

## Order of Worship

*Let us be as open vessels that God's spirit may enter.*

The Community Gathers: Experience God's presence in the assembly. Please greet one another with joy and welcome new friends into our community of love.

*You are welcome here...come and worship!*

**Prelude:** *The Christ's Child Lullaby (by Traditional Herbridean/arr. Marshall Barron) -Michelle Currie, Jen Comeau, Ada Goff & Patricia Mulholland*

**Focus:** "Christmas is the season of the heart. In the stillness of the quiet, we can hear its whisper, offering strength, affirming hope, remembering graces, restoring the soul. The graces of life, the wisdom of hope, the birth of a child...giving light to our spirits." Howard Thurman

**Preparation for worship:** As the candles for our service are being lit, you are invited to prepare for worship; putting aside all distractions, creating a quiet space and opening yourselves to the Spirit.

**Gathering Music:** *Still, Still, Still (German Traditional)*  
*-Michelle Currie, Jen Comeau, Ada Goff & Patricia Mulholland*

**Gather:** Rev. Paula Norbert

**Gathering Music:** Threshold Song (See Insert)

**Welcome:**

**Lighting of the Advent Candles:** Lamar and Elaine Robinson  
**Reader 1:**

Tonight we light all five candles: for Peace, Joy, Love and Hope... and one to represent the presence of God's light through Jesus Christ. This season, these candles have reminded us of the light of the star that shone over Bethlehem for all to see.

**Reader 2:**

God-with-Us, Emmanuel,  
we open ourselves to you this night,  
to become those who help to shine that light of Christ wherever we are--  
in our lives, our families, our communities, and our world.

*Spoken Response of the People:*

Fill us with your peace and light,  
make the world so calm and bright.

**Opening Hymn:** O Come All Ye Faithful p.133

**Prayer of Invocation:** O God most joyful, on this night of expectant wonder, we tread again the path to Bethlehem and to the child whose birth was heralded by prophets, proclaimed by angels, and welcomed by shepherds. Open our eyes to see in that infant your loving purposes, and stir up within us the spirit of adoring praise. Embracing God, in the quietness of this hour, touch our understanding with your Holy Spirit, that we may know again in true reality the wonder of your love in Jesus Christ; and though there was no room in Bethlehem's inn, help us to make room in the busy-ness of the world, in our daily life, that our lives may show Christ's love, and our hearts receive Christ's peace.

**Lord's Prayer**

**Awakening:** *Let the Light In (by Andrea Wollstadt)*  
*-Jen Comeau, Luke & Stella Duquette & Andrea Wollstadt*

**Scripture:** Lessons and Carols Anne and Ken Murray

First: Luke 2: 1-5

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem, Verses 1, 2 (See Insert)

Second: Luke 2: 6-7

Hymn: Away in a Manger, verses 1, 2

Third: Luke 2:8-14

Hymn: Angels We Have Heard On High 1, 2

Fourth: Luke 2: 15-20

Hymn: Go, Tell It on the Mountain

**Christmas Message:**

**Sermon Response:** *O Holy Night* (by Adolphe Adam) Rev. Paula Norbert  
-Michelle Currie

**Prayer for Peace:**

**Offertory:**

The offering taken at this service will be used for emergency assistance for the local community throughout the year. Thank you for your generosity.

**Offertory Music:** *Were You There on that Christmas Night? (by Natalie Sleeth)*  
*-The Union Church Choir*

**Prayer of Dedication:**

**Closing Song:** *All Is Well (by Michael W. Smith)*

*-Michelle Currie, Jen Comeau, Afda Goff & Patricia Mulholland*

**Blessing: Candle-Lighting**

**Leader:** We come to a special part of tonight's service

As Christ comes bringing the light of God's love,

we light our individual candles

to signify our individual and collective commitment

to live as Christ's faithful in the world.

**Hymn: Silent Night, Holy Night**

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**Leader:** As the lights are dimmed, let us hold up our candles...

One candle is but a flicker, but together, we create a bright flame  
of Christ's light in the world.

Consider the beauty of our lights shining together.

Jesus is the light of the world!

Jesus is the hope of all our tomorrows!

May we be witnesses of the light Christ brings, **Amen.**

As you gently extinguish your candle, may you carry the light of Jesus' love  
with you.

**Benediction** *(After Isaiah 9:6)*

**Leader:** A Child is born to us, named Wonderful Counselor,

Mighty God, Ruler of Peace! Christ is born! Merry Christmas to all!

**People: Christ is born! Merry Christmas to all!**

**Recessional: Joy to the World**

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# Union Church

## *Biddeford Pool*

...a place of peace and Presence by the sea



*(Stanley Cooke)*

you are welcome here  
**December 24th, 2018 – 5:00pm**  
**Christmas Eve Service**

With Special Thanks to Michelle Currie, our Amazing Music Director, and our Wonderful musicians Jen Comeau, Luke & Stella Duquette, Ada Goff, Andrea Wollstadt & Patricia Mulholland (Choir Director) and the Union Church Choir.