

Peacham Congregational Church

56 Church St., Peacham, VT 05862

802-592-3330



Interim Pastor, Nicole Klosterman

We are an Open and Affirming Church

*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.*

www.peachamchurch.org

Order of Worship

December 30, 2025

Lay Leaders - John Morris, Message

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude – “Advent” – Everett Titcomb

One: At the start of every day,
God shakes us awake to the possibility
of reconciliation and joyful abundance.

Many: **May our Great Redeemer,
who judges all with righteousness,
reward the tyrannized with justice.**

One: In every season,
God tends to the child within us,
bringing into harmony
all distress and despair.

Many: **May our Beloved Emmanuel
defend the cause of the deprived,
give deliverance to the abused,
and overwhelm the will of their persecutors.**

One: Throughout all generations,
God bestows upon the people
a peace that is everlasting.

Many: **May the Prince of Peace
rain down blessed mercy upon the people,
showering the earth with righteousness and peace.**

Opening Hymn: # 114 O Come O Come Emmanuel

Invocation (unison)

**Almighty God, we seek relief from the unrest of our daily lives. You, who offer
peace and justice in a single hand, are our redeemer. Allow us, God, to unfold in
your palm. With each breath, allow us to inhale the power of your sacred word,
and exhale the turmoil within.**

First Reading: Selection from John O'Donohue's poem "In Praise of Fire"

The hunger of Fire has no need
For the reliquary of the future;
It adores the eros of now,
Where the memory of the earth
In flames that lick and drink the air
Is made to release

Its long-enduring forms
In a powder of ashes
Left for the wind to decipher.

Lighting the Candle of Peace

Family: Today we light the Candle of Peace.

Reader 1: There is a hush in our hearts as we wait
to feel the peace of God envelop us.

Reader 2: We imagine it as delicate as a lily's petals opening,
as a blanket pulled snug beneath our chin,
as a breeze shaking the oak's branches on a sunny morning.

Reader 1: We expect peace to come gently,
but when has anything worthwhile come without pain?

Reader 2: A baby cries in birth as the mother sweats and shakes.
Imperfect compromises leave both sides vulnerable.
A voice that rallies us to change is often silenced too soon.

Reader 1: Striving for peace is no different.
It is fierce, and loud, and it requires tenacity.

Reader 2: Peace is complicated. Peace is a sip of water
after the longest night. Peace is the flame within
that we must keep lit for the sake of all.

People: **Peace is the hush, and it is the clatter.
Peace is God's love, acted out loud.**

Anthem – Waiting for a King – Joseph Martin

Passing of the Peace

Leader: As Christ welcomed everyone, no matter what their background, no matter what their social status; as Christ welcomed enemies and friends, outcasts and leaders, foreigners and neighbors, let us open our hearts and homes and lives. Let us be Christ to everyone we meet. Peace be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Leader: Now share the Peace of Christ with one another. This can be done with a smile, a wave, or a handshake, and the words, Peace be with you.

Joys & Concerns

Prayer of Peace & the Lord's Prayer

Peace before us

Peace before us, peace behind us,
Peace under our feet.

Peace within us, peace over us,
Let all around us be peace.

Light before us, light behind us,
Light under our feet.

Light within us, light over us,
Let all around us be light.

Love before us, love behind us,
Love under our feet.

Love within us, love over us,
Let all around us be love.

Christ before us, Christ behind us,
Christ under our feet.
Christ within us, Christ over us,
Let all around us be Christ.

David Haas (based on a Navaho prayer)

Response

Hear our prayer O God. Hear our prayer O god.

Incline Your ear to us and grant us Your peace. Amen.

Offering & Mission (CWS) Invitation to Generosity

Invitation to Generosity

Peace makes us generous. God's abundance pours through us to our neighbors, just as God's love showers us with blessing. As each of us gives what we can, we know that our community is only as resilient as our most vulnerable neighbor.

Doxology #46 Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.***

UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Emmanuel, hear our prayer! We bring these gifts before you to spread peace throughout our homes, our communities, and our world. On every street corner, beside rivers, lakes, oceans, at the top of your tallest mountains, and dwelling below the cliffs, your people are in need. Take these gifts to strengthen our church and bring relief to your beloved children.

Amen

Hymn # 149 – It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

Scripture Reading

Matthew 3: 1-12

Message – “A Voice in the Wilderness”

Closing Hymn # 115 – Comfort, Comfort Ye My People”

RESPONSIVE

When we leave this place today, let us carry the flame of Hope within us, no matter how small it may seem.

