

Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

December 11, 2022



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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. John J. Ward-Diorio

The Rev. Allyssa A. Boyer

Lector: Kathy Aumiller

Candle Lighting: Mike and Kathy Aumiller

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: Sherry Spencer

Worship Welcome Team: Jim Pirtle, Becky Thompson, Dave Scott

Nursery:

Flower Delivery: Martha Keith

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

Website: www.saintpaulsucc-mech.org

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

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 11, 2022

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 “Lo! How A Rose”

Randolph Johnston

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN No. 106 “My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise”

JOY

One: We have lit the first two candles, one for hope and one for peace. Today we light the third candle, the candle of joy. This should be the easy one, because joy is all around us—in the children, the lights, the music, the gathering together. But how often do we let our preparations—or our memories—push joy to the side? And do we ignore what makes God joyous?

One: Joy is like an underground spring that wells up within us, but joy is also a choice, an attitude. Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised. It needs to be proclaimed and sung as Mary did. So today we listen and open ourselves to joy, trusting that God has already planted it in us. All we need to do is give it care and offer it to share.

**All: Loving God, we open ourselves to you,
trusting that this is how you made us:
you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives.
Show us the creative power of hope.
Teach us the peace that comes from justice.
Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,
That we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.**

SUNG RESPONSE “The Candle of Joy”

(sung to no. 305, “You Servants of God”)

*The candle of joy reminds us to sing,
For God is at work to do a new thing.
The proud will be humbled; the lowly will rise.
God's kingdom is one of delight and surprise.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Experiencing joy is not about getting everything we want. Rather it is more about the recognition and being so moved by the realization, of the love and beauty that surrounds us. This love shows through the words and actions of others, some we know and some we do not; through the wonder of creation and the created; and through God’s Presence, fulfilling the promise of unconditional love. Focusing too much on the “getting” may well cause us to miss what has been given. Let us join in a time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us, and continues to come to us, seeking to open our eyes, hearts, and minds to what can truly bring us joy.

All: **Let us be moved by joy; let us be so caught up in joy that we embrace all that life offers. Amen.**

*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

*THE GLORIA PATRI (#759 is the tune, but not all the same words)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

*Children are invited to the front at this time.
Remember, everyone who comes forward will be on camera.*

SING THE CHILDREN TO THE FRONT

Jesus Loves the Little Children

Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world

Shy and Joyful, Bold and Bright

They are precious in his sight

Jesus loves the little children of the world.

THE WORD FOR THE YOUNG

SING THE CHILDREN TO THEIR SEATS

Jesus Loves Me

*Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so
Little ones to him belong. They are weak but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me
Yes, Jesus loves me. The Bible tells me so*

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

THE EPISTLE READING

James 5:7-11

*THE HYMN NO. 119 "My Soul Gives Glory to My God"

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE:

Luke 1:46-55

"Mary's Sermon"

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

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)

Advent Blessing

Bless us, Fa - ther, as we pray. Help us seek You day by day. Bind us all in

Heart and mind. Bid all our quar - rels cease. Fill the world with Hea - ven's peace. Bid all war and

hun - ger cease. Oh, come, Ho - ly Sav - ior, come.

Please place your pew pad sheets in that Offering Plate. Thank you.

THE OFFERTORY “People, Look East”

Helman

Hand Chimes

***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)**

Majestic God, thank you for inviting us to share the blessings You pour out on us. We want to extend the healing ministry of Jesus who gave sight to those who were blind and new insight to some who only pretended to see. Use our resources to heal attitudes as well as bodies, to bring wholeness, not just cures. Help us to address the inequities of the earth that leave so many without food or shelter or hope. Lead us into Your realm in the midst of our daily living. Amen.

***THE HYMN “God, We Await Your Advent Here”**

(To the tune of #365 - "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee")

**God, we await your advent here: When will these desert lands rejoice?
When will new blossoms bright appear And all earth praise you with one voice?**

**We live in deserts we have made; Gifts of your love we pass right by.
We seek possessions, more each day, And then in thirst for joy, we cry.**

**God, we prepare for Jesus' birth — Searching for gifts from store to store!
Yet when you sent your Christ to earth, You gave us joy worth so much more.**

**When in the love of Christ we grow, Streams in this desert shall abound.
Then by your Spirit we will know: True wealth in Jesus Christ is found.**

Text: Copyright © 1998 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.

***THE BIDDING TO MISSION AND BLESSING (Responsive)**

**One: Rejoice in God always, and again I say, rejoice
For God has created you with the capacity for joy.**

**ALL: We will find what makes us joyful,
And make that our gift to the world.**

**One: Trust in God’s good will for all of creation and open yourself
To both God’s gentle and surprising transforming love.**

**ALL: We will welcome new possibilities in our lives.
We will offer ourselves to God's goodness.
We will go forth in hope, and peace, and joy.**

***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. You may be visible and audible on the livestream as you exit early. If you choose to remain, please stay seated and listen quietly to the Postlude.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE "Lift Up Your Hands, O Mighty Gates"

Franklin Ritter

References:

Our Advent Candle Lightening Liturgy and Bidding to Mission and Blessing Responsive Reading are from "Process & Faith: Advent Candle Liturgy, May 27, 2015" by Jeanyne Slettom, with some slight edits and additions.

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.

The white rose on the altar today is in memory of JoAnn Bender. Please continue to keep Marshall and JoAnn's whole family in your prayers.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Are given to the Glory of God by
Mary Runkle, "In memory of my father, Glenn Randolph."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thursday, December 15th

• Blue Christmas Service (7PM)

- Christmas can be a painful time. Some people are mourning the death of a loved one. Some are far from home. Some are suffering from illness, addiction, or estrangement. Some are lonely, struggling financially, or in conflict with another. Some are hurting because of the great pain, need, and violence in our nation and around the world. The constant refrains on radio and television, in shopping malls

and churches, about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends, serves as a reminder to many of what we've lost and how alone we feel. Join us for our Blue Christmas worship service, Thursday, December 15, at 7:00 PM. This service is for every person who is looking for a safe place of rest, comfort, and healing this holiday season.

Sunday, December 18th.

- **Cantata, "I Hear the Prophet Calling"** (10:30AM)
- **The Christmas Fund Offering** (10:30AM)
 - THE CHRISTMAS FUND for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years. The offering is administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy, lay employees, and their surviving spouses may be eligible for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and/or Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks.
- **Christmas Caroling** (4PM)
 - The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear! We will leave St. Paul's at 4:00 PM sharp on Sunday, December 18, and drive to the homes of some of our congregation's seniors to sing carols. Bring comfortable shoes, warm clothes, and a joyful spirit. We plan to return to the church building around 7:00 PM. Children, youth, and adults are all invited to participate, but you must sign up so that we can arrange transportation for everyone (sign up on our website or on the bulletin board in the Common). Children in 5th grade or younger must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. If you are willing to volunteer as a driver, please let us know when you sign up. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Allyssa. Fa-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la!

Saturday, December 24th.

- **Christmas Eve Services** (4PM & 11PM)

Sunday, December 25th.

- Christmas Day: No services

'MITTEN TREE'

The 'Mitten Tree' is now a 'Mitten Bin' in order to not crowd our Common area. We are placing 2 bins marked for winter mittens, gloves, hats, scarves and warm socks. We will be collecting them throughout Advent. Items will then be taken to New Hope Ministries for distribution. January 14th is the deadline to contribute.

2023 GIVING ENVELOPES are in the Common. Please remember to pick up your envelopes today! If you would like envelopes and don't see a set marked for you, contact Renee in the church office.