

Lakewood Congregational Church

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Sunday, December 19, 2021



An Order of Worship to be followed in your home,
along with our Livestream Service at 10:00 am

Welcome and Announcements

If you are new among us, welcome. Please know we are glad you're here; you're welcome in our remote community and you're welcome in our physical community when the time is right.

At Lakewood Congregational Church, we strive to be people of extravagant welcome. Whether you are young or old, gay or straight, single or partnered, happy or sad, confused or inspired, street smart or college-educated, whether you can't pay your bills or you have more than enough to share—no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here in this place, to worship a loving God who welcomes us all. As I stand in this sanctuary I join my heart with you and I pray that you might feel the refuge of this space.

May the Peace of Christ be with you. Let us worship God.

The white candle on the altar is the 2021 Peace Light. Each year, a child from Upper Austria fetches the light from the grotto in Bethlehem where Jesus was born. The light is carried in two blast proof miners lamps on an Austrian Airlines jet from Tel Aviv, Israel to Vienna, Austria from where it is distributed at a Service of Dedication to delegations from across Europe who take it back, with a message of Peace, to their own countries. Austrian Airlines then flies the miners lamps containing the Peace Light to New York City. The goal of this group is to help the light spread like branches of a huge tree rooted in New York and spreading across the continent.

Prelude

arr. Wood and Thompson

Sussex Carol
LCC Handbell Choir

Call to Worship

One: We are seeking -

Many: Deeper faith, a place to belong, the feeling that God is connected to us here and now.

One: We are seeking -

Many: Joy that overflows, the movement of the Spirit, a hand to hold when alone in the dark.

One: We are seeking -

Many: The freedom to be, the courage to love, the conviction to act in the face of injustice.

One: We are seeking - and here as we worship and connect

Many: We are found.

One: Take a deep breath. This is your sanctuary.

Many: God is among us. We are found. Amen.

Opening Hymn

129

Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle: Love

Sarah, Matthew, Max, and Meg Winters

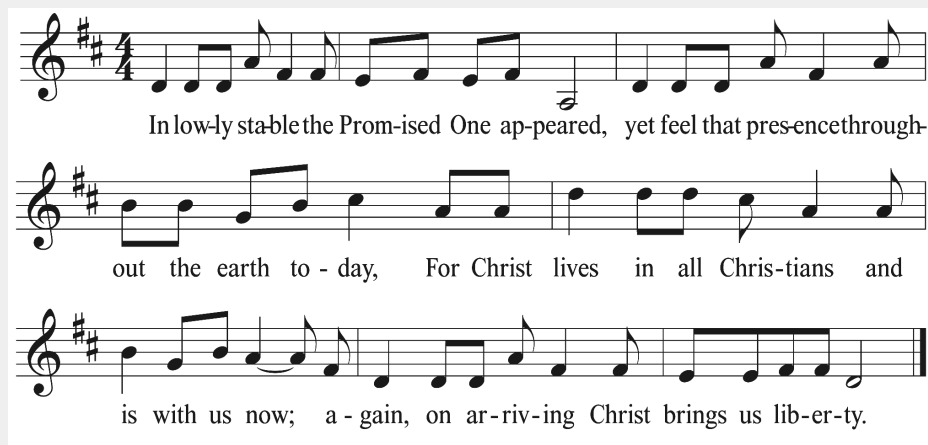
One: I will light four candles
and I am willing to light so many more,
because love is endless, recurring, persistent.

Two: This is how incarnation happens.
God comes into the world because of love.
We light four candles
or a hundred or a thousand if we need to.

One: whatever it takes
to remind ourselves to live in love.

Two: God's hope, peace, joy, and love comes to us
in the ordinary and gentle.
It illuminates the world and turns it upside down.

All: I will light Candles this Christmas,
Candles of joy despite all the sadness,
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,
Candles of courage for fears ever present,
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,
Candles of love to inspire all my living,
Candles that will burn all year long. (Howard Thurman)



In low-ly stable the Prom-ised One ap-peared, yet feel that pres-encethrough-
out the earth to - day, For Christ lives in all Chris-tians and
is with us now; a - gain, on ar-riv-ing Christ brings us lib-er-ty.

Anthem

Herbert Howells

A Spotless Rose
LCC Chancel Choir

A Time of Prayer

The Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

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 and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

Prayer Response

arr. Wood and Thompson

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

LCC Handbell Choir

A Time of Sharing

Call to Offering

Doxology (in unison)

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

Prayer of Dedication (in unison)

Good and gracious God, We give these gifts for the seekers
and those who need sanctuary. Our gifts are for those who
build sanctuaries, those who have lost sanctuary, and for
those who find sanctuary all over the place. Use these gifts to
bring us each closer to home. With joy and hope in our hearts
we pray, Amen.

Anthem

Herbert Howells

A Spotless Rose

LCC Chancel Choir

The Reading of God's Word

Patti Komperda

Luke 1:39-55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town
in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah
and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting,
the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the
Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you
among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why
has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to
me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child
in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that
there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the
Lord.'

And Mary said,

'My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things,

and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Children's Christmas Pageant

Hallelujah! May the Prince of Peace Live Among Us!

Closing Hymn

142

People, Look East

Benediction

Postlude

arr. Wood and Thompson

Cold December Flies Away

LCC Handbell Choir

Joseph Daso, Paula Deal, Noah Hamrick, Michael Komperda,
Val Mechenbier, Leah Thomas Molinari, Bob Paraska,
Cathy Spicer, Susan Walker, Robert Wenz, Jan Young

Offering and Contribution Collection

Please consider fulfilling your pledges during this time. Financial gifts are always welcome, and our church feels the call to respond to the needs around us as they arise. Financial stability allows us to do so more effectively. So, let us give generously of our time, talent, and treasure to further the work of God in our community. You can do so in the following ways:

- Writing and mailing a check to Lakewood Congregational Church, 1375 W. Clifton Blvd., Lakewood, OH 44107
- Texting STEWARD to 44-321
- Sending a gift through your bank's online bill pay
- By using the donate button on the church's website www.lcc-church.org
- Call the church office at (216) 221-9555 to discuss other options

LCC Events: December 19 - December 26

- **Sunday, December 19**, Worship with Christmas Pageant
 - 8:30am: Core Group, at LCC
 - 11:15am: Next Generation Band
 - 2:00pm: Core Group, Zoom
- **Monday, December 20**, 7:00pm: AA
 - 7:00pm: Executive Team Meeting
- **Wednesday, December 22**, 7:30pm Core Group (Pub Theology), Bottlehouse Brewery
- **Thursday, December 23**,
 - 1:00pm: Core Group, at LCC
 - 6:45pm: Handbell rehearsal
 - 7:30pm: AA
 - 8:00pm: Chancel Choir rehearsal
- **Friday, December 24**, Christmas Eve
 - 5:00pm: Children's Christmas Eve Service
 - 9:00pm: Festival Candlelight Service
- **Sunday, December 26**, Worship

Mission Statement proclaims our common goal.

*We strive to be a welcoming,
worshipping community of faith,
helping people discover and deepen
their relationship with God, growing as
disciples of Christ, and reaching out in
faith and loving service.*

In keeping with the spirit of our Mission Statement,

*Lakewood Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ,*

is an Open and Affirming congregation.

*We welcome people of all sexual orientation,
ages, differing abilities, and ethnic, economic,
and racial backgrounds into*

the full life and ministry of our church.

*We declare this in the name of the Still Speaking God,
whose Son, Jesus Christ, welcomed
all people into God's circle of grace.*

