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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**

November 29, 2026, 11:00am

Tower Chimes Janet Cook

Music to Gather: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!"
Arr. Evelyn R. Larter

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Amanda Muschett, Flute

* **Welcome**

Call to Worship by Rev. Nancy Townley

One: When we feel down-hearted…

All: Jesus says: "Rise!"

One: When we wonder if we can continue on our journey…

All: Jesus says: "I am with you. You have nothing to fear."
One: When we hunger and thirst in our souls for relief…
All: Jesus says: "Come, follow me."
One: Lord of hope and possibilities, be with us today.
All: Open our hearts and spirits to feed upon your healing word. AMEN.

Hymn Hymn #102 "O How Shall I Receive You"

Profession of Faith
One: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! Today we celebrate the first Sunday in Advent, recognizing the hope that is found in Jesus!
All: Precious Lord Jesus, today we begin the journey to the nativity. We ask for your blessing on this journey. Our world is deeply in need of the hope that you offer us. Fill us with your hope, and teach us how to trust you as we wait in the tension. Help us to be agents of your hope in the world, and bless us this advent season that we may grow closer to you. Amen.

102 O How Shall I Receive You

Paul Gerhardt, 1653
Transl. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, and others; alt.

1. O how shall I re-ceive you, how meet you on your way,
blessed hope of ev-ery peo-ple, my soul's de-light and stay?
O Je-sus, Je-sus, give me now by your own pure light,
to know what-e'er is pleas-ing and wel-come in your sight.

2. Love caused your in-car-na-tion; love brought you un-to me;
your thirst for my sal-va-tion pro-cured my lib-er-ty.
O love be-yond all tell-ing, that led you to em-brace
in love, all love ex-cel-ling, our lost and fall-en race.

3. You come, O Christ, with glad-ness, in mer-cy and good-will,
to bring an end to sad-ness and bid our fears be still.
In pa-tient ex-pec-ta-tion we live for that great day
when a re-newed cre-a-tion your glo-ry shall dis-play.

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Response to prayer of confession♫

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 Assurance

One: In 1861 the poet Emily Dickinson wrote this, "Hope is the thing with feathers, that perches in the soul- and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all."

All: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." Romans 15:13

Response to Words of Assurance ♫

Hymn #125, Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath- Hope
The Elders of St. John's UCC

Today we celebrate the first Sunday in advent and light the candle of Hope! The apostle Paul wrote that hope is the

destination of our faith; "Faith is the reality of what we hope
for, the proof of what we don't see." First Thessalonians chapter 1 verse 3 calls us to remember that our hope is found firmly planted in our faith in Christ. "We remember before our God and father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus gives us hope for the journey and hope for a future in which everyone born has a place at the table, and enough to eat.

(Light candle)

Responsive Scripture (Hebrews 11:1-3)

One: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Many: Indeed, our faith was passed down to us by the people who taught us hope and love.

One: By faith we understand that the world was prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.
All: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ this Advent season!

Lighting the Advent Candle (Tune #123)
Shine on us, O God of mercy;
Guide our path through gloom of night;
Fill us with your hopeful Spirit,
Come to us, O Christ the Light.

Scriptures	Barney Cook
Reading 1: Isaiah 64:1-9	(Pages 599-600)
Reading 2: Mark 1:1-8	(Page 806)

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.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel 116

Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710
Based on ancient antiphons from Advent Vespers
Transl. John Mason Neale, 1851, and others; alt.
St. 2, 7, transl. Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916; alt.

1. O come, O come, Em-man-u-el,
and ran-som cap-tive Is-ra-el
That mourns in lone-ly ex-ile here,
un-til the Child of God ap-pear.
Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man-u-el
shall come to you, O Is-ra-el!

2. O come, O Wis-dom from on high,
and or-der all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowl-edge show,
and help us in that way to go.
Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man-u-el
shall come to you, O Is-ra-el!

7. O come, De-sire of Na-tions, bind
all peo-ples in one heart and mind;
Make en-vy, strife, and quar-rels cease;
fill the whole world with heav-en's peace.
Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man-u-el
shall come to you, O Is-ra-el!

Isa. 11:1–12; Exod. 19–20:17

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Hymn #116 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
Verses 1, 2 and 7
(Note: Ushers will collect "Prayer Cards" during this time. Prayer cards are in the pews.)

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.

Chancel Choir "A Waiting Carol" Helen Kemp
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Announcements Jeff Rissell

Offering
Offertory "Savior of the Nations, Come"
Johann G. Walther
Copyright 1964 Concordia Publishing House

Children's Moment
Sermon: The Good News! (Hope)
Rev. Becky Sausser

* 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 #112 "Keep Awake, Be Always Ready"**
* Commission and Blessing
* **Threefold Amen**
Amen, Amen #161

Music to Go Forth "Lift Up Your Heads" Lani Smith
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112 Keep Awake, Be Always Ready

Arthur G. Clyde, 1993

1. Keep a-wake, be al-ways rea-dy,
God's time ap-proach-es sure and stea-dy,
God's strength will keep your heart from blame.
Clouds, the Spir-it's light con-ceal-ing,
dis-perse, God's pur-est light re-veal-ing;
cre-a-tion will its Sov-ereign name.
Dry branch-es burst forth green,
God's ad-vent signs are seen:
Hal-le-lu- jah!
Christ's judg-ment won, God's will be done;
God's new do-min-ion thus be-gun.

2. Rise and shine for One is com-ing
whose love will quench all na-ture's thirst-ing
to be made whole for-ev-er more.
On that day to end all weep-ing,
death's swords trans-formed to tools of reap-ing,
the God of might will mer-cy pour.
In-car-nate, God ap-pears
em-brac-ing all our tears:
Hal-le-lu-jah!
God's maj-es-ty e-ter-nal-ly
re-vealed to set the cos-mos free.

Isa. 2:1–5; 60:1–3; 64:1–9; Matt. 24:36–44; Rom. 13:11–14; 1 Cor. 1:3–9; 1 Thess. 3:9–13

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The Altar Flowers are in Honor of St. John's UCC

Special Announcements/Reminders:

You can give **Electronically** from your mobile device using the **VancoMobile app**.You can download it from the Apple and Google Play store. The church's name is **- stjohnsuccallentown -** exactly as shown. You can also give on our homepage by clicking the **"Donate"** button **www.stjohnsuccallentown.org**

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
Lucia Guido……Admin Assistant
Lois Mease……Music Director and Organist
Jim Saylor……Sunday Sexton
And too many volunteers to list!

Office Hours

Sunday: 9am-2pm
Monday-Thursday: 9am-3pm
Closed on Fridays and Saturdays