

“Let yourself be charmed, challenged, and changed by the company you’ll keep – stars and planets, hills and pools, all creatures great and small, and Love in the flesh pleased to be born under a star, between lowing cattle and wooly sheep.”  
-Mary Luti, UCC minister



Photo by Ian Schneider on Unsplash

**Prelude** *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming, arr. James Koerts*

**Lighting of the Candles and Ringing of the Bell**

**Welcome**

**Advent Candle Lighting Song**

**Lighting the Advent Candle of Love** *We Light a Candle*

**We light a candle for love, and our world that's longing for love.  
We light a candle for love, and our world that's longing for love.  
Holy One shine with the fire of our lives.  
We light a candle for love, and our world that's longing for love.**

**Call to Community** *enfleshed.com (adapted)*

One: As we wait in this season, the Spirit of God transforms our minds and hearts.

Many: **Our imaginations are stretched.**

Our notions of possibility expand.

**With hope, we are urged toward futures yet perceived.**

Creation groans, awaiting collective freedom.

**Peacefully, redemption comes into our lives.**

God will birth new worlds among us.

**In joy, we labor for renewal and restoration.**

May this time in community give us courage and strength.

**Come, Holy Spirit, and ready us for the Kingdom of love to come.**

**\*Opening Hymn** *Deep in Our Hearts/Handout*

**Opening Prayer** *enfleshed.com, adapted*

Patient One, by your Spirit, free us from the constraints evil has placed upon our dreams. We struggle to hope outside of what we have known. We find it difficult to practice imagination that is not bound by our fears or tainted with cynicism. Open our minds. Fill us with grand visions of life abundant and love that frees. May we not be a stumbling block to your transformation among us. As all of creation yearns for freedom, we remember that all of life is bound together. Our own spirits are entangled with the well-being of every living thing. With humility, we acknowledge our ongoing journeys of transformation as we seek to do our part in the collective labors of healing, justice, and companionship. Amen.

**December 22, 2024**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

We're so glad you've joined us today. Please feel free to ask any questions and participate or not in any parts of the worship service as you desire.

**Chancel Flowers**

Offered by Viginia Stuart in memory of her husband, Rev. Laird Stuart

**Service Volunteers**

Usher: **Mike VerMerris**

Greeters: **Kathleen & Peter Mueller**

Offertory: **Greg Sherman, Tom Fahlstrom, Jennifer Schwarb**

Acolyte: **Paul Burdick**

Reader: **Jerry Coates**

Sound Board: **Chris Clark**

Video Camera: **Lewis Corbin**

**Staff**

Pastor **Rev. Jody Betten**

[jody@douglasucc.org](mailto:jody@douglasucc.org)

Music Director **Peter Black**

Cantor **Jeff Spangler**

Administrative Asst. **Julie Ridl**

[julie@douglasucc.org](mailto:julie@douglasucc.org)

Phone **269.857.2085**

**Worship**

Sundays at 10am

**Quiet Contemplation**

Thursdays at 5pm

**Our Mission**

To grow together spiritually as progressive Christians, welcoming all, and pursuing peace, justice, love, and healing for all creation.

We demonstrate this by:

- Being Open and Affirming
- Acting as a Creation Justice Church
- Respecting and understanding all belief and faith traditions
- Recognizing and celebrating our connectedness to all peoples
- Valuing questions rather than answers

*Asterisk (\*) means stand if you wish and are comfortable doing so.*

Congregational voice parts look like this.

And service music lyrics look like this.

**DOUGLAS UCC**



## Assurance of Grace and Peace

One: Peace be with you.  
Many: And also with you.  
One: Let us share peace with one another

## \*Passing the Peace *Hands Shaped Like a Cradle*

**Put Peace into each other's hands and like a treasure hold it,  
Protect it like a candle flame, with tenderness enfold it.**

## Contemporary Reading *Author, EPC*

## Ancient Reading **Romans 8:18-25**

## Reflection *The Creatures of Christmas/Jody Betten*

## Moment of Quiet

## Offering and Offertory *Come, O Long Expected Jesus* Peter Black

## Joys and Concerns • Tibetan Prayer Bell

One: Thanks be to God!      **Many: Alleluia!**  
One: O God,                      **Many: Hear our prayer.**

## \*Doxology *Oh Glorious God*

**O Glorious God to you we bring  
Praise, treasures, lives as offering;  
Spirit of Love with in us dwell;  
Come Jesus, our Emanuel**

## Celebration of Holy Communion

One: God be with you.                      **Many: And also with you.**  
One: Lift up your hearts.                      **Many: We lift them up to God.**  
One: Let us give thanks to God.      **Many: It is good to give God thanks  
and praise.**

## Creation's Praise *Body of God*

**God breaking through to our lives, but this is no great surprise.  
Babies and barns, green fields and farms; This is the body of God.  
Star in the dark sky we share, straw underfoot as we look up and stare,  
Each part of creation a perfect formation that lives as the body of God.  
Where else would God be but right here?  
Under our noses, in the midst of our fears,  
God in the manger, God in the cows,  
God in the Christ child who showed the world how.  
God in our stories, God in our world,  
God in our lives is the Good News we've heard.**

## \*Sharing of the Bread and Cup *(gluten-free option, non-alcoholic juice in trays)*

The Bread of Life, the Gift of Heaven. Amen.  
The Cup of Love, the Drink of Compassion. Amen.

