



Prepare the Way

First Sunday of Advent

Love Gift Sunday

December 1, 2024

10:15 am

Welcome to St. John's UCC Lansdale!

Visitors, please complete the ivory visitor's card found in the pew pocket so we can thank you for joining us this Sunday!



Completed cards go in the basket by the narthex.

The **Book of Joys & Concerns** is a green binder on the podium at the front of the chancel. If you have an Announcement, Joy or Concern you'd like stated, celebrated or prayed about during the service, feel free to write inside before service begins!

Hymnals are on the back of the pew in front of you.

Bibles are on a shelf beneath the pew in front of you.



For **The Children's Message**, youth are invited to sit up front on the chancel steps for a direct and intentional age-appropriate message.



After the Children's Message, children will be dismissed and escorted downstairs for our youth programming; **Connect 3**. Connect 3 is aimed at ages 3 through 12, but all youth are welcome!

Hearing Aids are available if you are having trouble hearing the service.

Please ask a Hospitality Team Member.



Wheelchairs & First Aid Kit are stored in the labeled "First Aid Closet" in the narthex.



AED (Defibrillator) is in the church library on the wall closest to the Sanctuary by the window. When entering from the Sanctuary, turn left.

Audio Recordings of service can be found online on St. John's Facebook Page, Website, or Youtube. Sermons are available on Spotify; "St John's UCC Lansdale Sermons".

If you would like a physical copy, contact the church office.

The Nursery will be open for you to use mindfully. No volunteers will be on duty.

A parent, grandparent, or responsible adult **must** stay with their child.



Worship Leaders

Pastor Tom Adil, Acting Lead Bridge Pastor

Rev Dr Hilary Barrett, Bridge Support Pastor

Andrew Paulson, Minister of Music

United Ringers

Chancel Choir

Copyright Information

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My Soul Gives Glory to My God

Text: Miriam Therese Winter © 1978, 1987 Medical Mission Sisters

Order of Worship

St. John's United Church of Christ

500 W. Main Street, Lansdale, PA 19446

10:15 am—December 1, 2024—First Sunday of Advent / Love Gift Sunday

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

PRELUDE

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending.....Setting by Tyleen Stults

*Lo, he comes with clouds descending, once for our salvation slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending join to sing the glad refrain:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Christ the Lord returns to reign. -Charles Wesley*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

In the midst of night's shadows and anguish,

We pray earnestly to experience your presence.

As dawn slips into the horizon and relieves night of its reign,

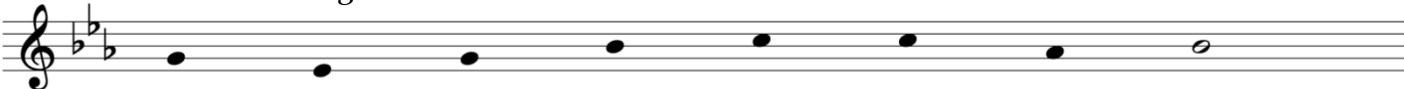
We pray earnestly to sense your presence.

As daylight grows into noontime, filled with the glow of sun's light,

We pray earnestly to know your presence.

*OPENING HYMN

Creator of the Stars of Night



Choir: 1. Cre - a - tor of the stars of night,
Choir: 2. When this old world drew on toward night,
All: 3. At your great name, O Je - sus, now
All: 4. Come in your ho - ly might, we pray,
All: 5. To God the Fa - ther, God the Son,



Your peo - ple's ev - er - last - ing light,
You came; but not in splen - dor bright,
All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;
Re - deem us for e - ter - nal day;
And God the Spir - it, Three in One,



O Christ, Re - deem - er of us all,
Not as a mon - arch, but the child
All things on earth with one ac - cord,
De - fend us while we dwell be - low
Praise, hon - or, might and glo - ry be



We pray you hear us when we call.
Of Mar - y, bless - ed moth - er mild.
Like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.
From all as - saults of our dread foe.
From age to age e - ter - nal - ly.

A - men.

*CONFESSION

God of the Possible and Probable,

Gloom often encapsulates us when life is confusing and conflict is great. Our faith is rattled, and we are swallowed by shadows of fear. The world often feels like the end is near even when a new beginning is around the corner. We forget that even when shadows have lengthened, there remains a crack in the surface. Light begins to stream into our space, and warmth dances upon our hearts. When fear unnerves us, may we cling to the hope of God’s love and the possibilities of joy once again. Amen.

