



*Christmas Praise
and
New Year's Blessing*

December 31, 2023
10:15 am

Order of Worship

St. John's United Church of Christ

500 W. Main Street, Lansdale, PA 19446

10:15 am—December 31, 2023 – First Sunday after Christmas

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

PRELUDE: In dulci jubilo.....F. W. Zachau

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN: Angels, From the Realms of Glory.....126

*CALL TO WORSHIP

The waiting is over and Christ, Emmanuel, is finally with us!

We waited in the unknown darkness of Advent and then, the light of Christ was born. As we wait now, on the edge of the unknown of this new year, we have hope that there is yet more light to be born!

The flames of hope, love, joy, and peace still burn brightly among us and within us this day, reminding us that, though our advent journey is over, Christ gives us all the light that we need for whatever road lies ahead.

Though it feels like the holidays are coming to an end, we are still captivated by the birth of this wonderful child! We pause today to bask in the light of Christ and to gather what we need to move forward and live into the call of Christmas.

Come let us worship and continue our Christmas praise!

Amen.

*CONFESSION

Loving God, on this Sunday after Christmas, we set unwrapped presents and leftovers aside to take time to pause and to praise. The whole world is different now that your son Jesus has been born, but rarely do we take time to live differently because of this miracle. Help us, as we step from one year into the next, to keep our eyes and hearts open to the ways in which all of creation praises You for such a gift. Walk with us as we seek to offer our praise in ordinary ways, in the midst of ordinary days, by who we are, what we do, and how we do it. Amen.

*ASSURANCE

When we confess our sins, when we claim our mistakes, when we dare to be honest before God, we are met with grace upon grace. In this season when we celebrate Christ's birth among us, we can be sure that when God offers forgiveness, it is because God knows what it means to be human. May we receive God's gift of mercy this day and may it change the way we live in this world. **Amen.**

SUNG RESPONSE: O Little Town of Bethlehem.....133, Stanza 4

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 148

Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon;
 praise him, all you shining stars!
 Praise him, you highest heavens
 and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord,
 for he commanded and they were created.
 He established them forever and ever;
 he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the Lord from the earth,
 you sea monsters and all deeps,
 fire and hail, snow and frost,
 stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills,
 fruit trees and all cedars!
 Wild animals and all cattle,
 creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers of the earth!
 Young men and women alike,
 old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the Lord,
 for his name alone is exalted;
 his glory is above earth and heaven.
 He has raised up a horn for his people,
 praise for all his faithful,
 for the people of Israel who are close to him.
 Praise the Lord!

SERMON: Proclaim Go Tell It on the Mountain.....	154, Stanza 3
Rejoice Good Christian Friends, Rejoice.....	129, Stanzas 2 and 3
Ask What Child Is This?.....	148, Stanza 1
Imagine Sing a Different Song.....	150, Stanzas 1 and 3
Shine O Little Town of Bethlehem.....	133, Stanza 1
Enjoy Joy to the World!.....	132, Stanzas 1, 2, and 3

JOYS/CONCERNS/PRAYERS/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.

*INVITATION TO OFFERING/SUNG RESPONSE: In the Bleak Midwinter.....128, Stanza 4

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.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*CLOSING HYMN: Jesus, Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child.....136
The hymn is sung twice.

*BENEDICTION AND NEW YEAR'S BLESSING

POSTLUDE: Joy to the World.....Arranged by Wilbur Held

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

Worship Leaders

Rev. Addie Stong

Ihna Cho: Guest Organist

December 31, 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](https://www.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: Mark Methlie, Team leader; Jen Gilbert, Sarah Hogan, Bonnie & Walt Weber

Elder of the Morning: Debby Hendricks

CD Technician: Robin MacMullen

Chancel Flower Ministry: Bill & Sue Morris

Driver: Gale Linderman

Umbrella Ministry: Sumiko Booraem

Chancel Flowers

In memory of Marie Evans' January 6th birthday from her daughter, Jeane, Bob Fritz and family

