

St. John's United Church of Christ
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St Johns UCC Allentown

**Personal hearing devices are available
from an usher.**

***Indicates that people may stand as they are able**

December 28, 2025

11:00am

Tower Chimes

Janet Cook

**Music to Gather: "Come, Your Hearts and
Voices Raising"**

Helmut Walcha

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Welcome

Jeff Rissell

Call to worship based on Psalm 100

One: Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

All: Serve the LORD with gladness; come into God's presence with singing.

One: Know that the LORD is God. It is God who made us, and we belong to God!

All: We are God's people and the sheep of God's pasture.

One: Enter the gates with thanksgiving and enter God's courts with praise.

All: Give thanks to God! Bless God's name!

One: For the LORD is good;

All: God's steadfast love endures forever and God's faithfulness is to all generations!

Hymn #144... "Hark! The Herold Angels Sing"

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.

1. Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing,
“Glo-ry to the Christ-child bring;
Peace on earth and mer-cy mild,
God and sin-ner rec-on-ciled!”
Joy-ful, all you saints a-rise,
join the tri-umph of the skies;
With the an-gel host pro-claim,
“Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!”
Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing,
“Glo-ry to the Christ-child bring!”
2. Christ, by high-est heaven a-dored,
Christ the ev-er-last-ing Lord!
Late in time the Sav-ior comes,
off-spring of the Vir-gin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh, the God-head see;
hail the in-car-nate De-i-ty,
Pleased on earth with us to dwell,
Je-sus, our Em-man-u-el.
Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing,
“Glo-ry to the Christ-child bring!”
3. Hail the Bear-er of God’s peace!
Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness,
Light and life our Sav-ior brings,
risen with ra-diant, heal-ing wings.

Profession of Faith

One: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here! Today we continue our celebration! Christ is born! Emmanuel, God is with us!

All: Precious Jesus, we praise your name from mountain tops and whisper it in our bedrooms at night as we drift off to sleep. We are overjoyed that your love came down to be with us! Though you are fully God you are also fully human. You are the king above all kings, prince of peace, wonderful counselor, Emmanuel, God with us! Amen!

Response to Profession of Faith Hymn **#133, Verse 4**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us,
we pray;**

**Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us
today.**

**We hear the Christmas angels the great
glad tidings tell;**

**O come to us, abide with us, our Lord
Emmanuel!**

Words of Reassurance

One: Beloved, let us gather together in song
and praise this morning!

**All: “Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the
earth; break forth into joyous song and sing
praises.” Psalm 98:4**

Response to Words of Assurance: 🎵 Hymn
#125, Refrain

**Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

Scriptures

Danny Collier

Reading 1: Colossians 3:12-17 (Page 956-957)

Congregational Response 🎵 (aka prayer for
grace)

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

“Things We Missed at Christmas”

**a hymn sing with reflections by Rev. Lois
Mease**

Snow

Hymn #128 “In the Bleak Midwinter” v 1 & 2

Children singing

Hymn # 138 Jesus, Our Brother, Strong and
Good

A rowdy song

Hymn # 129 “Good Christian Friends,
Rejoice” verses 1 & 2

A good old country melody

In the Bleak Midwinter

Christina G. Rossetti, 1872; alt.

1. In the bleak mid-win-ter, frost-y wind made moan,
earth stood hard as i-ron, wa-ter like a stone;
Snow had fall-en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak mid-win-ter, long a-go.
2. God tran-scends all heav-en, earth, and its do-main;
heaven and earth shall flee a-way when Christ comes to reign;
In the bleak mid-win-ter a sta-ble place suf-ficed
the sov-ereign God al-might-y, Je-sus Christ.
3. An-gels and arch-an-gels may have gath-ered there,
cher-u-bim and ser-a-phim thronged the mid-night air;
But his moth-er on-ly, in her maid-en bliss,
wor-shiped the be-lov-ed with a kiss.
4. What can I of-fer, poor as I am?
If I were a shep-herd, I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise one, I would do my part;
but what can I of-fer: all my heart.

Jesus, Our Brother, Strong and Good

French carol, 12th century
Transl. anon.

1. Je-sus, our broth-er, strong and good,
was hum-bly born in a sta-ble rude,
and the friend-ly beasts a-round him stood,
Je-sus our broth-er, strong and good.
2. "I," said the don-key, shag-gy and brown,
"I car-ried your moth-er up-hill and down,
I car-ried your moth-er to Beth-le-hem town;
I," said the don-key, shag-gy and brown.
3. "I," said the cow, all white and red,
"I gave you my man-ger for your bed,
I gave my hay to pil-low your head;
I," said the cow, all white and red.
4. "I," said the sheep with curl-y horn,
"I gave you my wool for a blan-ket warm,
you wore my coat on Christ-mas morn;
I," said the sheep with curl-y horn.
5. "I," said the dove, from the raf-ters high,
"I cooed you to sleep that you should not cry,
we cooed you to sleep, my love and I;
I," said the dove, from the raf-ters high.

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

German and Latin, 14th century
Transl. John Mason Neale, 1855; alt.

