



Peace United Church of Christ

Rev. Eric Kirkegaard

December 17, 2023

Third Sunday of Advent

Our mission: Love like Jesus...

Welcome all, love all, grow in faith together, and seek justice for all.

“Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.” – John 13:34

We, the members of Peace United Church of Christ, believe that we are called to be a congregation of grace and welcome to all of God’s children:

- to celebrate every person as a child of God, created in God’s image.
- to love all as God has first loved us.
- to acknowledge the presence of, and offer healing to the wounds of oppression, injustice, prejudice, and hate, and to stand with those who are left out.

Following Christ’s example, we welcome and include everyone in all aspects of life, leadership, and ministry of the church. We affirm persons of all races, nationalities, sexual orientations, gender identities, family structures, physical or mental abilities, political stances, faith backgrounds and socio-economic status.

In the way of Jesus, we stand against acts of hate and violence in all their forms.

Therefore, we declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming Congregation, where an extravagant welcome and grace are extended to all, and each person’s gifts are celebrated, welcomed, nurtured, and blessed, that all may be one. Amen.

Approved by Peace Church 10/20/2019

*Our vision: “Peace Church exists to feed souls,
grow in God's extravagant love and
together serve all of God's children and creation.”*

Welcome visitors! *Please take a moment to complete a Guest Information card in the pew racks in front of you. Please place the completed card in the offering plate.*

Prayer Requests - *As we gather together as one family in Jesus Christ, we covenant to hold one another’s joys and concerns. Please share your prayers with us by writing them on the “Prayer Request” slip found in the pew in front of you and return them to the usher or place them in the offering plate. Thank you.*

Contact Peace Church: *Peace UCC - P. O. Box 433, Kewaskum, WI 53040*

Pastor Eric cell: 262-707-0758 - pastor@peace-ucc.org

Church Office: Robin Mock, 262-626-4011 - office@peace-ucc.org

Intern Minister: Vikar Jakob Kröner, 262-626-4011

On the web @ www.peace-ucc.org, YouTube: Peace UCC Kewaskum

****Please stand***

WORSHIP SERVICE

PRELUDE "Away in the Manger" Vandall

GREETINGS - A TIME OF CENTERING

*HYMN 185 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

PRAYER OF JOY – adapted from UCC Worship Ways

One: God of justice and of peace — You have woven into the fabric of the world threads of mercy and kindness.

All: We hunger for the awe and wonder revealed in your marvelous artistry.

One: God of joy and delight — You beckon to us in the beauty of sunset and darkness, of daylight and lengthening shadows.

All: We rejoice in the majesty of your creation.

One: The chorus of your rejoicing spills forth all around. The hues of your love warm our spirits. The vibrancy of your wonder saturates us with joy.

All: Blessed is the God of joy whose art expressed in Christ we anticipate.

One: We light this candle in abundant expectation that your radiance, O God, will be kindled in our hearts, filling us with joy, as we anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ.

All: We who wait on the Lord rejoice in expectation.

HYMN #175 "We Light the Advent Candles" vs 1&4

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: As we begin our advent journey, our days grow shorter, the sacred-darkness longer. We turn to symbols of candles, evergreens, and wreaths to proclaim our belief in the unquenchable light that shines in the darkness. In confession we offer our darkness trusting in God's Reign of light.

All: We confess that our lives have not always been lived in ways pleasing to you, God. Our shame has left us feeling distant from you who are both Mother and Father to us all. We know that you love us just as we are, but we also know that you love us too much to have us remain merely as we are. Forgive us O Lord, for what we do and for what we

fail to do. Forgive us for all the ways that we break our relationships in thought, word, and deed; for all the times that we fail to love our neighbors or ourselves as you would have us do. Guide us with your light that we might become a light to the nations. We humbly pray in your name O Christ, our Lord. Amen

One: God, our Creator, has given us the ultimate gift. God's gift to us is grace - everlasting love offered in startling and unexpected ways. **Alleluia and Amen.**

*A Response #177 – “Jesus, Name Above All Names”

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you

9:30 service – The Children’s Program

At 8:00 a.m. Service

PSALM 126 (page 472)

One: When the Lord changed Zion’s circumstances for the better, it was like we had been dreaming.

All: Our mouths were suddenly filled with laughter; our tongues were filled with joyful shouts.

One: It was even said, at that time, among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them!”

All: Yes, the Lord has done great things for us, and we are overjoyed. Lord, change our circumstances for the better, like dry streams in the desert waste!

One: Let those who plant with tears reap the harvest with joyful shouts.

All: Let those who go out, crying and carrying their seed, come home with joyful shouts, carrying bales of grain!

The Children’s Time – As the children come forward, please sing Hymn 437 “Jesus Loves Me” vs. 1

HYMN 184 “What Child Is This”

LESSON	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	(page 574)
GOSPEL	John 1:6-8, 19-28	(page 809)
SERMON		

SPECIAL MUSIC “Carol of the Bells” Vandall

***THE DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below:
Praise God for all that love has done:
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**Gracious God, we bring these gifts as a sign of
our love for you and one another. Bless us with
your presence as we give ourselves to you and
to your people. Amen.**

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 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.”*

BENEDICTION

One: The worship is ended, now the service begins. Go in
peace, serve the Lord.

All: **We go to love and to serve for we are the church!**

All: **Alleluia and Amen!**

***HYMN 218** “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

POSTLUDE “Joy to the World” Vandall

Serving Today: Musicians: Sherry McElhatton, Karla Spaits, Mia Dornacker; Video: David Dorn; Audio: Josh Spaits

Today’s Altar Flowers from John & Karen Kletti in honor of Wesley Spaits for this 1st Birthday

Lectionary for December 24 – 4th Sunday of Advent - Christmas Eve

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 • Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 • Romans 16:25-27 • Luke 1:26-38

Happy Birthday Dec 17 – 23

Dec 17 Mary Steger, Wesley Spaits (1)

Dec 18 Gayle Van Ess

Dec 19 Karla Spaits

Dec 20 Corbin Walker

Dec 21 Kathy Danielson

Happy Anniversary Dec 17 – 23

Dec 20 John & Margaret Schmahl (54)

Calendar for the Week of December 17

- 12/17 Children's Christmas Program,
Scholarship Cookie Sale
9th Grade Confirmation gathering donations at
Enchantment in the Park from 5-9 pm
- 12/19 Lectionary 10 am, Faith Formation 7-8 pm
- 12/20 XYZ Cards, Banned Book Club 1:30 pm

Family Promise – Peace Church will be taking meals to Family Promise on January 1st. Meal prep will take place at Peace Church on Friday, December 29th 1st at 10:30 am. Please email the church office if you can assist with the meal prep. (office@peace-ucc.org)

Prayers of Healing:

For Christian Bocher who was hospitalized this week.

Prayers of Comfort:

For Bev Martel and her family, as they continue grieving the death of her mother Sharon Seltrecht.



December 24

Christmas Eve

Fourth Sunday of Advent Service – 9:30 a.m.

Candlelight Services of Lessons and Carols

6:30 p.m. & 8:30 p.m.

December 25

Christmas Day

ONLY ONE SERVICE

9:30 a.m.

December 31

First Sunday after Christmas

ONLY ONE SERVICE

9:30 a.m.