



St. John's United Church of Christ
36 S. 6th Street
Allentown, PA 18101
(610) 433-0146
www.stjohnsuccallentown.org

Christmas Eve

7:30 PM

December 24, 2025

* Indicates people are invited to stand

Tower Chimes

Janet Cook

Music to Gather

"Silent Night! Holy Night!"

setting, John Turner

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"He Is Born, the Divine Christ Child"

Arranged by Penny Rodriguez

Copyright 1994 Beckenhorst Press, Inc.

Lois Mease, Piano

"All Through the Night"

traditional Welsh, arr. Sarajane Williams

Ann Kunkel, Harp

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Noel Rawsthorne

"In Dulci Jubilo"

Noel Rawsthorne

Copyright 2001 Kevin Mayhew Ltd.

Lois Mease, Organ

"What Child is This"

Traditional, arr. Vince Guaraldi

Copyright 1966 Lee Mendelson Film Productions, Inc.

Lois Mease

"Welcome, Yule!"

Shelly K. Albrecht

Copyright 2012, Alfred Music Publishing Co.

Chancel Choir

Welcome

Rev. Becky Grace Sausser

*Call to Worship

One: Tonight, we gather together in revelry and celebration!

All: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given!

One: They will call him “wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting father, prince of peace.

All: All authority will rest on his shoulders and there will be an everlasting peace that has no end.

One: Tonight, we gather together in hope, peace, joy, and love!

All: Let us welcome Christ anew into our hearts on this blessed and holy night!

*Hymn #135.....O Come All Ye Faithful

Verse 1

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him born the King of angels;

Refrain:

**O come, let us adore Him; O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

Verse 2

Oh sing, choirs of angels, sing in
exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav’n above;
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;

Refrain:

Verse 3

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this
happy morning;
Jesus to thee be all glory giv’n!
Word of our God, now in flesh appearing;

Refrain:

Lighting of the Christ Candle

The Dannenhower Family

Today we light the center candle in the advent wreath: the Christ Candle. As the angels proclaimed to the shepherds watching over their flocks on that night so long ago, let us bring good news of great joy to all the people—that a child will be born to bring peace on earth and good will to all!



**The Christ candle's light that shines for us here
Tells out the good news that God has come near!
God came, a poor baby, in one time and place,
To show all creation the wealth of God's grace.**

Pastor: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!
Let us pray together on this the night of our dear savior's birth!

All: God of the stars and the angels' songs, as we gather this evening, all our attention is focused on a baby, lying in a makeshift bed in an "it-will-have-to-do" stable. It's not lost on us that you sent your Son, our Savior, into the world among the poorest of the poor and told us: "This will be a sign to you." As we present gifts to you, we pray that they might reach those in the greatest need, that they might lift those in the deepest despair, and that they might bring peace and compassion to those who find themselves amidst conflict. We pray this in the name of that Holy Child, Jesus the Christ, our Savior and Redeemer! Amen.

Written by UMC Communications

Offertory

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

Arr. Chuck Marohnic

Copyright 2000, Malcolm Music

Verse 4 of Hymn # 128

What can I offer, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.

If I were a wise one, I would do my part;

But what can I offer: all my heart.

Scripture Reading #1 - 

Luke 1:26 - 38 NRSV

Nancy Kramer-Moyer

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

"O Bambino"

Arr. Harry Simeone

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Chancel Choir

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Hymn #124Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes,
But Little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; protect me, I pray,
And stay by my side until night turns to day.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see -- I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



* Hymn #125Angels We Have Heard On High

Verse 1

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Verse 3

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him Whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King

Refrain:

Verse 2

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

Verse 4

See Him in a manger laid,
Whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
While our hearts in love we raise.

Refrain:

Scripture Reading #4



John 1:1-14

Pastor Becky Sausser

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.



A Christmas Reflection

Pastor Becky Sausser

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

traditional Polish, arr. Ailie Robertson

Copyright 2025 Ailie Robertson
Ann Kunkel, Harp

Invitation to Share the Light

Note: Ushers will distribute the candlelight to the first person in each pew. To light your candle, tip your unlit candle into the lit candle of the person next to you. Please raise your candle as you are able, at the beginning of verse 3 and keep it raised, as you are able, until the verse ends. Then carefully extinguish the candle.

* Hymn #134....."Silent Night"

Verse 1

Silent night! Holy night
All is calm, all is bright
round yon Virgin Mother and Child,
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
sleep in Heavenly peace!
sleep in Heavenly peace!

