



Homeless Jesus by Timothy Schmalz

A bronze sculpture depicting Jesus as a homeless person, sleeping on a park bench.

Back to School with Jesus

Reign of Christ Sunday

It is no coincidence that on the same Sunday we celebrate Christ's mighty Reign, we also hear Jesus liken himself to "the least of these" who stands in need of a helping hand. But how can one so powerful identify with such powerlessness? How can the same Jesus be a king on a throne and a homeless man on a park bench? How can he be both holy and hungry? We are challenged to look for Jesus in the places we'd least expect and even the places we'd rather not look.

November 26, 2023

10:15 am

Order of Worship

St. John's United Church of Christ

500 W. Main Street, Lansdale, PA 19446

10:15 am—November 26, 2023— Reign of Christ Sunday

You are invited to stand when indicated by an asterisk and speak the words in bold if able.

PRELUDE: *Andante* from Pastorale in F Major, BWV 590.....J.S. Bach

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*OPENING HYMN: All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name.....304
Stanzas 2 and 3 may be sung in harmony.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

In a world where so many and so much calls for our loyalty,
We gather to celebrate the one who rules above all.

In a time when we are told to look out only for ourselves,
We gather to learn from the one who sees others with eyes of compassion and mercy.

In a day when the love of power reigns,
We cling to Christ and the power of love.

May we become aware of what it means for Christ to truly reign in our lives and in our world.
Come, let us worship!

*CONFESSION

Loving God, when we think of something or someone reigning, we often think of law and absolute authority—something that humans want and fight to have. We confess that it is hard for us to see the power in empowering others and the strength in strengthening those around us. Help us, God, to allow your compassion to be what rules our lives and what guides our thoughts, words, and actions. When we are tempted to choose that which the world tells us will put us “in charge”, remind us that you have charged us with sharing your love to each and every person we encounter, each and every day. AMEN.

*ASSURANCE

When we confess our sins, claim our inability to see beyond ourselves, and ask for God's help, God sees us. God hears us. God offers us love and grace. As we seek to extend that grace to others, God does not require us to be perfect, but a life of faith requires us to be aware of God's presence and God's gift of forgiveness. Grab hold of that gift this day, allow it to change the way you see and live in this world. AMEN.

*SUNG RESPONSE: I Come With Joy

The image shows two staves of musical notation for a sung response. The first staff is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics 'I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and free,' are written below the staff. The second staff continues the melody with similar note values. The lyrics 'The life of Je - sus to re-call, in love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.' are written below. The staff ends with a double bar line.

I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and free,
The life of Je - sus to re-call, in love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 25:31-46

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life.”

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

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.

ANTHEM: Make Me a Channel of Your Peace.....Sebastian Temple, arr. Jane Holstein

*Make me a channel of your peace:
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your healing power,
and where there’s doubt, true faith in you.*

*Make me a channel of your peace:
where there’s despair in life let me bring hope;
Where there is darkness, only light,
and where there’s sadness, ever joy.*

*O, Spirit, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.*

*Make me a channel of your peace:
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving to all that we receive,
and in dying that we’re born to eternal life.
-Attr. St. Francis of Assisi (Adpt. Sebastian Temple)*

SERMON: “Misplacing Christ”Rev. Addie Stong

HYMN: Spirit of Jesus, If I Love My Neighbor.....590

JOYS, CONCERNS, PRAYERS, AND SUNG RESPONSE: Grant Us Wisdom To Perceive You

Grant us wis - dom to per - ceive you, hearts a - wak - ened to re - ceive you,
minds a - lert to thoughts that grieve you, God of mer - cy, hear us.

*INVITATION TO OFFERING, AND SUNG RESPONSE: Praise God, the Giver and the Gift

Praise God, the Gi - ver and the Gift. Hands, hearts, and voi - ces now up - lift:
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
Praise, praise the Breath of glad sur - prise, free - ing our spir - its, op'n - ing eyes.
Three in One - ness, love com - mun - ing,
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*CLOSING HYMN: Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing.....303

Stanza 1: All Stanza 3: Lower Voices
Stanza 2: Higher Voices Stanza 4: All

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: *Allegro maestoso* from Sonata II.....Felix Mendelssohn

Following worship, you are invited to join us for fellowship in Assembly Hall.

