



Venice United Church of Christ
Second Sunday of Advent
Sacrament of Holy Communion

Rev. Barbara Dickason, BCC
“The Gift of Peace”

United in Christ’s love,
A just world for all



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Second Sunday of Advent Sacrament of Holy Communion December 7, 2025

Singing Prelude

One Candle Is Lit
TUNE: *Away in a Manger*

Parrott/Kirkpatrick

**Come quickly, shalom, teach us how to prepare
for a gift that compels us with justice to care.
Our spirits are restless till sin and war cease.
One candle is lit for the reign of God's peace.**

Welcome and Announcements

We Approach God's Presence

Meditation/Bringing in the Light of Christ

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Praetorius

***Responsive Call to Worship**

The sudden sense of a larger mystery.

A flood of unexpected tears.

Some chorus faintly heard.

A cherished memory brought to mind.

A fragment of a dream. The tail end of a story.

An awesome peace in the midst of a pressing chaos.

A holy reverence on a starlit, moon-bright night.

An unexplained act of kindness.

An unexpected letter, a surprise visit.

In many and varied ways God nudges, tugs, calls and beckons us.

We turn and discover God already waiting for us.

Our longing met by God's yearning.

Rejoice and sing!

***Prayer of Peace**

God of heart-longing and hope-filled dreams,
Your prophet Micah faithfully foretold that a new ruler would
come out from Bethlehem—today we celebrate the pregnant
stillness that comes before the whole world changed;
Make us bold enough to proclaim with faith—
the coming of your dwelling on earth as with You,
the coming of your justice,
the coming of your peace.
May we sing out the good news of your steadfast love.
Help us to build a home for Your Peace in our city,
that we may walk in your holy ways. Amen

***Hymn**

There's a Voice in the Wilderness (inside back page)

Lighting the Candle of Peace

Lynda Weston/Charlene Frick

Christmas Gifts

by Ann Weems, from *Kneeling in Bethlehem*

I had a dream that the Holy Family
came down the escalators at Field's.
Angels in red raiment flew around
sprinkling us with Stardust,
singing alleluias and playing their bugles,
and all the shoppers knelt in adoration and praise.
The Wise Men, working in gift wrap,
began receiving our hearts
and wrapped them in rainbow papers
and we presented them to the Christ Child.
Then they were gone
and we returned to our shopping.
But I heard no more complaining about the long lines
and I saw no more rushing about.
We all smiled and greeted one another with
PEACE and GOODWILL.
We all remembered we had given away our hearts.
It was the best Christmas shopping I'd ever done!

**Peace, peace, peace – the light of Christ is peace.
We walk with Him, his path our mission;
Grateful for his sure provision.
Peace, peace, peace – the gift of Christ is peace.**

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Dearest Lord,
Because of this moment,
 when God's peace was offered to us
 while the angels sang as their great light filled the heavens,
and the shepherds learned of God's gift of Immanuel
 we can know the light of your peace
 in our own lives - right now.
**As the light of the candle of peace fills the earth,
 may your peace surround us and fill us,
 and may our lives overflow, a little more,
 with the peace of wholeness, health, and life itself
 given to us by the Christ Child. Amen**

***Words of Grace**

Even when unkind words, arguments, rigidity of pride, and war
 grab our attention, seeking their justification;
 The Gift of God's Peace appears.
We rush forward, hearts open wide to receive God's grace.

***Response**

Acts of Kindness - Peace Quinn/Polish Folk Melody
TUNE: *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

**God, we seek through acts of kindness
 to treat everyone on earth
with respect and great compassion
 as we honor Jesus' birth.**

**Help us understand the yearnings
 and the needs of all until
we're a source of peace for others
 as we seek to do your will.**

We Encounter God in the Word

First Lesson

Isaiah 2:1-5 Young's Literal Translation
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

Prepare the Way

Martin

Second Lesson

Matthew 3: 1-3; Psalm 122 *New International Version*
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

“The Gift of Peace”

Rev. Barbara Dickason, BCC

We Respond to God's Grace

Congregational Prayers

Silent Prayers

Prayers of the People and our Lord's Prayer (sung)

**Our Father, which 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, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

We Share God's Love

Invitation to Generosity *(Offering plates are found by each doorway for your use.)*

***Song of Gratitude**

Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above, ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

**Emmanuel, hear our prayer!
We bring these gifts before you to spread peace throughout our homes,
our communities, and our world. On every street corner, beside rivers,
lakes, oceans, at the top of your tallest mountains, and dwelling below
the cliffs, your people are in need. Take these gifts to strengthen our
church and bring relief to your beloved children. Amen.**

Invitation to Holy Communion

Christ has invited everyone to join together in this holy feast.

