



December 10, 2024 Vol. 76, No. 49

## Peace in Advent?

## ON WATCH

Last Sunday, the Advent theme was peace. During a season marked by overprogramming and overconsumption, peace seems anachronistic. It doesn't fit. This season leading up to Christmas often lacks any sense of peace. Yet, in John 14:27, Jesus said, "My peace I leave with you."

What is Jesus' peace? Defining peace is tricky because it is a family resemblance term. This means, according to a philosopher named Ludwig Wittgenstein, a concept like peace implies various parts of a category. The parts don't necessarily share a single defining characteristic. Instead, they are connected through a network of overlapping similarities. We have peace in the sense of an absence of conflict. We can also have a sense of peace, as in an inner calm. We can also find settings of peace, like a bucolic pond near some trees and a gentle breeze (i.e., picture a peaceful setting). These are branches of the idea of peace. They have overlapping similarities but lack a single defining characteristic.

When Jesus said, "My peace I leave with you," he did not imply something so narrowly defined as the absence of war or violence or a pond with leaves swaying in the breeze. The peace of Advent and the peace we can experience in Christ is deeper. The peace of knowing Jesus strikes deep in our sense of who we are. When we experience Jesus, we can find inner peace. Solutions for the complex problems of the world around us become clear, or with the peace of Christ, we can see life in the wider lens of God's big picture.

## SERVICE OF HOLY WORSHIP

Sunday, December 15, 2024

11:00 AM

**Sermon:**

Vegetarian Lions

Dr. Matthew Tennant

**Scripture:**

Isaiah 11:1-9

**Anthem:**

*Alpha & Omega: The Father's Love*  
Gwyneth Walker

## SUNDAY SERVICE

**Deacon:** Raynell Stokes

**Ushers:** Ian Pallini, Hunter Cooper

**College Dinner:** Click [here](#) to sign up to provide a dinner for our college students.



Join us for our Holiday Lights Tour and a bus ride around town on Friday, December 20, 6:00-8:00, as we

enjoy the lights of the holiday season. Seats are limited. Sign up [here](#) (or call the church office) to reserve your spot on the bus. We will gather in the Fellowship Hall between 5:30-5:45.

It wasn't just any peace he referenced in John 14. Jesus spoke of his peace. It was possessive. "My peace I leave..." As we recognize Jesus as God-incarnate, especially during this holy season, the peace he offered is the peace of God. It's *his* peace. This peace is sacred and transcends the violence of this world.

Wittgenstein suggests that we learn by rearranging what we know. Instead of limiting peace to the objective absence of violence, what if we understood peace in a new way? In Philippians 4:7, we read, "The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

What is God's peace? It passes all understanding and can help us navigate this season and anything life throws at us.

Peace,  
Matt



### Thank You Will Cooke!

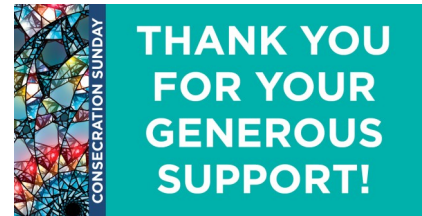


Will has been directing Jubilate, our auditioned college choir at UBC, since 2021, leading them through the pandemic and then through a rebuilding stage while also

directing Voces Laetae and managing his full-time job as Choral Director at Charlottesville High School.

Will has handed the baton for Jubilate over to Megan Sharp, our Associate Minister for Music & College Students. However, we are not saying goodbye to Will. He will still be directing Voces Laetae, our community youth choir for middle school and high school students.

Please take a moment to thank Will for his ministry with Jubilate and his continued ministry with Voces Laetae.



### Consecration Sunday Final Report

1. 80 giving units (couples or single persons) completed pledge cards committing a total of \$563,572.36 for the next 12 months.
2. Adding the expected giving of our other regular givers and non-donor sources (like parking income), we project our total church budget income over the next 12 months to be \$675,812.48.
3. Our total church budget income over the *past* 12 months was \$573,927.49.
4. This represents an increase in our total church budget income of \$101,884.99 (17.8%).

SPECIAL THANKS to the church staff and to the more than 50 other members who helped with this stewardship program!

### CALENDAR

#### WEDNESDAY, December 11

- 9:00 Work Team
- 5:30 Wednesday Night Dinner
- 6:00 Christmas Caroling
- 7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

#### THURSDAY, December 12

- 1:30 Personnel Committee Meeting

#### SUNDAY, December 15

- 8:30 Finance Committee Meeting
- 9:30 ESOL/Seekers Class
- 9:45 Sunday Morning Bible Study
- 11:00 Morning Worship

#### MONDAY, December 16

- 7:00 Theology Reading Group

#### TUESDAY, December 17

- 6:00 Kittie Colvin Trail Circle
- 7:00 Voces Laetae Concert

For our most up-to-date calendar, [click here](#).