Worship Leaders

Rev. Addie Stong, Preacher

Andrew Paulson, Organist

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I Come with Joy

Text: Brian Wren, 1968; rev. 1982, 1994, © 1971, Hope Publishing Company

Music: DOVE OF PEACE, Southern Harmony, 1835, arr. Austin Lovelace, 1977, © 1977 Hope Publishing Company

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

Text: Attr. St. Francis of Assisi, Adpt. Sebastian Temple, © 1967 OCP Publications

Grant Us Wisdom to Perceive You

Text: Rae Whitney, 1991; rev. 1994, © 1994, Selah Publishing Co., Inc.

Music: QUEM PASTORES, German carol, 14th century; Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

Praise God, the Giver and the Gift

Text: Brian Wren, 1989, © 1989, Hope Publishing Company

Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, Geistliche Kirchengesäng, 1632

November 26, 2023

- The Nursery will be open for you to use mindfully, if your little one needs a break. No volunteers will be on duty, so a parent, grandparent, or responsible adult must stay with their child.
- Today's worship available later online on St. John's Facebook Page, Website or YouTube Channel: youtube.com/stjohnsucclandsdalepa
- Please ask a Hospitality Team member for an audio device if you are having difficulty hearing the service.
- CD's of this morning's service are available by contacting the church office.
- Reminder: The wheelchairs and first aid kit are stored in the "First Aid Closet" in the narthex (the door is clearly labeled). The automatic external defibrillator (AED) is located in the church Library on the wall closest to the Sanctuary.

Worship Assistants

Hospitality: Robin MacMullen, Team leader; Peter Conver, Griff Francis, Stefanie Giampa, Carol Luehrs, Jenn Moyer, Matt Rivett

Elder of the Morning: Bonnie & Ken Hales

CD Technician: David Douglass

Chancel Flower Ministry: Sarah Hogan

Driver: Jo-Ann Sine

Umbrella Ministry: Susan Hendricks

Chancel Flowers

In memory of George A. Filson Jr.'s November 26th birthday from his family

In memory of Catharine L. Kinter's November 26th birthday from her children and grandchildren

In memory of Laura Burkholder's Nov. 27th birthday from her daughter Judy Johnston and family

In memory of Eric Kirk's November 29th birthday from his mother, Barbara Kirk

In honor of Raelyn McAfee's birthday on December 2nd from her mother, Bonnie, and Pop Pop Jack McAfee

This Week at St. John's

If you would like more information, please contact the church office 215.855.5489 or office@st-johns-ucc.org

Nov	26	Sun	9:00 am 10:15 am	Reign of Christ Connect ³ , Activity Room Morning Worship, Sanctuary Fellowship
Nov	28	Tue	12:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	AGO Recital – Andrew Paulson, St. John's UCC Girl Scouts AA
Nov	29	Wed	5:00-7:00 pm 5:30 pm 6:00 pm 6:45 pm 7:30 pm	Wednesday Night Live Community Meal, Assembly Hall Evening Worship, Fireside Room Children's Music, Music Room Adult Education, Library United Ringers Handbell Choir, Sanctuary Chancel Choir and Friends, Sanctuary
Dec	1	Fri	6:00 pm	Chess
Dec	2	Sat	10:00 am – 12:00 pm 12:30 pm	Christmas Tea Hanging of the Greens
Dec	3	Sun	9:00 am 10:15 am	First Sunday of Advent – Love Gift Sunday Connect ³ , Activity Room Praying Hands Stitchers, Library Morning Worship, Communion, Sanctuary Budget Meeting Fellowship

Weekly amount needed for Current Income 2023	\$7,788.46
Weekly amount needed for OCWM 2023	\$865.00
A Look at the Week of November 12, 2023	
Attendance: 10:15 am, November 12	136
Attendance: 5:30 pm, November 15	20
Offering For Current Income	\$5,587.00
Offering For Our Church's Wider Mission	\$702.00
A Look at the Week of November 19, 2023	
Attendance: 10:15 am, November 19	119
Attendance: 5:30 pm, November 22	NO WNL
Offering For Current Income	\$4,398.00
Offering For Our Church's Wider Mission	\$847.00

