

VESPERS

Saturday, December 16, 2017 5:30 PM

“His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom...” (Isaiah 9:7)

TEN MINUTES OF GATHERING MUSIC: (Starting at 5:20 pm)
from Songs of Taizé

Once the music starts to play, we invite you to be in silence.

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Marlayna Schmidt

CALL TO WORSHIP/ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Jessica Skidmore, Christian Ministry Coordinator

Peace (written by Rev. Martha Spong)

The poet, Wendell Berry, wrote: “When despair for the world grows in me... I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water.” We think of the 23rd Psalm, “He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul.”

When everything feels hopeless, when we feel as dead as the dry bones in Ezekiel’s valley, God calls us away from the workaday world.

God calls us to breathe in the holy breath of Peace. When we light the candle of Peace, we breathe in the One who restores us.

Whatever we face in life, God’s Spirit of Peace will dwell within us.

(Jessica lights the candles of Hope and Peace)

ONE MINUTE OF SILENT MEDITATION

MEDITATIVE READING: A prayer by Steven James

Bethany Woods, Reader

Lord,
today I choose your path.
Today I choose to spread light and not shadows,
Grace and not pain,
Love and not apathy,

Peace and not anger,
Deep delight and not sharp sorrow.

I choose to stand on the rock and not the sand,
To glory in you and not myself,
To lift others up and not push them down,
To leave boasting to those with
More reasons to do it than I.

I choose to revel in thanksgiving rather than discontent,
To foster a sense of enoughness rather than moreness,
To pursue relationships rather than reputation,
To be attuned to needs and not just desires.

Here, I offer my heart and my longings,
My dreams and my priorities,
My goals and my habits,
My choices and opinions.

So in the strength that you offer,
And by the grace that you give,
I offer my “yes” to you.
Hear it clearly.
Nothing and no one above you.
That is my pledge for today.

ONE MINUTE OF SILENT MEDITATION

SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 9:2 ,6-7

Shawn Newman, Reader

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace

for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

ONE MINUTE OF SILENT MEDITATION

REFLECTION: *“The Story of the World War I Christmas Truce of 1914”* From www.History.com, paraphrased by Rev. Schmidt

LIGHTING OF VESPER CANDLES (10 minutes)

You are invited to come forward and light a candle(s) for people or situations you want to hold in the Light of God’s Love. When you light the candle feel free to whisper the name of the person(s)/situation(s) for whom you are praying.

MUSIC DURING CANDLE-LIGHTING *is from Songs of Taizé*

BENEDICTION

Rev. Schmidt

SUNG BENEDICTION RESPONSE:

O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

If you wish, you are invited to remain in the sanctuary after the benediction and listen to the music, which will play for another ten minutes.

We invite you to leave the worship service in silence when you are ready.. However, Rev. Schmidt will stay in the church for a time in case you would like her to say a word of prayer with you following the service. Just let her know if you would like to pray.