participate in Sunday school in our classroom downstairs. They can choose to attend Sunday school or return to their seats to sit with their parents. Please see a member of the welcoming team for assistance!

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS
JOYS & CONCERNS

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Traditional

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We wait for peace — not the kind the world invents,

C: but the peace that reaches tired hearts.

L: We search the wilderness for your path, O God.

C: We listen for the voice that cries, "Prepare the way."

L: Even now, your light flickers on the horizon.

C: We are searching for your peace in the darkness.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

PRAYER OF THE DAY¹

L: God of the wilderness and the whisper,

**C: Fill our hearts with your faith—Where there is faith, there is love,
Where there is love, there is peace, Where there is peace, we find you. Amen.**

***OPENING HYMN NO. 116 NCH** (black hymnal, vs. 1, 4, 5, & 6)

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

arr. Thomas Helmore

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Piano $\text{♩} = 80$

1. O come, O come Em - man - u - el, and ran-som cap-tive
2. O come, O Wis - dom from on high, and or - der all things
3. O come, O come, O A - do - nai, who came to all on
4. O come, O shoot of Jes - se, free your own from Sa-tan's
5. O come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen wide your
6. O come, O Day-spring, come and cheer our spir-its by your

6

Is - ra - el that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here, un -
far and nigh; To us the path of knowl - edge show, and
Si - nai high, and from its peak a sin - gle law pro -
tyr - an - ny, From depths of hell your peo - ple save, and
heaven - ly home; Make safe the path to end - less day, to
ad - vent here; Love stir with-in the womb of night, and

11

Refrain

- til the Child of God ap - pear. Re-joice! Re-joice! E - man - u -
help us in that way to go.
- claimed in maj - es - ty and awe.
give them vic - tory o'er the grave.
hell's de - struction close the way.
death's own shad - ows put to flight.

17

- el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

***TIME OF CONFESSION**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

TIME OF CONFESSION

P: God of stillness and song,

C: we confess that we rush through this season, seeking peace in all the wrong places. We chase perfection and call it preparation. We confuse busyness with purpose. Forgive us for the ways we crowd out your voice. Calm our anxious hearts. Center us in your presence. Teach us again to rest in the quiet of your peace. Find us in the dark streets and shine your light, O God. Amen.

REMINDER OF GRACE

P: Hear this promise: The God who meets us in the wilderness also meets us in the noise. God's peace comes not to those who have it all together, but to those willing to breathe and be still. In Christ, we are forgiven, restored, and made whole.

C: Thanks be to God. The light shines, and the darkness cannot overcome it. Amen.

ACT OF PRAISE NO. 108 (red hymnal, vs. 1 & 3)

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ALL SING: 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 heaven; No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive Him, still the dear Christ enters in.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Travis Pinci

SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 11:1-10 (CEB)
Matthew 3:1-12 (CEB)*

SERMON

*Rev. Susan Emmons
Looking Out, Looking In: John the Baptizer*

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

There's a Voice in the Wilderness

J. Lewis Mulligan, 1925

H. Hugh Bancroft, 1938

$\text{♩} = 80$

Piano

The musical score is written for piano in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of five staves of music. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 80. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes three verses of lyrics. The first staff begins with a piano dynamic marking. The music features a simple, hymn-like melody with some syncopation. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with some words hyphenated across lines. The score ends with a double bar line.

1. There's a voice in the wil-der-ness cry - ing, a
 2. O Zi - on, who of-fers good tid - ings, to the
 3. But the word of our God is for - ev - er, our De -

4

call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the desert a high - way, a
 height of the mountains dare! Lift your voice to the cit - ies of Ju - dah: "Be -
 - fend - er's will is strong; God stands in the midst of na - tions, to

8

high - way for our God! The val - ley shall be ex - alt - ed, the
 - hold your God!" de - clare. Like the flowers of the field we per - ish, our
 ren - der right the wrong. Then God shall be as a shepherd, the

12

loft - y hills brought low: make straight all the crook - ed
 hu - man works de - cay, the power and pomp of
 lambs gathered to God's breast; and pas - tures of peace shall

15

pla - ces where Em - man - ue - el may go!
 na - tion shall pass like a dream a - way.
 greet them, to give to the wea - ry rest.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: God of peace that surpasses all understanding, we come to you from our hurried weeks and restless hearts. You invite us to breathe, to listen, to rest in your quiet presence. Settle us now in your stillness.

C: Find us in the dark streets and shine your light, O God.

