

Welcome to
St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

January 1, 2023



GOD IS STILL SPEAKING



*NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S
JOURNEY YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!*

Worship Leadership

Preacher: The Rev. Anna L. Thompson

Lector: Mary Runkle

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Eric R. Dundore

Choristers' Director: Jonneke A. Dundore

Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore

Organist: Sarah A. Myers

Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller

Ministry of Audio and Video

Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service

Worship Welcome Team Leader: Chris Bowers

Worship Welcome Team: Steve Roush,

Nursery:

Flower Delivery: Mary Runkle

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Herrold

Ministers

The Entire Congregation

Please visit the church website at <http://saintpaulsucc-mech.org/> to sign up for Acolyte, Welcome Team, Lector, Volunteer in the Nursery, Deliver the Altar Flowers, and/or Sponsor the Altar Flowers. You will find the individual signup sheets under the "Sign Up" menu heading. Thank you.



St. Paul's Online Giving

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

626 Williams Grove Road

Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

717/766-7931

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Office email: stpaulstaff@outlook.com

Rev. John's email: revjohnwd@outlook.com

Rev. Allyssa's email: allyssaboyer@outlook.com

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

January 1, 2023

Please note: the livestream broadcast begins with the Announcements. If you do not wish to appear in the livestream, it is best to sit in one of the back three pews of the Sanctuary.

Please write up any Prayer Requests ahead of time, leave them in the Red Bowl or give them to the Welcome Team Leader. They will bring them forward.

****Those who are comfortable doing so are invited to stand.***

THE RINGING OF THE CHIMES

THE WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "What Child is This?"

Roy Rob Perry

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

One: We recount the gracious deeds of God,
all the praiseworthy acts the Lord has done for us:

All: Praise God for coming to dwell among us, Immanuel.

One: Praise God for the good news of Jesus, the pioneer
of our salvation.

All: Praise God for making us brothers and sisters in Christ.

One: Praise God who is present with us still, lifting us up
and carrying us.

**All: God's glory shines in heaven and on earth.
Praise the Lord!**

*CAROLS No. 132 "Joy to the World!"
No. 139 "The First Nowell" (verses 1 & 2)

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

**Exalted God,
even as the heavenly host sang of your glory
in the night skies over Bethlehem;
even as the star shone in the heavens,
and sheep and cattle gathered in that light,
so we gather,
young and old together,
to recount all that you have done for us
in mercy and steadfast love.
No tyrant's threat or deadly act
can destroy the dreams and visions**

you have placed within us,
for you have drawn us close.
With all creation,
we praise you and exalt your name
forever and ever. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

Merciful God, in great love you have claimed us as your children.
We confess that we have not loved you as we should.
We have not participated fully in your purposes and plans;
we grow weary and give up when the way is hard.
We have not loved our brothers and sisters as you intend.
Complacent in the presence of injustice and violence,
we fail to recognize our own complicity.
Forgive us, especially when we fail to protect children
so vulnerable and precious in your sight.
Forgive our misuse of power against people,
and against your creation.
Help us to praise you by living in harmony and peace.
Do not be ashamed of us, we pray,
but strengthen us in our time of testing.
Set us free from fear
that we may wholly trust in you.
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ,
who shared our flesh and blood. Amen.

SILENT PRAYERS

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

Minister: Children of God, it is clear that Jesus Christ came to help sinners. He is our Savior in all our distress, and it is his presence that saves us. Declare with me the good news of the gospel:

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

*Please note: we will not be shaking hands or hugging.
If you are able, please rise and greet one another with other signs of Peace.*

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

*CAROLS No. 143 "On Christmas Night All Christians Sing"
No. 133 "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 63:7-9

THE PSALM READING

Psalm 148

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE GOSPEL READING:

Matthew 2:13-23

*CAROLS No. 131 "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" (verses 1, 2 & 4)

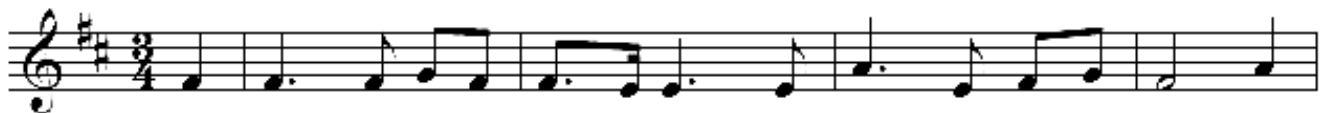
No. 129 "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" (verses 1, 2 & 4)

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts and debtors)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE CHORAL RESPONSE (unison)

Prayer Response



Thru Christ our ear-nest prayers are said with words we scarce can frame; Our



work of Christ-mas now be-gun, We serve them in Christ's name.

OFFERTORY "A Bethlehem Lullaby"

Suzanne Keeney

*DOXOLOGY

From all who dwell beneath the skies,

Let the Creator's praise arise!

Let the Redeemer's name be sung.

Through every land, by every tongue! Amen.

*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)

In this gifting season, O God, we are grateful for the gift of your dear Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Receive, we pray, these offerings we bring. May they be used in the service of your grace and truth dwelling among us. In Christ's holy name we pray. Amen.

*CAROLS No. 125 "Angels We Have Heard on High" (verses 1 & 3)
No. 154 "Go Tell It on the Mountain"

*THE BIDDING TO MISSION

*THE WORLD PEACE PRAYER

One: Lead us, O God.

All: Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth.

Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust.

Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace.

Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe. Amen.

*THE BENEDICTION

* THE THREE-FOLD AMEN

Please note: the livestream continues until the end of the Postlude.

*Please know you are free to leave following the Three-fold Amen,
and exit to the Narthex to speak with one another.*

Do remember you may be visible and audible on the livestream as you exit early.

If you choose to remain, please be seated and listen quietly to the Postlude.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE "Christmas Carol Medley"

Robert J. Hughes

References:

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The World Peace Prayer is a paraphrase of a verse from the Upanishads, the most ancient scriptures of Hinduism, also prayed daily by Roman Catholic Benedictine nuns.

ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by
Don Wood, "In honor of the Wood and Kanour Families"

WE WELCOME the Rev. Anna L. Thompson as our Preacher and Liturgist today. Anna is a ministerial daughter of our congregation and served St. Paul's as the Director of Christian Education and Youth Ministries for a number of years. She is the retired Chaplain of Thornwald Home and The Sarah A. Todd Memorial Home of United Church of Christ Homes. We thank her for her participation in our worship service today.