



GRACE UNITED CHURCH

Advent 4 - LOVE

December 21, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS MUSIC SERVICE

Worship Leader: Keith Mayers

Music Director: Don Salfarie

Lay Presider: Jewel Naismith

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Piano Prelude: He is Born

John Carter

Welcome, Announcements

& Traditional Land Acknowledgment

Jewel Naismith

Advent Hymn: Led by the Choir (Organ accompaniment)

Hope is a Star

(Verses 1-3) Voices United# 7

Advent Reading & Candle Lighting 4 (LOVE):

Bempong / Habakkuk Family

Reader 1: Again, we light a candle for hope - hope for ourselves, hope for God's beloved world.

[light the shortest BLUE candle.]

Reader 2: Again, we light a candle for peace -peace among us and peace on earth.

[light the next shortest BLUE candle.]

Reader 1: Again, we light a candle for joy - joy in our hearts, joy for the world. **[light PINK candle.]**

Reader 2: Today we remember God's love for the world, shown forth in God's beloved Child Jesus.

Reader 1: Because Jesus was human like us, we know we are all God's beloved children. God's Love shines forth in every one of us.

Reader 2: May love shine in our hearts, as we share love and light with all who share this beloved world.

[light last BLUE candle.]

All: God of infinite love, of all the gifts we receive in this season, most of all we treasure the gift of your love. May we treat each person, each living being, as your beloved- especially those who may be feeling sad or lonely or ill. May we respect your wondrous creation, as we care gently for your beloved world. In the name of Jesus, Love born among us. Amen.

(from Let Us Pray, Volume 4 by Jane Doull, used with permission.)

Song: Hope is a Star

(Verse. 4 & refrain) VU#7

Opening Prayer:

Christ is at home in your heart
Place your hand over your heart
Close your eyes
and see the candle's light in your mind's eye.
Sit quietly and notice where love is stirring...
(pause)

Rest in the light of Love beckoning...
breathe... breathe... breathe...

(pause)

All: Come, Love, come
Stir in our souls
Find your birthing place
in our living.
Warm our hearts.
Burn within us.
Radiate from us.
Come, Love, come.

Centering Prayer by Lori Megley Best, adapted by Shawn Redden

Praise and Worship 1: Led by the Choir (organ & flue accomp)
O Come All Ye Faithful **(verses 1.3.4.5) VU#60**

TO DISCOVER THE WORD OF GOD FOR TODAY

Scripture Reading: Matthew 2: 7-12 **Job Amankwah-Nkansah**
One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.
All: Thanks be to God!

A STORY OF LOVE FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE AND FOR WISE GUYS?

1. Choir: The Story of Christmas John W. Peterson
2. Maria Stevens: Gesu Bambino Frederick H. Martens & Pietro A. Yon
3. Joyce Redford & Lynn Marsden: I Wonder as I Wander (Hammered Dulcimer & Alto Recorder) Arr. By DeeDee Tibbits
4. Choir: Hear the Angels Singing L. Larson & P. Tomlinson
5. Kay Bingham (Christmas Worship Medley):
We are the Reason David Meece /
Thou Did'st leave Thy Throne Elliott & Matthews /
I Love You Lord Laurie Klein /
Jesus, Lord to Me G. McSpadden & G. Nelson /
Thou Did'st leave Thy Throne (chorus)
6. Madriaga family: Christmas in our Hearts Jose Mari Chan & Liza Chan
(guitar and piano accompaniment).
7. Bob Phillips (vocals & Euphonium): Go Tell it on the Mountain Trad. African American Spiritual
8. Grace Band: More Than Wonderful L. Wolfe
9. Keith Mayers: The Virgin Mary had a Baby Boy Trad. African American Spiritual
10. Daniel Kuku (vocals & guitar):
It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas Meredith Willson

**11. Choir (Soloists: SheRaym Madriaga, and Andy Keay):
Such Wise Men Jimmy & Carol Owens**

TO RESPOND IN FAITH AND HOPE

Offering Invitation

Offertory: God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen Trad. English Carol

Offertory Prayer

Prayer Prelude: A Candle is Burning (verse 4) Voices United# 6

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer (said)

THE CHURCH SCATTERS TO LIVE ITS FAITH IN THE WORLD

Commissioning **Keith Mayers**
Blessing **Keith Mayers**

They find nothing in the end but an ordinary baby
Born in the dark of night
Born a peasant child in poverty
And the baby's cry, like bells ringing, makes people wonder...
What God's presence might really look like, sound like, feel like...

We already possess all the gifts we need in this season:
Ears to hear the music of hope
Eyes to behold wonder and joy
Hands to build true peace on earth
Hearts to hold each other in love
May blessing be with us
As we share these gifts
Christ's presence
This Christmas.

Organ Postlude: Mary's Boy Child Jester Hairston