1. Good Chris-tian friends, re-joyce
with heart and soul and voice;
now give heed to what we say:
Je-sus Christ is born to-day;
Ox and ass be-fore him bow,
a-sleep with-in the man-ger now.
Christ is born to-day, Christ is born to-day!
2. Good Chris-tian friends, re-joyce
with heart and soul and voice;
now you know of end-less bliss:
Je-sus Christ was born for this!
God has o-pened heav-en's door,
and you are blessed for-ev-er-more.
Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!
3. Good Chris-tian friends, re-joyce
with heart and soul and voice;
now you need not fear the grave:
Je-sus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the ev-er-last-ing hall.
Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!

153 Who Would Think That What Was Needed

John Bell and Graham Maule, 1990; alt.

1. Who would think that what was need-ed to trans-form and save
the earth
might not be a plan or ar-my proud in pur-pose, proved in worth?
Who would think, de-spite de-ri-sion, that a child should lead
the way?
God sur-pris-es earth with heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.
2. Shep-herds watch and sag-es won-der, mon-archs scorn and
an-gels sing;
such a place as none would reck-on hosts a ho-ly, help-less thing;
Sta-bled beasts and pass-ing strang-ers watch a ba-by laid in hay:
God sur-pris-es earth with heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.
3. Cen-tu-ries of skill and sci-ence span the past from which we move,
yet ex-per-i-ence ques-tions wheth-er with such prog-ress
we im-prove.
In our search for sense and mean-ing, lest our hopes and
hu-mor fray,
God sur-pris-es earth with heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.

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Isa. 11:1–6; Matt. 2:1–11; Luke 2:8–14

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

126

James Montgomery, 1816; alt.

1. An-gels, from the realms of glo-ry,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
As you sang cre-a-tion's sto-ry,
now pro-claim Mes-si-ah's birth:
Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship,
wor-ship Christ, give thanks and sing.
2. Shep-herds, in the fields a-bid-ing,
watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now re-sid-ing,
yon-der shines the in-fant light:
Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship,
wor-ship Christ, give thanks and sing.
3. Sag-es, leave your con-tem-pla-tions,
bright-er vi-sions beam a-far;
Seek the great De-sire of Na-tions,
guid-ed by Christ's na-tal star:
Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship,
wor-ship Christ, give thanks and sing.
4. Saints, be-fore the al-tar bend-ing,
watch-ing long in hope and fear,
Sud-den-ly, your prayers at-tend-ing,
Christ be-side you shall ap-pear.
Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship,
wor-ship Christ, give thanks and sing.

Luke 2:8-20; Matt. 2:1-2, 9-11

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I Am the Light of the World

584

Jim Strathdee, 1969; rev. 1981

In response to a Christmas poem by Howard Thurman

Refrain:

"I am the light of the world!

You peo-ple come and fol-low me!"

If you fol-low and love you'll learn the mys-ter-y
of what you were meant to do and be.

1. When the song of the an-gels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the sag-es and the shep-herds have found their way home,
the work of Christ-mas is be-gun:

Refrain:

2. To find the lost and lone-ly one,
to heal the bro-ken soul with love,
To feed the hun-gry chil-dren with warmth and good food,
To feel the earth be-low, the sky a-bove!

Refrain:

3. To free the pris-oner from all chains,
to make the pow-er-ful care,
To re-build the na-tions with strength of good will,
to see all God's chil-dren ev-ery-where!

Refrain:

Hymn #153 “Who Would Think That What Was Needed”

The feeling of oneness with creation

Hymn #126 “Angels from the Realms of Glory” verses 1 & 4

Something to Look Forward To

Hymn #584 “I Am the Light of the World”

Morning Prayer and 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.

Prayer Response 🎵 Hymn #124, Verse 3

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay

Close by me forever and love me, I pray.

**Bless all the dear children in your tender
care,**

And fit us for heaven to live with you there.

Announcements

Jeff Rissell

Offering

Offertory “Away in a Manger” David Williams
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* Doxology 

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heav’nly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

* Hymn 148..... “What Child is This?”

* Commission and Blessing

* Refrain #161

William C. Dix, 1865; alt.

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
Whom an-gels greet with an-thems sweet
while shep-herds watch are keep-ing?
This, this, the an-gels sing,
is Christ, God's ho-ly of-fer-ing;
Haste, haste your praise to bring
the babe, the child of Mar-y!
2. Why lies the Child in man-ger bare
where ox and ass are feed-ing?
Give heed, draw near; for sin-ners here
the si-lent Word is plead-ing.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the child of Mar-y!
3. Bring gifts of in-cense, gold, and myrrh;
come, join in ju-bi-la-tion;
The Ho-ly Child, though meek and mild,
has come with God's sal-va-tion.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the moth-er sings her lul-la-by;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the child of Mar-y!

Luke 2:7–14, 25–32; Matt. 2:11; John 1:14; John 19:16b–18, 34

Amen, Amen

Music to Go Forth: "Rise Up, Shepherd"

Karl Osterland

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***The Altar flowers* in honor of St. John's
UCC.**

Special Announcements/Reminders:

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In emergencies, please use exits found to
the left and right of the altar, to the right of
the front pew, and at the rear of the
sanctuary. Follow **EXIT** signs

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

God is still speaking, ...

Serving St. John's...

Rev. Becky Sausser.....Pastor
Lois Mease... Music Director and Organist
April Riddick.....Custodian
Jim Saylor.....Sunday Sexton
And too many volunteers to list!

Office Hours

Sunday: 9am-2pm

Monday-Thursday: 9am-3pm

Closed on Fridays and Saturdays