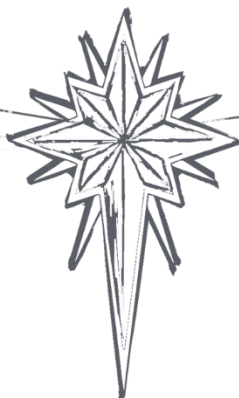


Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

January 7, 2024



When they saw the star,
they rejoiced
exceedingly with
with great joy.

Matthew 2:10

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: Eric Dundore

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

Lead Greeter: Chris Bowers
Greeters: Paula Boyer, Sherry Spencer, Fenton Fox, Chris Grice, Steven Roush
Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer
Kids' Place:
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Jonneke Dundore
Counting Team: Fenton Fox, Sherry Spencer

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Herrold

Ministers

The Entire Congregation

*Visit the church website, under the 'Sign Up' menu heading, to help
as a Sunday volunteer or Worship Participant.
We're grateful for your generosity.*

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

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Office: stpaulstaff@outlook.com

Rev. John: revjohnwd@outlook.com

Rev. Allyssa: allyssaboyer@outlook.com



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

EPIPHANY
HOLY COMMUNION

January 7, 2024

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 "March of the Wise Men"

George Blake

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN No. 139 "The First Nowell" (vs. 1-3 & 5)

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

God of light, You brought Your light for all into the world in Jesus, demonstrating that Your light is within all of us. May we let our lights shine, so that in the midst of darkness, both personal and world-wide, we might find and offer hope. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

We often cover the light of God within us, out of uncertainty if the flame does burn in us, or out of fear of what that light might reveal, or out of fear of who might be angered by our light. Yet God's light continues to shine in us, visible to those who are searching. Let us join in the time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us, and continues to burn brightly within us, longing to shine through us.

ALL: Despite our uncertainties and fears, let us let our lights shine! Amen.

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.
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 60:1-6

THE PSALM READING

Psalm 72:1-7, 12-14

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE:

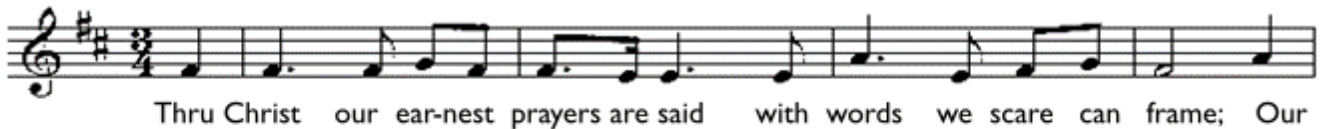
Matthew 2:1-23

“Wonder and Horror”

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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)



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

THE OFFERTORY “The Work of Christmas”
Chancel Choir

words by Howard Thurman,
music by Dan Forrest

***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)**

We reach for the boundless riches of Christ, even as we give the tithes and offerings we have pledged. An abundance of things does not satisfy, and the wealth of nations cannot buy peace. Therefore, we join our efforts in the church to make a difference in the world, not through instruments of oppression but through the power of love. Employ our gifts in the service of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

***THE HYMN No. 165 “Love Came Down at Christmas”**

THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God.

All: It is good to give God thanks and praise.

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

We gather both in person and in Spirit. Greeters will pass out bread and gluten-free crackers, and then red wine and white grape juice. They will bring the trays to you.

For those of you joining us via livestream, we hope you have some bread and wine or juice of your choice before you. We trust that God is powerful enough to extend God’s Blessing upon these Communion elements, even as we and they are scattered in geographic space.

Please hold the elements until all have been served; we will eat and then drink them together. All are welcome to participate. Thank you.

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

Holy God, we give You thanks for the miracle and wonder of this meal. We give You thanks for your coming to us in the person of Jesus, and for Jesus' willingness to offer his whole self for our benefit. We can see how we can best live our lives. We can believe all "deaths," those losses, endings, and struggles in this life, and the ones at the end of our physical lives, are not the final word. We can trust that Your Spirit is within all of us, and always will be. May the gifts of this table always remind us of the gifts You have given us all. Amen.

*THE HYMN No. 157 "Brightest and Best"

*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. 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 "The Newborn King"

Gilbert M. Martin

References:

The Prayer of Dedication is from "Led by Love" by Lavon Bayler, 1996, United Church Press.

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.