*ASSURANCE

Take comfort, dear friends, that God’s grace will fill our hearts with joy as we know that light grows ahead. May we cling to the crumbs of hope as we step into the nighttime with faith, knowing Divine Bliss accompanies us in each step.

Thanks be to God!

WE LIGHT THE CANDLE OF HOPE: FOR THOSE WHO ARE WAITING

Advent is a time for the human heart to wait,
while trusting God’s eternal time.

How long, O Lord, how long?

For those waiting for answered prayer:

Grant Your steadfast patience.

For those waiting in the face of uncertainty:

Grant unshakable confidence in Your sovereign provision.

For those waiting for justice and mercy to reign:

Grant a glimpse of Your glory in our wounded world.

For all of us waiting for God’s kingdom to come:

**Grant that we might have the peace of Christ as we wait,
the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.**

(We light the first Advent candle.)

This morning, we light the first candle, which reminds us that throughout history, God’s people have spent time waiting, wandering and wondering about the timing of God’s eternal plan. Like the people of old, we long for God’s presence to illuminate the areas of life where we are called to wait.

SUNG RESPONSE

O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep The si - lent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shi - neth The ev - er - last - ing light;
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Jeremiah 33:14-16.....Page 696

Luke 21:25-33; 36

“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. “Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place and to stand before the Son of Man.”

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

THE 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

Spotless Rose.....Ola Gjeilo

Alleluia...

Alleluia...

*A Spotless Rose is blowing,
Sprung from a tender root,
Of ancient seers’ foreshowing, Of Jesse promised fruit;
Its fairest bud unfolds to light
Amid the cold, cold winter,
And in the dark midnight.*

*The Rose which I am singing, Whereof Isaiah said,
Is from its sweet root springing In Mary, purest Maid;
Through God’s great love and might
The Blessed Babe she bare us,
In a cold, cold winter’s night.*

Alleluia...

-16th Century German, tr. C.Winkworth

SERMON

“A Paradox in a Box”.....Rev. Tom Adil

*HYMN

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence.....Hymn 345

Stanza 1: All

Stanza 3: Lower Voices

Stanza 2: Higher Voices

Stanza 4: All

JOYS & CONCERNS/PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/SUNG RESPONSE

Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup - ports those in dis - tress,
re - mem - ber - ing past prom - is - es with pres - ent faith - ful - ness.

OFFERING & OFFERTORY MUSIC

Watcher, Tell Us of the Night.....Joseph Parry/John Bowring

Offering plates will be passed to the congregation in the pews during the Offertory music. The plates will then be dedicated during the Offertory Sung Response. You may also donate by scanning the QR code found in the bulletin and on laminated cards in the pews.

***SUNG RESPONSE**

The wise shall bow be - fore you and gold and in - cense bring;
 all na - tions shall a - dore you, and praise all peo - ples sing;
 To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows be said,
 your realm is still in - creas - ing, with you, O Christ, as head.

HOLY COMMUNION

Jesus said: "I am the bread of life. You who come to me shall not hunger; you who believe in me shall never thirst."

In the company with all around the world who hunger, we come to this table to know the risen Christ, in the sharing of this life-giving bread and cup.

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION/PRAYER OF BLESSING

BRINGING OF GIFTS/SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

You are invited to bring forth your gift and receive communion. Please bring your gift with you as you walk down the center aisle. After you drop off your gift, turn either left or right to receive communion in either transept. Communion is served by intinction. Gluten-free/pre-packaged elements are available at each station. If you would like to receive a blessing, please cross your arms as you approach the elements.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING/DEDICATION OF GIFTS

***CLOSING HYMN**

Now Is the Time Approaching.....Hymn 609
Stanza 2 may be sung in harmony.