Verse 2

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from Heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Verse 3

Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, Love's pure light
radiant, beams from Thy Holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

* Benediction

Pastor Becky Sausser

*Hymn #132 "Joy to the World"

Verse 1

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
let earth receive her King;
let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Verse 2

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns:
let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Verse 3

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of His righteousness
and wonders of His love,
and wonders of His love,
and wonders, wonders of His love.

Music to go Forth

"I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve"
Copyright 1975, Augsburg Fortress

Stephen Gabrielsen

God bless you and have a blessed Christmas!



Thank you for worshipping with us this evening. Please place your candles in the bins outside of the sanctuary. Fellowship will take place in the Trinity room after the service; all are welcome to join!

Many thanks to our amazing bakers who provided goodies for this evening!

Please join us again on Sunday for our 11am service! There will be **no Sunday School or Adult Forum on December 28.**

Thanks to those assisting in tonight's worship:

Acolytes: Noah Dopera

Chimer: Janet Cook

Greeters: Bill Falla & Cindy Danenhower

Readers: Nancy Kramer-Moyer, Sarah Collier, Jeff Rissell

Ushers: Jeff Rissell, Julian Pyle, & Julius Pyle

A special **THANK YOU** to our Music Director and Organist, Lois Mease, our harpist, Ann Kunkel and the Chancel Choir!



The Poinsettias gracing our altar this Christmas season are.....

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Paul Saylor Sr. by Jim & Brenda Saylor
In memory of Bernard Lackner & Bernice Bramich by Jim & Brenda Saylor
In memory of Loved Ones by Jim & Brenda Saylor
In memory of Eleanor & Michael Duch by Shirley & Jim Bartynski
In memory of Virginia & Bronek Bartynski by Jim & Shirley Bartynski
In memory of Loved Ones by Cindy Dannenhower
In memory of Loved Ones by Bonnie & Bill Falla
In memory of Loved Ones by Tom Raub
In memory of Bud Knerr by Felicia Knerr
In memory of Wouter de Nie by Trudi Egan
In memory of Mom & Gram by Trudi Egan
In honor of Tanner & Connor by Trudi Egan
In memory of Barbara Silfies by Jim & Becky Bronfenbrenner
In memory of Doris Todd by Jim & Becky Bronfenbrenner
In honor of Lynn Cloak's cooking by Jim & Becky Bronfenbrenner

In honor of St. John's Sunday School by Jim & Becky Bronfenbrenner
In memory of Helen and Charles Rissell by son Jeff Rissell
In honor of Bruce & Sally Rodenberger by daughter Judy Garrigan
In memory of Althea (Grams) Rodenberger by Judy, Kelly and Abby Garrigan
In memory of our beloved daughter, Valerie Ford by Jeanette and Dick Schmoyer
In memory of Thomas R. Heinze by Esther Heinze
In memory of Matthew Gutt by Esther Heinze
In memory of Thomas R Heinze and David Heinze by Nancy Rissell
In memory of Agnes and Chet Heinze Sr. by Nancy Rissell
In memory of Jean and Chet Heinze Jr. by Nancy Rissell
In honor of the Children and Youth of St. John's by Nancy Rissell
In memory of my wife Doris Todd by Ralph Todd
In honor of my children, Megan & Jesse and Christopher & Emily by Ralph Todd
In honor of my grandchildren, Piper, Ellie and Jack by Ralph Todd
In honor of our streaming expert Danny Collier by Ralph Todd
In memory of Richard J. Klingborg by Sterna M. Klingborg
In memory of Loved Ones by Sterna M. Klingborg
In memory of Karline Mosebach by Jay Mosebach
In memory of Jay's parents Jay Mosebach
In memory of Stephen & Lillian Schaffer by Richard Schaffer & Carol Wikerd
In memory of Paul & Loretta Wikerd by Carol Wikerd & Richard Schaffer
In memory of David Deily by Alan & Lynn Cloak
In memory of Lloyd & May Deily by Alan & Lynn Cloak
In memory of Maude Anker by Alan & Lynn Cloak
In memory of Loved Ones by Bruce DeLong
In memory of Alan Huff by Kate Terrell
In honor of our children by Kate Terrell
In honor of our grandchildren by Kate Terrell
In memory of Alan Bowersox by Priscilla Bowersox
In memory of Anna & Clark Bowersox by Priscilla Bowersox

If you are taking your poinsettia following the service tonight,
please come to the front of the sanctuary and wait for someone to assist you.