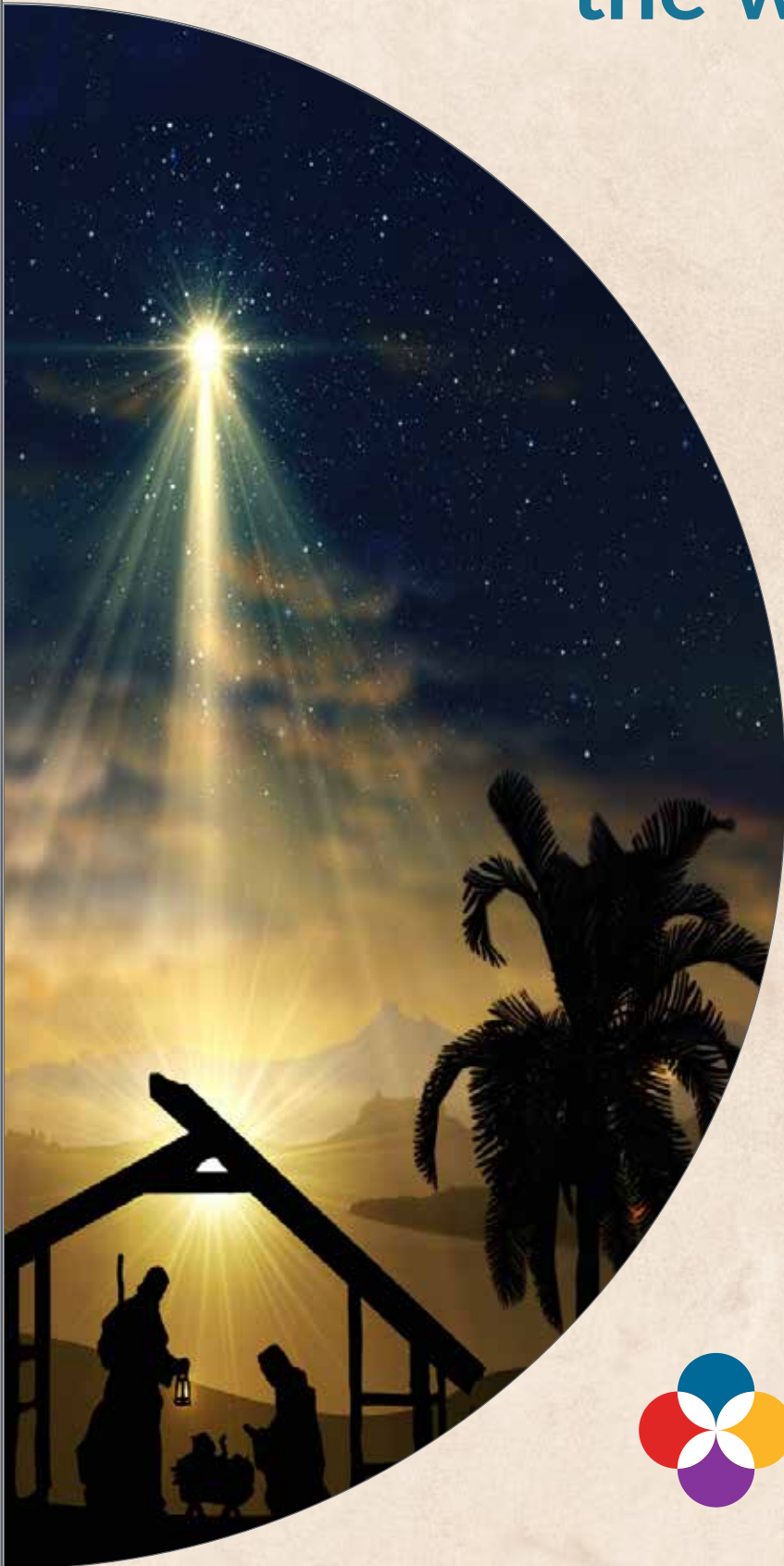
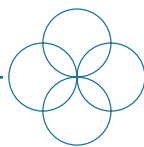


We embrace all as we journey
the way of Jesus



CHRIST
CHURCH UCC



December 24, 2023

Welcome

Prelude

“There Is a Great Joy Coming”
Chancel Choir

Courtney/Red
arr. Mark Hayes

Lighting of the Fourth Candle of Advent – Peace

Katie, Bud, and Kathy Leftin

Hope, Love, Joy – those are the three candles that we have lit thus far in this holy season. Each has spoken to a different part of the Jesus story around which we gather. Hope connected to a story of challenge and difficulty. Love spoke to the tangible expression of welcome and acceptance. Joy was expressed by angels to those often ignored or forgotten. We light those three candles now.

Today, on our final Sunday of Advent, we come to peace as we hear the stories of when Mary and Joseph were first told of what was to come. It is likely that peace was far from what they felt in those conversations. Even as the divine spoke to them, they were staring into the unknown with no idea of what was ahead for them.

We live in times right now where we may feel similarly. Our planet’s climate is in crisis. Wars are taking place and fears continue to be felt for them spiraling ever further. We may feel unsettled with what we hear all around us. And peace might feel far from our own specific lives for many different reasons. Yet, there is the promise that this child to be born shall be called, among many other names, Prince of Peace.

All: So we light this fourth candle in defiance of all else that is telling us that peace is impossible or peace is not realistic. We light it in the power of the one who was, who is, and who always will be. We light it as we claim shalom, the restoration of all things. Amen.