We feed it with the knowledge that God's love is incendiary.

Our Beloved's breath blows through us, allowing the flames to rise and catch and give us strength all the days of our lives.

Amen.

Response #345– God Be with You Til We Meet Again, vs. 1

Postlude – “O Tannenbaum” - Traditional

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## **Announcements December 7, 2025**

Our 4th quarter mission is Church World Service. If you would like to donate to CWS please indicate on your check in the memo line "CWS".

The Danville Open Door Food Shelf is asking for EGGs. Next week is

If you haven't done so already, please don't forget to return your annual pledge envelope. The Business Committee is counting on early returns so they can begin preparing for the 2026 Budget.

We will hold an additional Christmas Eve Service on 12/24 at 4:15 pm – A Contemplative Christmas Vigil. More details will be forthcoming. We will also hold our regular 6:30 pm Family Service.

- |          |                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12/7/25  | John Morris – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent (peace)<br>Coffee Hour: Nancy & Brad Toney<br>Advent participants: Deasy & Hovey Families                                        |
| 12/13/25 | 3:00 p.m. North Country Chorus – Handel's Messiah<br>Drive Thru Food Drive 10:00 am to noon<br>Drop off for Food Drive at the back kitchen door of church<br>from 12/11 – 12/16 |
| 12/14/25 | Lay Leaders – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent (joy)<br>Coffee Hour – Melissa Hough<br>Advent participants: Choir Members                                                       |

**Interim Pastor.....Nicole Klosterman (802)-227-4956**

Email: peachamchurchpastor@gmail.com

### **Nicole's availability for scheduled visits:**

Mon 1-2:30

Tues 11-2:30

Fri 8:45-11

**Here is a link to schedule a 45 min pastoral care visit with Nicole using days listed above:** <https://calendly.com/peachamchurchpastor/30min>

## O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

*Unison*

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
 2. O come, thou Day - spring, come and cheer our spir - its by thine  
 3. O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, and or - der all things,  
 4. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind all peo - ples in one

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here, un -  
 ad - vent here; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night, and  
 far and nigh; to us the path of knowl - edge show, and  
 heart and mind; bid en - vy, strife and quar - rels cease; fill

*Refrain (Harmony)*

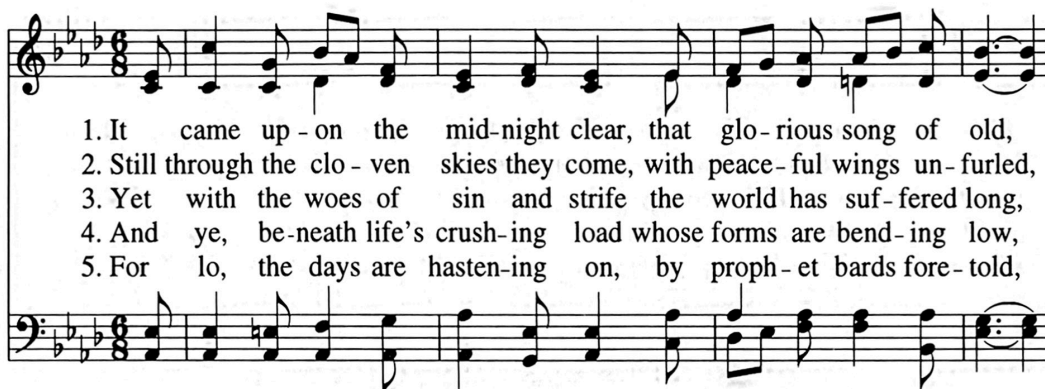
til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 death's dark shad - ows put to flight.  
 cause us in her ways to go. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -  
 the whole world with heav - en's peace.