## The Lord's Prayer

Our Creator who is in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, and deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

## Ways to be Love in the World

## \*Hymn of Sending *Jesus Our Brother, Strong and Good/New Century Hymnal #138*

## \*Benediction

## Postlude *Love Makes the World Go 'Round/Bob Merrill*



Scan this code to read and subscribe to our **Weekly E-Pistle**.

## Prayer List

Family of Nancy Grib; Paul & Carrie (Julie Ridl's brother-in-law and sister); Melanie (Stacy Honson's sister); Bev Hawkes; Dan McGavin and Family of Carol Brown; Barbara Lindsay (Lewis Corbin's Bridge Partner); Rev. Marchiene Rienstra Family; Karen Clement (Friend of Debra Carr's); Ann and Jim Hopkins; Sally LaRowe (Linda Charvat's friend); Janice Campbell children & grandchildren (Pete Wehle's friends); James Higgins (Friend of Shane Anderson and Michael Tuleja), Joe Scarpone (Friend of Tom Fahlstrom); Fred Hamlin; John Kerr; Dave and Shirley Lawson; Ruth Fahlstrom (daughter of Tom Fahlstrom); Stuart Family; Mary Westenbroek; Jerry Elpers and family (Beth Howley's Dad); Edie Plantinga (Nancy's Mom); Max Matteson; Eric Cooley (Jo Cooley's brother)

## Birthdays

December 22: **Mary Harris**  
December 24: **Christine Kerney, Kelsey Whitcomb, Cambria Whitcomb**  
December 27: **Bert Hallewas**

## Anniversaries

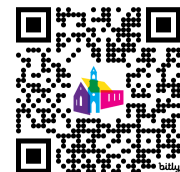
December 27: **Anne & Doug Petersen**  
December 28: **Sarah Donovan**

## Weekly Financial Stewardship Report

for December 15, 2024

Attendance: **101**      Viewers: **189**

Collection Plate/Mail:	<b>\$2,095.00</b>
Online Giving:	<b>\$2,474.08</b>
Total:	<b>\$4,569.08</b>



Scan this code to support us with an online gift. (The code will take you to our website: [douglasucc.org/giving](https://douglasucc.org/giving).)

Or give from your smartphone by texting any US\$ amount to **844-931-2849**.

## Thank you!

Your gifts sustain our mission of service.

[www.DouglasUCC.org](https://www.DouglasUCC.org)

# Deep In Our Hearts

## Opening Song

John Oldham

Ron Klusmeir



1. Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon - vis - ion;  
2. Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon - pur - pose;  
3. Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon long - ing;  
4. Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon vis - ion;



Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon song;  
Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon goal;  
Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon theme;  
Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon song;



Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon sto - ry  
Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a sa - cred mes - sage  
Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon cur - rent  
Deep in our hearts\_\_\_\_\_ there is a com - mon sto - ry



13 **1.2.3.**  
tell - ing Cre - a - tion that we are one.\_\_\_\_\_  
jus - tice and peace in har - mo - ny.\_\_\_\_\_  
flow - ing to free - dom like a stream.\_\_\_\_\_



19 **4.**  
tell - ing Cre - a - tion\_\_\_\_\_ that we are one!

## Jesus, Our Brother, Strong and Good

138

French carol, 12th century

Transl. anon.

Luke 2:1-7; Matt. 1:23

1 Je - sus, our broth - er, strong and good, was hum - bly  
 2 "I," said the don - key, shag - gy and brown, "I car - ried your  
 3 "I," said the cow, all white and red, "I gave you my  
 4 "I," said the sheep with curl - y horn, "I gave you my

born in a sta - ble rude, and the friend - ly beasts a -  
 moth - er up - hill and down, I car - ried your moth - er to  
 man - ger for your bed, I gave my hay to  
 wool for a blan - ket warm, you wore my coat on

round him stood, Je - sus our broth - er, strong and good.  
 Beth - le - hem town; I," said the don - key, shag - gy and brown.  
 pil - low your head; I," said the cow, all white and red.  
 Christ - mas morn; I," said the sheep with curl - y horn.

- 5 "I," said the dove, from the raf - ters high,  
 "I cooed you to sleep that you should  
 not cry,  
 we cooed you to sleep, my love and I;  
 I," said the dove, from the raf - ters high.
- 6 Thus all the beasts, by some good spell,  
 in the sta - ble dark were glad to tell  
 of the gifts they gave Em - man - u - el,  
 the gifts they gave Em - man - u - el.