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence.....Setting by Al Roberts

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

Worship Assistants

Hospitality:

Mark Methlie, Jen Gilbert, Sarah Hogan,
Bonnie & Walt Weber

Elder of the Morning:

Sally Atkiss & Emilie Truscott

Deacon of the Morning:

Judy Leslie

Audio Technician:

Scott Cunningham

Chancel Flower Ministry:

Lisa Thim

Driver:

Scott Vanderburg

Greeters:

Bill & Sue Morris

Social Host:

OPEN

Weekly amount needed for Current Income 2024	\$7,884.62
Weekly amount needed for OCWM 2024	\$798.00
A Look at the Week of November 17, 2024	
Attendance: November 17, Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost	178
Attendance: November 20, Holden Evening Prayer	21
Offering For Current Income	\$6,254.63
Offering For Our Church's Wider Mission	\$304.50
A Look at the Week of November 24, 2024	
Attendance: November 24, Reign of Christ Sunday	108
<i>No Wednesday Night Live</i>	
Offering For Current Income	\$6,669.00
Offering For Our Church's Wider Mission	\$362.00

To give online through our secure platform, visit <https://app.easytith.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 contact the office.

Pastor Tom Adil, M.Div., LPC, Acting Lead Bridge Pastor

Rev Dr. Hilary Barrett, D.Min, M.Div, BA, Bridge Support Pastor

Andrew Paulson, M.M., M.A., Minister of Music Abbie Lampe, Minister of Music for Children & Youth

Kay Peebles, Church Office Manager Grace Marchione, Communications Coordinator

Bill Bergey, Custodian Mark Bruen, Council President

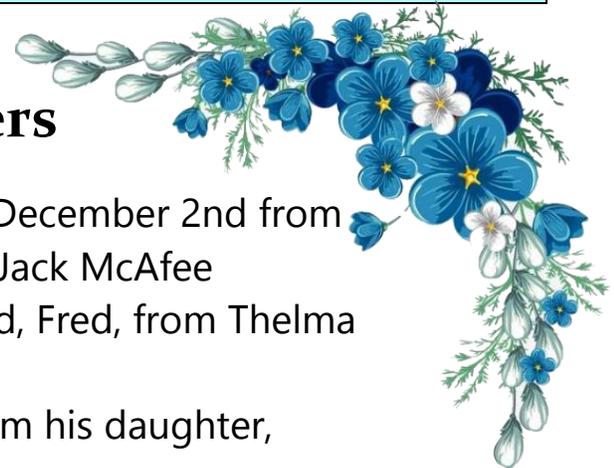
This Week at St. John's

If you would like more information about St. John's, please speak with one of the staff or contact the church office at 215.855.5489 or office@st-johns-ucc.org

Dec	1	Sun	9:00 am 10:15 am 10:45 am 11:30 am	First Sunday of Advent Love Gift Sunday Stitchers, Library Morning Worship, Sanctuary Connect3, Activity Room Fellowship, Assembly Hall
Dec	3	Tues	7:00 pm	AA, Assembly Hall
Dec	4	Wed	5:45-6:45 pm 6:15-6:45 pm 7:00-7:20 pm 7:30-9:00 pm 9:00-9:30 pm	Wednesday Night Live! Community Meal, Assembly Hall Adult Education, Library United Ringers, Sanctuary Children's Choir, Music Room Holden Evening Prayer, Sanctuary Artist Series Chorus, Sanctuary Chancel Choir, Sanctuary
Dec	5	Thurs	9:30-11:30 am	LMS Holiday Practice, Sanctuary Soup Sale Prep, Kitchen
Dec	6	Fri	2:00 pm	Christmas Tea Set Up, Assembly Hall Soup Sale Prep, Kitchen
Dec	7	Sat	8:30-10:30 am 10:00-12:00 pm	Art of Living Foundation, Library Women's Christmas Tea, Assembly Hall
Dec	8	Sun	10:15 am 10:45 am 11:30 am 11:45 am 4:00 pm	Second Sunday of Advent Enlightener Due Date Morning Worship, Sanctuary Connect3, Activity Room Fellowship, Assembly Hall Confirmation Class, Associate Pastor's Office Artist Series at St. John's: Christmas Festival

Chancel Flowers

In honor of Raelyn McAfee's birthday on December 2nd from
her mother, Bonnie, and Pop Pop Jack McAfee
In memory of loved ones and her husband, Fred, from Thelma
Brunner
In memory of Earl Bruce Kirk's passing from his daughter,
Barbara Kirk (Dec 4)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Do you know someone who might be
interested in working part time
for St. John's?

We are looking for someone with light
maintenance skills and cleaning experience
for our church. The job description is posted
on our website and FB page.

You can apply on our website, Indeed,
or at personnel@st-johns-ucc.org

Any questions contact

Margie Jewell

personnel@st-johns-ucc.org



Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

Luke 21:25-33; 36

"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

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