



An Open & Affirming Congregation in the United Church of Christ  
Order of Worship for 12/18/2022 ~ **Fourth Sunday of Advent: LOVE**  
Rev. Amelia Fulbright, Transitional Pastor

**Prelude:**

Largo

Benedetto Marcello

**Welcome**

**Words for Centering** (Unison, written by Cheryl Lawrie)

*We gather - people of faith and no faith, people of hope and no hope, people of peace and no peace. We gather with the longing to be made whole again if just for this time, here and now.*

*We gather with a prayer, however vague and tenuous, that in spite of the absence of virgins and angels, wise men and shepherds, we might still be a witness to the birth of all love.*

*We gather as ready as we'll ever be for this story of faith to unfold.*

**\*Hymn of Celebration:** Red Hymnal #105 "People, Look East"

**Lighting the Candle of Love**

\*Response: Black Hymnal #136 "Jesus, Jesus, Oh What a Wonderful Child"

*Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child.*

*Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek, and mild;*

*new life, new **love**, the Child will bring.*

*Listen to the angels sing, "Glory, glory, glory,*

*let the heavens ring!*

**Listening To the Sacred Text:** Matthew 1:18-25 (NRSV)

Listening for the Spirit in Silence:

*Word and words, O God. Help us to hear the One among the many.*

**Reflecting:**

"Love Powers"

**\*Hymn of Reflection:**

Black Hymnal #102 "O How Shall I Receive You"

**\*Prayer for Transformation and New Life** (written by J. Puls, G. Cashmore)

*Leader: God of surprises, you call us from the narrowness of our traditions to new ways of being church, from the captivities of our culture to creative witness for justice, from the smallness of our horizons to the bigness of your vision.*

**People: Clear the way in us, your people, that we might call others to freedom and renewed faith.**

*Leader: Jesus, wounded healer, you call us from preoccupation with our own histories and hurts to daily tasks of peacemaking, from privilege to pilgrimage, from insularity to inclusive community.*

**People: Clear the way in us, your people, that we might call others to wholeness and integrity.**

*Leader: Holy, transforming Spirit, you call us from fear to faithfulness, from clutter to clarity, from a desire to control to deeper trust, from the refusal to love to a readiness to risk.*

**People: Clear the way in us, your people, that we might all know the beauty and power and danger of the gospel. Amen.**

**Offering invitation**

Offertory Music

A Waiting Prayer

Dengler

**Offering our gifts and our prayers**

**\*Doxology** (Tune: *All Creatures Of Our God and King*)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow.*

*Praise God, all creatures here below. Alleluia, Alleluia.*

*Praise God for all that love has done. Creator, Christ, and Spirit One.*

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Amen.*

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**Announcements**

**\*Sending Song:** "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (See handout.)

**Benediction**

**Postlude:**

In Dreamland

William H Squire

**\* Please rise as you are able, in body or in spirit.**

**Leading In Today's Service:**

Laura Martin, Director of Music

Warinda Harris, Usher

Jonathan Geer, Piano

Britt Hicks, Director of Online Ministries

CJ Wood, Liturgist

Liz Lee, Cello