**We gather with sisters and brothers and friends
from every time zone
around this beautiful sphere God created
and that we call earth.**

As today's sunlight inches across the land and sea, we prepare our Lord's table
so that all may come, all may eat, and all might be nourished by the bread
Christ has offered that gives us life.

**We gather to eat the bread and drink of the cup
that fills us with God's abundant love,
that reforms us to be a reflection
of God's original blessing, and
that reconnects us to God, God's creation,
and each other.**

*(The ministers and servers will prepare the elements; the congregation
is then invited to come and receive the bread and the cup.
If you cannot come but wish to receive, the servers will come to you.)*

Communion Meditation

Mary, Did You Know?

Lowry/Greene

We Go to Carry the Light

***Hymn**

Christmas Peace (back page)

***Blessing and Benediction**

***Sending Blessing**

Christ, Be Our Light

Farrell

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts, shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

Postlude

Ding, Dong! Merrily on High

French Carol

**Please remain seated in silence for the Postlude as the
Light of Christ is carried into the world.
The worship has ended; our service begins.**

Worship materials are taken from
Raised Above: Service Prayers for the Second Sunday of Advent Year A by Maria Mankin

Supporting Our Service Today

Acolytes: Allison Rowe and Bella Clapham

Liturgist/Communion Assistant: Rev. Mel Burrowes

Litany of the Advent Candle: Lynda Weston and Charlene Frick

Communion Stewards: Barbara and Bob Zittel

Welcome Table: Gayle Davis **Greeters:** Loren Matasek and Helen Helgren

Head Usher: George Ikeda **Usher Team:** Jim Forristall, Chet Hamlin,
Steve Hemping, Dick Schleicher, Bonnie Thistle

Technology Team

(Live Streaming, Camera, and Sound Technicians)

Gary Woodrum, Debra Mosely, Maria Groody,
David Jack, Linda Newton, Wally Davis, Patty Fjetland

The **Lord's Table** was decorated by Victoria Augustine

The **Sanctuary Flowers** are given by Helen Markus and Mel Burrowes
in Memory of Helen's Daughter, Susanne Wiltberger

The **Church Sign** was changed by Faye Newton and Lisa Sclafani

Sunday Librarian: Nancy Brex

Fellowship Time: VUCC Volunteers

Senior Minister

Rev. Barbara Dickason

Music Staff

Barbara Quinn: *Music Director*

Lynda Weston: *Bella Handbell Director*

Other Staff

Gary Leidheiser: *Custodian*

Barb Quinn: *Office Assistant*

The church office is open M-Th, 9-1.

**Pastor Barb's day off is on Friday. Please reach out in case of Emergency.
All other emails received over the weekend will be answered the first of the week.**

**Would you like to donate to VUCC online? Use your Smart Phone to scan the QR code
below, and it will take you directly to our donations page. It is really easy!**



This Week at a Glance

Monday, December 8

12:00 PM SpiritFed!

Noon Bible Study via Zoom (link below)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83576594637?pwd=U2024sKmOPiy3CyMqV4OarYUtofaom.1>

Meeting ID: 835 7659 4637

Passcode: 913882

(The easiest way to connect is to use the link in the Connect.)