Red Hymnal #74
Verses 1 & 2

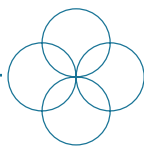
“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Wesley/Prichard

Praying Together

Katie Leftin

One: Are you a Mary or a Joseph? Are you a Mary who seems to sit and listen to the angel’s pronouncement and seemingly accept it as it is shared even if your insides are tied in knots at the unknown? Are you a Joseph who hears news and makes a quick decision only to later find that it was not the way to go? In silence, reflect upon which you may feel you are – *Silence* – Let us pray together.



All: Holy One who spoke to that young man and that young woman so long ago, thank you for continuing to be with us today. Thank you for continuing to speak today. Regardless of whether we feel more like Mary or more like Joseph, meet us in those places. Give us peace as we face uncertainty or the unknown. Help us to offer peace to others who seek to foster conflict. Bless us with inner peace to soothe the rough patches. May we follow in Jesus' footsteps as peace-makers and peace-sharers. Amen.

Assurance of God's Presence

Offertory

"Grown Up Christmas Wish"

Laura Petracco, vocalist

David Foster

arr. Linda Thompson Jenner

Prayer of Dedication

Solo

"O, Holy Night"

Ashley Tinch, vocalist

Adolphe Adam

Scriptures

Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 1:18-24 NRSV

Sermon

Finding Peace

Rev. Dr. Edward Goode

Black Hymnal #129

All Verses

"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

John Stainer

Children's Christmas Program

Benediction

Red Hymnal #92

Verses 1 & 4

"Joy to the World"

Watts/Mason

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Edward Goode

Pastor

Toni Sheffer

Music Director/Organist

Max Gise

Guitarist

Talia Zoll

Vocalist

Kelly Kuhnhein

Director of Christian Education & Outreach

Jeff Searcy

Custodian

Barb Walkenhorst Derby

Bookkeeper

Michele Wright

Communications Director/Administrator

• Welcome to Christ Church

If you'd like information about our church, you can find our online service, newsletter, and much more on the church's website:

christchurchft.org.

Visitors are encouraged to fill out our "Friendship Form" by scanning this QR code or going to:

<https://bit.ly/ccucc-welcome>



• Christmas Music Series

- **Sunday, Dec 24, 10 p.m.** — Annual Christmas Eve service with a song from our Chancel Choir men and violinist, Evan Hurley.
- **Sunday, Dec 31** - Our regular worship service will feature our annual Carol Sing. *Be sure to get your favorite Christmas Carols to Toni Sheffer before Sunday, Dec 24.*

• Office Closed Next Week

All staff will be working from home between Christmas and New Year's. Phone messages will be monitored from home along with any emails. The staff will be there for any emergencies. The Christ Church staff thanks you for giving them extra time with their families.

• Youth Gathering

Game Night! – Sunday, January 7, 5:30-7:30

Lakeside Presbyterian Church Carriage House
2690 Dixie HWY, Lakeside Park

It's a new year! Join us as we kick off the year with an evening of food, games, and more. RSVP at

<https://lakesidechurch.org/index.php/nkyyouth/>

• Birthdays and Anniversaries

Carolyn Watts

Christi Stevenson

Scott Turner

Richard Pendery

Michael & Carolyn Cook

Mike & Nancy Evans

Cynthia & Bob Blau

Toni & Mark Sheffer

• Because of You... Stewardship

Because of you and the Holy Spirit, the church is changing lives. Thank you for being part of Christ Church and opening yourself to the work of the Holy Spirit in our



common ministry! If you have already sent in your commitment card, thank you! If you haven't please do so as soon as possible, or consider making a commitment using this QR code.

• Open and Affirming Process

If you have any questions about our Open and Affirming Process, please contact **Beckie Borah**

• Prayer Changes Us

Covenant Cluster Prayer Partner:

Washington UCC, Cincinnati, OH

Prayer Requests:

Joy, Genene Lyons, Pierce, Ev & Jack Weber, Tom Cox, Marie Shields, Barry Bordenkircher, Jean Lacialley, Amber Schmidt, Bobby Grim, Roman, Lyuda & Natalya Shostak, Tim, John Jr., Sheila Mains, Sue, Judy & Greg Gadd, Kristen Bender, Mike & Laura Randall, Marcia Hosea, Emma Hamann, Sallie Schmidt and family, Barb Walkenhorst-Derby, Landon Schmidt, Jesse Clayton, Bill P., Don Seifert, Raenon Justice, the family of Bonnie Hitch, Kim Schnier, Chris, the family of Wilma Graves, the family of Nancy Faulkner, David Hosea, Scott, Stacey Seiter, Jeff McCall, Kelly Greenwalt, Kristin Bailey, Jamie, Jenny Holek, Nancy McLane, Mike & Sheila Smith, the family of Margi McKenna, John Fugate, the family of Judy Robinson, the family of John Neumaier, Andrew, Howard Storm, the family of Faye Gateley, Marshall Gantt, Sophia, Carolyn Tyler, Shane, Parker, Dave, Jane Cox, the family of Lillian Chapman, the family of Steve and Lesley Ann Gracey, the family of Billie Crowder, Paulina, Gregg Frank, Linda Gracey, Gary Kennedy

(Names underlined indicate request for anonymity)

We will start with a new prayer list Sunday, January 7.

If you would like to remain on the current list, please call the office: (859) 441-2565