man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

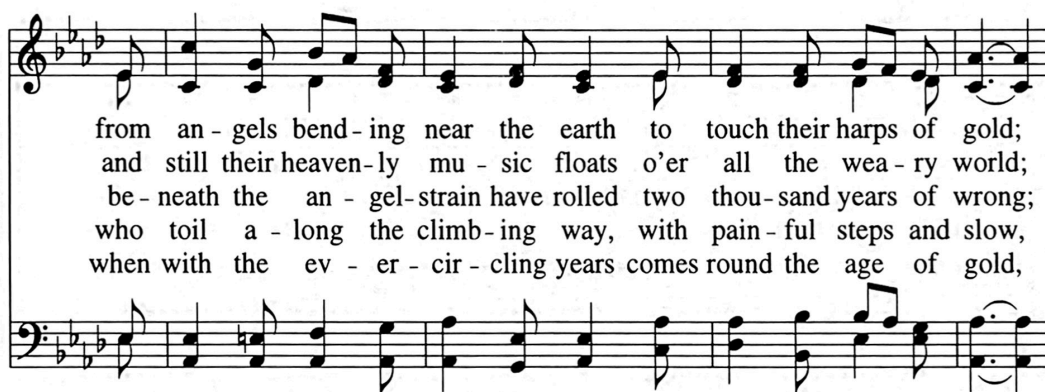
WORDS: Latin: c. 9th century; sts. 1,2, tr. John M. Neale, 1851; sts. 3,4, tr. Henry S. Coffin, 1916 VENI EMMANUEL  
 MUSIC: French melody, 15th century, arr., harm. Thomas Helmore, 1854 LM w. refrain

Anglican Oxford Movement Neale translated this hymn which originated in the seven Great 'O' antiphons that were traditional for vespers during Advent. The refrain was added in the 13th century.

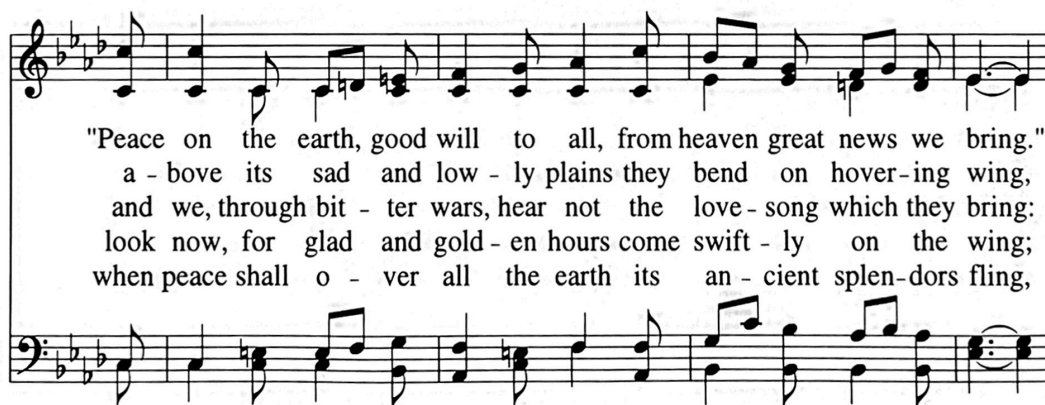
## It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



1. It came up - on the mid-night clear, that glo - rious song of old,  
 2. Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace - ful wings un - furled,  
 3. Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf - fered long,  
 4. And ye, be - neath life's crush - ing load whose forms are bend - ing low,  
 5. For lo, the days are hasten - ing on, by proph - et bards fore - told,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold;  
 and still their heaven - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world;  
 be - neath the an - gel - strain have rolled two thou - sand years of wrong;  
 who toil a - long the climb - ing way, with pain - ful steps and slow,  
 when with the ev - er - cir - cling years comes round the age of gold,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven great news we bring."  
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hover - ing wing,  
 and we, through bit - ter wars, hear not the love - song which they bring:  
 look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;  
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,

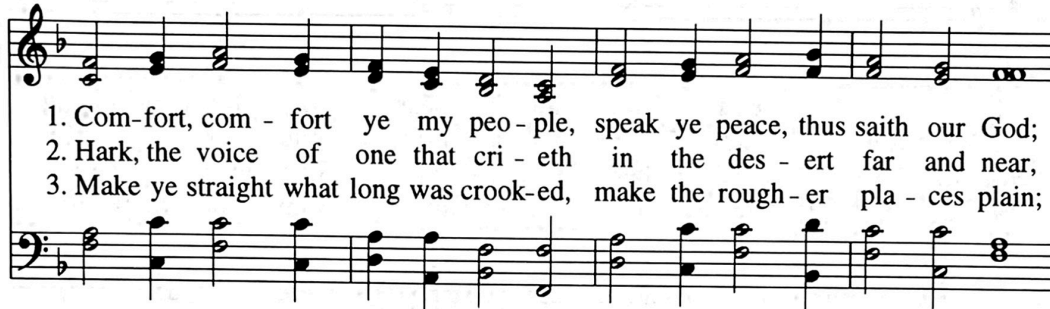
WORDS: Edmund H. Sears, 1849, alt.  
 MUSIC: Richard S. Willis, 1850