P: We pray for a world that longs for calm—for places torn by conflict and hatred, for leaders who bear heavy burdens, for those whose days are filled with fear. Let your peace take root and grow, softening even the hardest ground.

C: Find us in the dark streets and shine your light, O God.

P: We pray for the world community—for those who wait for good news, for those facing uncertain days, and for all who work to bring kindness and justice close to home. Shine your light through this church, that we may be bearers of your hope in York and beyond.

C: Find us in the dark streets and shine your light, O God.

P: We pray for those who worry and work to bring your peace right here—for teachers and nurses, for caretakers and neighbors, for those who carry hidden stress or silent worry. Help us to be instruments of your peace, speaking gently, acting kindly, loving well.

C: Find us in the dark streets and shine your light, O God.

P: We give thanks for moments of rest, laughter, and kindness—the small glimpses of peace that remind us your Spirit is near. We name our joys aloud now, trusting you rejoice with us.

(Pause for spoken joys.)

P: Hold these joys of our hearts.

C: Find us in the dark streets and shine your light, O God.

P: We hold before you those weighed down by worry or pain—those who grieve, those awaiting diagnosis, those searching for comfort or healing. Hear now the names and needs we lift aloud or in silence.

(Pause for spoken concerns.)

P: Bring us peace in the midst of concern and grief.

C: Find us in the dark streets and shine your light, O God.

P: God of Peace, calm our hearts and this world you so love. Make your gentle light shine through us, that others may find rest in your grace. Through Christ, the Light of the World, we pray, Amen.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

TIME FOR SHARING

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY & DISCIPLESHIP

OFFERTORY (sung by Caitlin Damon)

Glory (Let There Be Peace) by Maher

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

L: God of peace,

C: you calm our hearts and steady our hands. Bless these offerings and make them instruments of your peace. Where there is conflict, bring compassion; where there is fear, bring your calm. Let your light of peace shine through all we share. Amen.

WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM

A Star Will Soon Shine

by Price & Besig

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

L: Holy and gracious God, we give you thanks—for creating a world of beauty and belonging, for breathing life into us, and for never letting us go. When we turned away, you sent prophets to remind us of your promise. When our hearts were restless, you spoke peace into the world through your Son, Jesus Christ—who came as a child of hope, lived among us with mercy and compassion, and offered himself for us in love. For all your goodness and grace, for the peace that passes understanding, we give you thanks and praise, joining our voices with angels and all who dwell in your house, saying:

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

ALL: 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

*POST COMMUNION PRAYER

L: God of stillness and light,

C: in this meal you have gathered us into your peace. As the world stirs around us, help us carry your calm into our homes and our hearts. May the bread we have broken strengthen us for service, and the cup we have shared remind us that your peace is for all. In the name of the One who is our peace, Jesus Christ. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN UM HYMNAL NO. 431 (see below)

Let There Be Peace on Earth

Let There Be Peace on Earth

Sy Miller & Jill Jackson

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Piano $\text{♩} = 80$

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time with a tempo of 80 beats per minute. It consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words hyphenated across lines. The score ends with a double bar line on the seventh staff.

Let there be peace on earth and let it be-gin with me; let there be

11
peace on earth the peace that was meant to be. With God our cre-a-tor

21
children all are we. Let us walk with each other in perfect har-mo-ny

32
Let peace be-gin with me; let this be the moment now. With every

43
step I take let this be my solemn vow: to take each moment and live each

52
moment in peace e-ter-nal-ly. Let there be peace on earth, and let it be -

62
- gin with me.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

***BENEDICTION²**

L: Go now, disciples of Christ, and shine your light.

C: This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine — for peace.

L: Where will you shine your light?

C: We will shine our light of peace —on ourselves, our families, our friends, and our community.

P: God will use your shining light of peace, to bless all of creation. So go, children of the Light, and know that the Light of the World goes with you — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

POSTLUDE

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

by Williams

Thank you to Rev. Susan Emmons for presiding over worship today. Thank you to Caitlin Damon for providing special music.

Thank you to Lee & Patsy Brown for providing our Christmas trees and the wreaths on our front door!

Welcome Team Members— Deb & Terry Barnes, Nancy & Jesse Smith

Liturgist— Tori Everhart

Tech Team— Elaine Bevivino, Joe Vacante

¹The Prayer of the Day was written by Lana Fritz for our In The Dark Streets Shineth Worship Series

²The Benediction was written by Deb Herlocker for our Advent Series.