6:30 PM Bridge Group—Parlor

Tues., Dec. 9

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

10:00 AM Mission Committee—Parlor

3:00 PM Game Group—Parlor

4:00 PM Vision Team—CR

6:00 PM Girl Scouts

6:30 PM Blue Christmas Service—Sanctuary

Wed., Dec. 10

9:00 AM-Noon Library open

10:00 AM Bible Study—CR

3:30 PM Youth Handbells

6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

Thurs., Dec. 11

4:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal

6:00 PM Daisies

Fri., Dec. 12

8:30 AM Men's Coffee—Panera

Sun., Dec. 14

9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary

9:00 AM Library open

10:00 Worship in situ and virtual

11:00 AM Fellowship Time

11:00 –11:15 AM Library open

11:00 AM Usher Training after worship

Coming Events (partial list)

2025

- 6:30 PM Tuesday, December 9, Blue Blues Christmas Worship Service
 - Sunday, December 14, Christmas Fund Offering Begins
- 12:30 PM, Thursday, December 18 –Women's Luncheon at The Point

Sign up in Naar Hall

- 7:00 PM Wednesday, December 24, Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service
 - 10:00 AM-Noon, December 25, Christmas Day Brunch—Naar Hall

Bring something to share—sign up in Naar Hall

2026

- Sunday, January 11, Mission Fair—Naar Hall
- Prospective New Members Meet in Parlor after Worship
- Sunday, January 18, Labyrinth Program after Worship
 - Tuesday, January 20, Women's Trip to Spanish Point in Osprey

- Sunday, January 25, CROP Walk

Soup-a-thon after Worship

5:30 PM, Tuesday, January 27, Word Made Flesh Dinner—Naar Hall

- 10:00 AM-4:00 PM, Saturday, January 31, Venice Garden Club Flower Show—Naar Hall
 - Friday/Saturday, February 6-7, Venice Coin Club Show—Naar Hall
 - 8:00 AM-1:00 PM, Saturday, February 14, Women's Fellowship Rummage Sale
 - Saturday/Sunday, February 21-22, Combined Bell Choirs from VUCC and Winter Haven
 - Saturday, February 28, Christian Education Event TBA
 - Sunday, March 8, Immokalee Sunday with Alan Penick
 - Saturday, March 28, 10:00 AM, Easter Egg Hunt
 - Sunday, March 29, Palm Sunday
 - Sunday, April 5, Easter Sunday
- 7:00 AM Sunrise Service; 10:00 AM, Service in Sanctuary
- Sunday, April 12, One Great Hour of Sharing Offering Begins
 - Sunday, April 26, Annual Meeting following Worship



I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

Psalms 122:1

There's a Voice in the Wilderness

Isa. 40:3-11; Ps. 103:15-17

J. Lewis Milligan, 1925; alt.

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-

call from the ways un-trod: Pre-pare in the des-ert a
 height of the moun-tains dare! Lift your voice to the cit-ies of
 fend-er's will is strong; God stands in the midst of

high-way, a high-way for our God! The
 Ju-dah: "Be-hold your God!" de-clare. Like the
 na-tions, to ren-der right the wrong. Then

Before moving to Canada, J. Lewis Milligan was a successful British journalist and poet. This text was written in 1925 to celebrate the union of three churches into The United Church.

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Tune: ASCENSION Irr.
 H. Hugh Bancroft, 1938

val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the loft - y hills brought
 flowers of the field we per - ish, our hu - man works de -
 God shall be as a shep-herd, the lambs gath-ered to God's

low: make straight all the crook - ed pla - ces
 cay, the power and pomp of na - tions
 breast; and pas - tures of peace shall greet them,

where Em - man - u - el may go!
 shall pass like a dream a - way.
 to give to the wea - ry rest.

Christmas Peace

Words and Music by
Richard Blank

Eb *Gm* *Eb*

1. Lord be born in our hearts this day, Christ - child spir - it bring
 2. Lord the world cries for u - ni - ty Bind our hearts in com -
 3. Lord be born in us ev - 'ry day, Keep the world in your

F7 *Bb* *Eb* *Gm* *Eb*

peace we pray, Make the wars of the world to cease,
 mu - ni - ty. From all ha - tred our souls re - lease,
 peace al - way, Christ child spir - it in us in - crease,

Ab *Fm7* *Bb7* *Eb* *Refrain*

Bring us Lord Christ - mas peace. Christ - mas peace,

Ab *Fm7* *Gm* *Eb/Bb* *Eb*

Christ - mas peace, Bring us Lord, Christ - mas peace.

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