CAROL  
 CMD

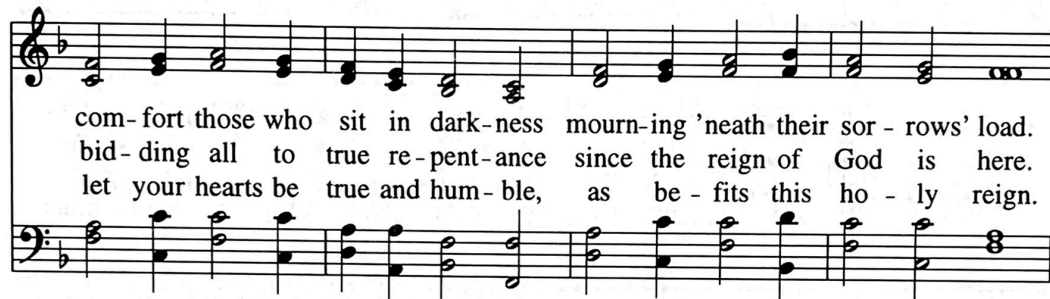
Massachusetts Unitarian Sears' poem is one of the first American hymns to stress the social implications of the angels' message of peace. Stanza 3, often omitted, is here restored to the text.

# Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

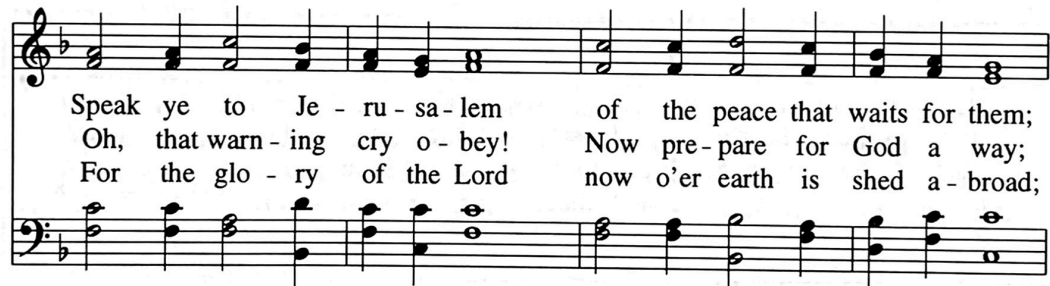
115



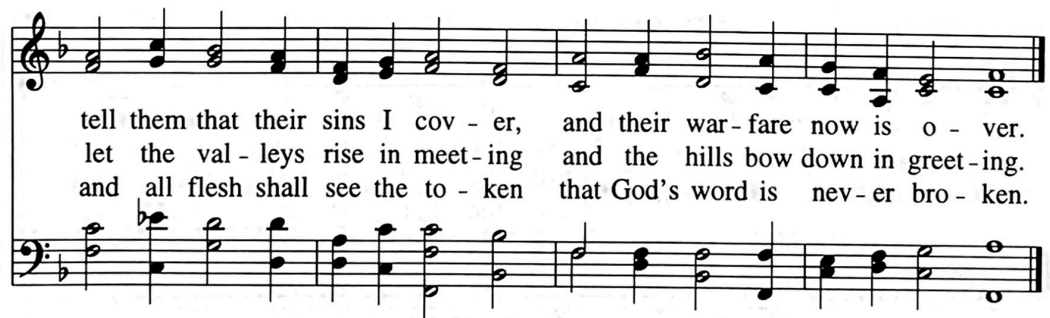
1. Com-fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, speak ye peace, thus saith our God;  
 2. Hark, the voice of one that cri - eth in the des - ert far and near,  
 3. Make ye straight what long was crook-ed, make the rough - er pla - ces plain;



com-fort those who sit in dark-ness mourn-ing 'neath their sor - rows' load.  
 bid-ding all to true re-pent-ance since the reign of God is here.  
 let your hearts be true and hum-ble, as be - fits this ho - ly reign.



Speak ye to Je - ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them;  
 Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre-pare for God a way;  
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now o'er earth is shed a - broad;



tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war-fare now is o - ver.  
 let the val - leys rise in meet-ing and the hills bow down in greet-ing.  
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

WORDS: Johann Olearius, 1671; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt.  
 MUSIC: Louis Bourgeois, *Trente quatre Pseaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

PSALM 42  
 87.87.77.88

Based on Isaiah 40, this hymn was written for St. John the Baptist's Day (June 24).  
 The tune is a heritage from the earliest Reformed psalters in Geneva.

ADVENT