## Qualified Charitable Distributions

Are you familiar with Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD)? A QCD might reduce the taxes you owe while helping your church. Here's how it works.

If you have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) and are over 73, you are required to take a distribution from that IRA each year based on the value at the end of the previous year and your age. This is called a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), and generally the distribution is fully taxed as ordinary income. The form of the distribution may be in cash or securities.

A QCD is a direct transfer of funds from your IRA custodian to a qualified charity. This direct transfer can be in cash or securities, and it counts toward satisfying your RMD for the year. A QCD reduces your taxable income by the amount of such distribution since it is not included in your income.

Charitable giving is not about taxes. However, the tax benefit from a QCD encourages charitable giving and could enable you to give more money to what you love. With the recent increase in the Standard Deduction, many taxpayers will find that charitable donations no longer have any tax benefit. A QCD can restore some significant tax benefits for charitable donations.

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## Advent Devotions

Matt is sending out Advent Devotions again this year. If you want to receive these daily devotions by email, please let the [office](#) know.

## Prayer Requests\*

Jack & Jo-Ann Averill

Tony & Patti Barretta

Alba & Pam Beasley

Clara Brown

Leon & Nancy Castle

David & Linda Hendon

Ian & Lily Pallini on the loss of Ian's father, Franco Pallini

Edith Parker

Kaylee Risell

Melvin & Mildred Spicer

Bob & Joyce Tennant

Barbara Weber

Jack & Anne Wilkerson

\*In order to respect privacy, limited information is included here.



Join us tomorrow, Wednesday, December 11 for dinner at 5:30 and then beginning at 6:00, we will enjoy a Christmas Carol Sing in the Fellowship Hall for the whole family.

Childcare is always available.

Click [here](#) to RSVP.

Our menu will be:

*Vegetarian Lasagna*

*Asparagus*

*Garlic Bread*

*Mixed Green Salad*

*Meatballs in Pomodoro*

*Peppermint Hot Chocolate Cocoa Cake*

Following the program you are invited to sing with the Sanctuary Choir as they rehearse in the Music Suite.

## Partners in Renewing God's World CBF Offering for Global Missions

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is a Christian network of individuals and churches working together to spread the hope of Christ. Their diverse community includes partners all over the globe, and our fellowship supports a wide range of missions and ministries that give people meaningful opportunities to put their faith into action.



For more than 20 years, CBF field personnel Dianne and Shane McNary have served among Roma people in Slovakia and Czechia teaching English, hosting mission teams, serving children, helping the poor, starting churches, and building community. They are now preparing and organizing places to be used as refugee stop-overs by Ukrainians moving into and through Slovakia.



Eddie Aldape serves as field personnel in Spain but has recently traveled to Slovakia to serve Ukrainian refugees alongside the McNarys. Every refugee is

assigned a job, "because everyone needs a purpose," Dianne said. "We didn't take over for them, we work along beside them."

Your generosity in support of the CBF Global Missions Offering and their mission programs will help and transform lives. From December 1 to December 31, we are collecting donations for the Offering for Global Missions. 100% of your gifts will support the long-term presence of CBF field personnel serving around the world. The CBF offering goal this year is \$4 million, which covers the costs for current field personnel and their families to live full and healthy lives in their place of service, including salary, benefits, housing, and children's educational needs. Our goal here at UBC is to contribute \$3,000 toward the larger CBF goal.

*Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ~Isaiah 43:19*



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Join us in wishing some of our church family a Happy Birthday next week!

**Dec. 18:** Karen Dalton, Carolyn Stone

**Dec. 20:** Larry Johnson, Bill Jesser

**Dec. 23:** David Wagoner

**Dec. 24:** Charlotte Bailey



**Hey UBCYouth, after our Family Christmas Lights Tour, stay at church ALL NIGHT LONG!!!**

December 20-21 is the Winter Solstice, the

longest night of the year. Let's spend it at church! Bring your comfy jammies and a sleeping bag or blanket. After we explore our church building and play some games, we'll settle in with snacks for a holiday movie marathon on the sofas in the Youth Room. When the sun comes up, we'll have breakfast together before we go our separate ways. There is no cost for this event. Friends are welcome! Share this link so they can sign up. [UBCYouth: Longest Night Lock-In](#)



Dr. Tennant was Jay James' guest on WINA's Morning News last

week. He appears on WINA once per month to provide commentary on the news from a faith perspective. This month he joined the program to discuss homelessness, division in the community, and much more. In case you missed it, you can [hear the interview here](#).

To learn more about CBF Global Missions click on the following short videos.

[Overview](#)

[Global Water Poverty](#)

[Droughts in West Africa](#)



### Global Missions Christmas Post Office

The Christmas Post Office for Global Missions is open for "business", sponsored by the Kittie Colvin Trail Circle. This is a way for you to exchange Christmas greetings with other church members and regular attendees without even knowing their mailing address and to support Global Missions at the same time. The "Post Office" box is located on a table in the first-floor lobby outside the Church Office.