Weekly amount needed for Current Income 2023	\$7,788.46
Weekly amount needed for OCWM 2023	\$865.00
A Look at the Week of December 17, 2023	
Attendance: 10:15 am, December 17	122
Attendance: 5:30 pm, December 20 - Service of Longest Night	46
Offering For Current Income	\$3,958.85
Offering For Our Church's Wider Mission	\$432.00
A Look at the Week of December 24, 2023	
Attendance: 10:15 am, December 24	139
Attendance: 10:15 pm, December 10	147
Attendance: NO Wednesday Night Live on December 27	
Offering For Current Income	\$11,093.75
Offering For Our Church's Wider Mission	\$829.50

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

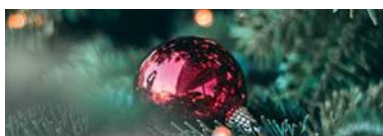
or visit our website at <http://www.st-johns-ucc.org>

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

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

Dec	31	Sun	9:00 am 10:15 am	First Sunday after Christmas NO Connect ³ , Activity Room Morning Worship, Sanctuary Fellowship
Jan	1	Mon		New Year's Day - Office Closed
Jan	2	Tue	7:00 am	AA, NAMI
Jan	3	Wed	5:00-7:00 pm 5:30 pm 6:00 pm	Wednesday Night Live Community Meal, Assembly Hall Evening Worship, Fireside Room Adult Education, Library NO ensemble rehearsals. Ensemble rehearsals resume on January 10.
Jan	5	Fri	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	Chess Lansdale Montessori School Open House
Jan	6	Sat	9:30 am	Epiphany Unhanging of the Greens
Jan	7	Sun	9:00 am 10:15 am	Epiphany Sunday Praying Hands Stitchers, Library Connect ³ , Activity Room Morning Worship and Communion, Sanctuary Fellowship



Unhanging of the Greens

Please consider joining us on Saturday, January 6, at 9:30am when we will remove
 Christmas decorations from the building. Many hands make light work!

A New Year's Prayer

By Howard Thurman

“Grant that I may pass through
the coming year with a faithful heart.
There will be much to test me and
make weak my strength before the year ends.
In my confusion I shall often say the word that is not true and do the thing of
which I am ashamed.
There will be errors in the mind
and great inaccuracies of judgment...

In seeking the light,
I shall again and again find myself
walking in the darkness.
I shall mistake my light for Your light
and I shall drink from the responsibility of the choice I make.
Nevertheless, grant that I may pass through the coming year with a faithful heart.

May I never give the approval of my heart to error, to falseness, to vanity, to sin.
Though my days be marked
with failures, stumblings, fallings,
let my spirit be free
so that You may take it
and redeem my moments
in all the ways my needs reveal.
Give me the quiet assurance
of Your Love and Presence.
Grant that I may pass through
the coming year with a faithful heart.”

Meditations of the Heart

P R A I S E

Proclaim: Go Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hill, and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.

3 Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]

Rejoice: Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

2 Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Now you know of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
God has opened heaven's door,
And you are blessed for evermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

3 Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Now you need not fear the grave:
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
To gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

Ask: What Child Is This?

1 What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

Chorus:

This, this the angels sing,
Is Christ, God's holy offering;
Haste, haste your praise to bring,
The Babe, the Child of Mary!

Imagine: Sing a Different Song

1 Sing a different song now Christmas is here,
Sing a song of people knowing God's near;
The Messiah is born in the face of our scorn,
Sing a different song to welcome and warn.

3 Love a different love now Christmas is here,
Love without condition, love without fear:
With the humble and poor, with the shy and unsure,
Love a different love. Let Christ be the cure!

Shine: O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see you lie!
Above your deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;

Yet in your dark streets shines forth
The everlasting light,
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in you tonight.

Enjoy: Joy to the World!

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth its praises bring;
Let every heart prepare Christ room, and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and heaven and nature sing.

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.

3 Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of God's righteousness and wonders of God's love,
And wonders of God's love, and wonders, wonders of God's love.