To give online through our secure platform, visit
<https://app.easytithes.com/app/giving/stjohnsucc>

Scan here for online giving



St. John's United Church of Christ

500 West Main Street, Lansdale, PA 19446 Office: 215.855.5489 email: office@st-johns-ucc.org

If you would like more information about St. John's please speak with one of the staff

or visit our website at <http://www.st-johns-ucc.org>

Rev. Dale Davis, M. Div., Interim Senior Pastor	Rev. Adelaide L. Stong, M. Div., Associate Pastor
Andrew Paulson, M.M., M.A., Minister of Music	Abbie Lampe, Minister of Music for Children & Youth
Lisa Delp, Church Admin.	Leroy Horst, Buildings & Grounds Supervisor
	Bill Bergey, Custodian
	Liz Rivett, Council President

Announcements



We will be decorating the church for the advent season on Saturday, December 2 at 12:30 (after the Christmas Tea). Please plan to join us in making the church festive for the holidays.



Love Gift Sunday, December 3

By now you have noticed that what has traditionally been known as "White Gift Sunday" is now "Love Gift Sunday". This change was presented to and affirmed by church leadership and came about for a variety of reasons. First, the agencies that we offer our gifts to have asked for the gifts to come unwrapped, which eliminates the need for the traditional white wrapping paper. In addition, to someone who is not a member of our community, the term "white gift" could be seen as culturally insensitive or confusing; and since we don't want the name to distract from the meaning, the most compassionate and welcoming thing to do is change the name. Now, those who hear about this Sunday or visit us in worship that day will know what this special day is all about: offering gifts in a spirit of LOVE to those in need.

This Sunday is no doubt a very meaningful one in the life of our community, and we acknowledge that this name change is new and different. We do want to assure you, however, that it is just that: a *name* change. The spirit, the purpose, and the heart with which we approach Sunday Dec. 3rd will be what it has always been: one of God's LOVE. We appreciate your support, understanding, and openness to change as we at St. John's continue to seek to be a voice and a presence of awareness, compassion, and, most importantly, LOVE. Please refer to the wish lists below and we look forward to celebrating Love Gift Sunday together on Dec. 3rd.

URBAN PROMISE – Christmas Promise Store Toy Drive

Special Gifts

**Bikes
Scooters**

Gift Cards:
Walmart, Target, Amazon,
Gamestop, Sephora, Footlocker

Ages: 5-10
Most Popular: Legos, Squishmallows, Slime, Science Kits, Play-Doh
Figurines: Disney, Marvel, Pokemon, & Dolls Of Color
Sports: Balls, Gloves, Equipment
Arts & Crafts: Art & Science Sets
Other: Nerf Toys, RC Cars
Clothing: Pajamas, Hats & Gloves

Ages: 11-16
Most Popular: Headphones, Wireless Speakers, LED Light Strip
Personal Care: Lotions & Scrubs
Accessories: Jewelry, Wallets, Bags
Arts & Crafts: Sketch Book & Art Set
Other: Workout Equipment, Portable Chargers, Ring Light
Clothing: Hoodies, Jackets & Sport's Apparel

Not Local?
Scan for Amazon Wishlist


Urban Promise also welcomes gifts of wrapping paper, bows, tape, etc. for families to use once they have selected their gifts. Bring these items along with the gifts on December 3.

OLD FIRST UCC – Winter Clothing Cupboard (for homeless clients)

Hats, gloves, warm socks, underwear, flannel shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants

If you are unable to attend worship on December 3, please bring your gift donations to the St. John's office before that date. Thank you!

St. John's Warming Tree

St. John's will be collecting hats, scarves, mittens and gloves from November 12 through December 3. Place your donations on the tree in the Narthex. All donations will be given to Urban Promise's Christmas Promise Store!



Advent Celebration

On December 10th the Board of Educators will be hosting fellowship time and an Advent Celebration, including caroling and a craft for kids/family. Come out and join in some holiday fun during fellowship time!