Instructions:

- Write the names of the recipients on your cards and place them in the appropriate alphabet slots. [Please include first names as we have multiple families with the same last name (e.g. Martin, Moore)].
- Deposit \$.73 per card (or round up for any additional contribution) into the container on the table or give it to any Kittie Colvin Trail Circle member.
- Please do not include cards for people who do not attend regularly or have moved away.
- Pick up any cards addressed to you or your family. Please do not remove any cards except your own.
- Do not place cards in the box after Sunday, December 24.

ALL proceeds go to the CBF Global Missions

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In this series of Word articles, [Elizabeth Dowdy](#) explains what *Worship+Wonder* is and how it is teaching our children to engage the parts of our worship services.

The stories and items the children have heard and made for their worship bags so far have introduced the first two movements of every worship service, *Gathering* and *Hearing God's Word*. Now we are ready to move into the third movement, *Responding* to what we have heard.

The act of *Responding* can take many different forms. In a service of worship, limited by time and space, symbols often stand in as commitments to larger actions that will continue long after we leave the doors of the church. Sometimes, our bodies are the symbols of our response. When hearing the proclaimed Word moves someone to commit their life to following Christ, they present themselves to the minister up front as a candidate for baptism. Other symbolic responses might include writing an intention on a card, taking a request to fulfill, placing a stone or lighting a candle to honor a loved one, or bringing a gift in an envelope to share. Each of these responses can be simplified down to one easy word: *Giving*. Giving of ourselves is fundamental to our response to God's gifts of love and grace in our lives. It is the walk that follows the talk of the Gospel.

For children, responding to God's message develops as a collaboration with parents and trusted adults. To help them, it is often necessary to *think small*, by breaking down projects into bite-sized pieces. "I want to help the homeless," can become, "I can help my parents and other grown-ups donate their old coats to a clothes closet this winter." "I want to save the rainforests," can look like helping to pack your family's snacks in paper sacks so less plastic packaging ends up in a landfill.

Perhaps no parable of Jesus better illustrates what is possible when we *think small* than The Parable of the Mustard Seed. For kids, who need step stools to help in the kitchen and may not weigh enough to sit in the front seat of the car, the idea of starting with something small and insignificant to grow something as enormous and amazing as God's Kingdom speaks to them. You may recall that this was the first story I shared with the kids as an introduction to Worship+Wonder, in our Morning Worship service back in August. Since they had heard it before, this time I invited them to help me tell it. They recalled many of the phrases, word for word!



The tangible symbol the kids add to their Worship Bags with this story is a set of offering envelopes. Designed for children, these envelopes are imprinted with the words, "I thank God with... My Time \_\_\_\_, My Talent \_\_\_\_, My Treasure \_\_\_\_." This three-fold, alliterative motto of *Responding as Giving* is one framework for understanding how we can contribute to the work of God's Kingdom here and now. Put in other words, the gifts of our service, through hard work (our time) or our expertise (our talent), along with sharing our financial resources (our treasure), are the essential inputs of our participation in

God's work in the world around us. Even the smallest gift helps to grow God's kingdom of justice and peace.

A few weeks back, the kids wrote their names on the top line of their new envelopes and began to color in the friendly sheep. "I'm going to put some of my allowance in it," one eagerly responded. "What happens when I run out of envelopes?" another asked. I replied, "Come to me and I will give you more."

### Staff Contact Information:

Senior Minister: Dr. Matthew Tennant - matt@universitybaptist.org

Associate Minister for Music and College Students - Megan Sharp - megan@universitybaptist.org

Interim Associate Minister: Rev. Elizabeth Rickert Dowdy - elizabeth@universitybaptist.org

Intentional Interim Minister of Music: Rev. Susan Deal - susan@universitybaptist.org

Voces Laetae Director: Will Cooke - wcooke@universitybaptist.org

Office Coordinator: Linda Weirich - linda@universitybaptist.org

Financial Coordinator: Amanda Ohlms - aohlms@universitybaptist.org

Social Media Coordinator: Alaysia Toney - socialmedia@universitybaptist.org

Church Administrator: Alan Hendricks - ahendricks@universitybaptist.org

Education Coordinator: Rev. Tommy Deal—call the church office at 434-293-5106

Organist: Barbara Moore - call the church office at 434-293-5106

Custodian: Thomas Hill - call the church office at 434-293-5106

## Sunday Mornings

### Worship

Our Sunday morning worship service begins at 11:00 am. We encourage everyone in the congregation to join us in whatever way you feel safe and comfortable at this time, whether in person or virtually. As always, you can listen by radio on WINA (1070 AM and 98.9 FM), or you can join us online for our live broadcast. To view the live video broadcast, visit our [Facebook page](#) or click [this link](#) to watch on YouTube.

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Connect with us

