***Announcements***

**On our calendar – December 15th, Advent Study 9am
 December 22nd, Advent Study 9am**

 **Christmas Fund Special Offering**

 **December 24**th, Christmas Eve Service 2pm
 December 25*th,* Christmas Day (No Service)

**December Birthdays:** Melissa Ray, December 3rd, Steve Hammerel- December 4th, Carol Buckman– December 6th, Kevin Hagen – December 19th, Nancy Benevides – December 30th

**December Anniversaries:** Steve and Deb Hammerel – December 18th Kevin Hagen and Kathy Bartilson – December 23rd

**In our prayers:**  Margie, Tammy, Lee, Glen, Therese Canfield, Toni, Betty, the people of Ukraine, Bruce, Mary’s neighbors, Becca Oden, Tracey Peterson, Stacy Hall, Vicky, Judy, Philip, Kip, Barb’s friends Rita and Chuck, Barb’s friend’s grandson Noah, the Ray Family, Kris Albert, the people of Israel, Gaza, and all innocent lives caught in the line of fire, those battling cancer, Janice, Kathy’s mother and family, Doug, Lisa, Lee White, families mourning loss due to gun violence, those harmed by recent hurricanes, floods, and disasters, Desmond, Greg’s Brother

**Prayer of the Week:**

*Father, we thank You that You sent Your Son so that we can have peace with God. We ask that You increase our peace and pour out Your peace to others through us. This season let us be peacemakers who point others to the peace of Christ. In Jesus’s name we pray, amen.*

**Namekagon Congregational Church, UCC**

W4446 Friday Street

Earl, WI 54875 • 715-635-2903

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**December 8th, 2024**

**10:30 am Worship**

*\*Please rise if you are able at these points in the service*

**Gathering Music**

**Welcome, Church Announcements and Special Concerns**

 **Prelude and Time of Quiet Reflection**

 **\*Call to Worship**

L: Welcome today to this time of preparation.
**P: Although we have been preparing for celebrations, we come seeking to prepare our hearts to receive God's Good News.**L: Get ready! The Lord is bringing to us Hope and Peace.
**P: How wonderful it is that the Lord is showering us with Peace.**L: Open your hearts and let your spirits be quieted. Be at peace with the Lord.
**P: Lord, prepare our lives and bring us peace. AMEN.**

**\*Hymn** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” **No. 119**

**Opening Prayer** (*Unison*)

**We have prepared our homes, and our gifts, Lord, but we need help in preparing our spirits to receive your message of Peace. Free us from the stresses and strains of this time, and place your peace which passes all our understanding in our hearts. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN.**

**Scripture Reading**  Luke 3:1-6

**Hymn** “Spirit of the Living God” *Twice*  **No. 259**

**Message**

**Hymn** “Come, O Long-expected Jesus" **No. 125**

**Prayers of the People**

 **Silent Prayer**

 **Pastoral Prayer and The 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 and ever. Amen.**

**Offering Invitation**

**\*Response No.46**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below; praise God above, ye heavenly host: Praise God, the Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*Prayer of Dedication** (*Unison*)
**Bless these gifts by the power of your Spirit, O God. May someone near or far receive grace and hope for living because**

**of what we share here today. Amen.**

**Holy Communion \*See Insert**

**\*Hymn** “People Look East” **No. 142**

**\*Benediction**

Peace be with you and with all whom you love. Go now into God's world with God's peace in your hearts and lives. Go in hope and peace. **AMEN.**

**\*Closing**  "Go in Peace"

 **Go in peace and the peace of God be with you this day,**

 **Go in peace and the peace of God be with you always.**

 **Celebrate and share the joy, Celebrate new life,**

 **Go in peace and the peace of God be with you always.**

**\*Postlude**

**Holy Communion**

One:      In this season of expectant waiting, we are invited to Christ’s table here and now.  Coming to Christ’s table is a way to experience the grace of God.  Therefore it is open to all.  The only requirement is a sincere heart.  The only barriers to the table are created in our own heart.  So we come together as a people to confess our sins to God.  We confess as a people because we all fall short of God’s plan of perfect love.  We do not confess to avoid punishment.  We confess to free our own hearts and minds, so we may remove the barriers we build between ourselves, our God, and our brothers and sisters.

All:       **We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.** **We go about our lives as if Christmas is an event to be celebrated, but not lived.  We hear the good news, but do not heed it.  We turn away the holy family for there is no room in our hearts.  We hear the cry of the expectant mother, desperate for care and a place to lie, but listen instead to the carols.  We see the lowly children, born in mangers among the filth of the world, but we look instead to the decorations.  We hear the call of the Angels to come and worship the newborn King, but we bow down to the idols of our culture.  Forgive us, we pray.  Forgive us and free us for joyful obedience.  Remove the barriers that we construct, and empower us to be a people doing the real, gritty, holy, graceful, loving work of Christmas every day. In the name of the Holy Spirit, we pray.  Amen.  (pause for silent confession and prayer)**

One:      Out of the wilderness a voice calls out.  Prepare ye the way of the Lord.  Prepare ye the way of love.  Prepare ye the way of forgiveness.  The Christ child was born in the midst of darkness.  The waiting is over.  Christ may be born today in your heart.  In the name of Jesus Christ, we are all forgiven.

**All:         Joy to the World. Amen.**

God be with you

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to God.**

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

…

And so,
with all your people on earth
in every place where two or more are gathered in your name
and all the company of heaven who have gone before us
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

 …

And so,
in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,

in union with Christ's offering for us
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

**…**

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