Wrapping Presence

Volunteer Opportunity

As reported in the November Enlightener, the Church Council endorsed supporting the Wrapping Presence organization (www.wrappingpresence.org) with volunteers to serve the residents at The Harborview Rehab & Care Center Lansdale in the distribution of holiday gifts so that the residents have gifts to give to their close ones. Wrapping Presence is looking for 20 Wrapping Buddies to assist the residents in selecting gifts (provided by Wrapping Presence) and wrapping them so that they have gifts to give when their close ones visit during the holidays.

The event will take place on Thursday 14th December from 1:00-4:00 pm and there is a website for sign-ups at <https://bit.ly/WP-NHS> (please ignore the ads on the sign-up site, scroll down to the 14 December event to provide your information and the click the button at the bottom to confirm your choice). Wrapping Presence will provide experienced volunteers to guide St. John's volunteers in assisting the residents. Some volunteers will have the opportunity to interact with the residents and help them select gifts (information on who they are selecting gifts for will be provided) while others, skilled in wrapping, will wrap presents and attach gift cards. The gifts will be placed in decorated gift bags (a WNL activity will be planned for bag decorating) for the residents to bring back to their rooms.

Please contact Bill Cagney for more information or assistance in signing up:

215.385.2882 (text)

215.641.4930 (home)

Billcagney@verizon.net

2023 Poinsettia Donation Form



Due Date 12/18/23

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Name _____ Amount \$ _____ Envelope # _____

AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

Presents

Tuesday Noon Recital - November 28 - St. John's United Church of Christ

Join us for a free noontime organ recital from a local organist every Tuesday in November!

Nov. 28: Andrew Paulson, St. John's UCC

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2023 AT ST. JOHN'S ~ GOD INCARNATE TAKING PLACE
The birth of Christ is a reminder that God comes to us in subtle, intimate, and surprising ways.
Join us as we follow the story of *God Incarnate Taking Place*.



Wednesday, November 29

5:30pm – Wednesday Evening Advent Worship with Holy Communion

Sunday, December 3: First Sunday of Advent

10:15am – Sunday Morning Worship with Holy Communion

Join us for Love Gift Sunday, a morning service of giving as we recall God's greatest gift to us.

Wednesday, December 6

5:30pm: Wednesday Evening Advent Worship with Holy Communion

Sunday, December 10: Second Sunday of Advent

10:15am – Sunday Morning Worship

4:00pm – In the Stillness: The 2023 Christmas Festival

Join the St. John's Chancel Choir and Friends, The North Penn Chamber Singers, and the North Penn Brass Ensemble for an annual St. John's Artist Series holiday tradition! A festive reception follows the concert.

Wednesday, December 13

5:30pm – Wednesday Evening Advent Worship with Holy Communion

Sunday, December 17: Third Sunday of Advent

10:15am – Sunday Morning Worship with the St. John's Brass Ensemble

Wednesday, December 20

No 5:30pm Wednesday Evening Advent Worship (Dinner will still be served from 5pm-7pm)

7pm – Service of Longest Night

Join us for an evening worship service on this very tender night of the year.

The Chancel Choir leads us in an evening filled with reflection and love.

Sunday, December 24: Christmas Eve

10:15am – Sunday Morning Worship with Holy Communion

Music from the Children's Choir, Piano, and Organ.

Join us as we sing familiar carols and hear the Christmas story read from the Gospel according to Luke.

A special Christmas Eve prelude begins at 10am.

10:15pm – Sunday Evening Worship with Holy Communion

Music from the Chancel Choir, United Ringers (Handbell Choir), String Quartet, Piano, and Organ.

Join us as we sing familiar carols, hear the Christmas story read from the Gospel according to Luke, and light candles to welcome the birth of Christ. A special Christmas Eve prelude begins at 10pm.

Wednesday, December 27

No Wednesday Evening Programming

Sunday, December 31: New Year's Eve

10:15am – Sunday Morning Worship

Join us as we end 2023 and welcome 2024 with a special New Year's Eve worship service.