



Prepare the Way

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2024
10:15 am

Welcome to St. John's UCC Lansdale!

Visitors, please complete the ivory visitor's card found in the pew pocket in your best handwriting 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	Children's Choir
Rev Dr Hilary Barrett, Bridge Support Pastor	Grace Bruen, Flute
Andrew Paulson, Minister of Music	Chancel Chor
Abbie Lampe, Minister of Music for Children and Youth	Debroah Dayton and Liz Vanderburg, Soloists

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© 1991 Choristers Guild
A New Magnificat
© 1993, Augsburg Publishing

Canticle of the Turning
© 1990 GIA Publications, Inc.
My Soul Gives Glory to My God
© 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 22, 2024—Fourth Sunday of Advent

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

PRELUDE

Canticle of the Turning.....Setting by Ron Schmoltze

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Love deeply, creating the wells of kinship,

For in the Body of Christ we belong.

Love boldly, like the spirited colors of a rainbow,

For in the Body of Christ we find peace.

Love joyfully, like the blissful songs in the wind,

For in the Body of Christ we claim our connections.

*OPENING HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.....Hymn 116

Stanza 1/Refrain: All

Stanza 4/Refrain: All

Stanza 7/Refrain: All

Stanza 2/Refrain: Higher Voices

Stanza 5/Refrain: All

Stanza 3/Refrain: Lower Voices

Stanza 6/Refrain: Organ

*CONFESSION

Divine Light and Love, we have been weighed down by the heaviness of the season, the sorrows carried from the past, and the expectations of the present and future. We hide in shadows instead of the light. We embrace individualism instead of basking in the joy of community love. Create a new path in our hearts so that we can find levity and grace. Reconnect us with the Body of Christ instead of the distressing comfort of spiritual solitude. Amen.

*ASSURANCE

The grace of God infinitely streams into our lives, drawing us from the shadows into the light, and reconnecting us again with our neighbors.

May the mercy of our Creator help us rediscover the Spirit of Love in our midst. Amen.

WE LIGHT THE CANDLE OF LOVE: FOR THOSE WHO ARE WOUNDED

Advent is a time to bind up the brokenhearted.

Come, Lord, and make all things new.

For past wrongs that prevent us from moving forward:

Come, Lord, and make all things new.

For any bitterness that scratches our soul:

Come, Lord, and make all things new.

For relationships left in decay and neglect:

Come, Lord, and make all things new.

For any action that has wounded us or by which we have wounded others:

Come, Lord, and make all things new.

(We light all four Advent candles.)

This morning we light all four candles. The **first candle** is the light of hope for those in times of waiting. The **second candle** is the light of peace for those wearied by the circumstances of life. The **third candle** is the light of joy for those eagerly watching for God's promised glory. The **fourth candle** is the light of love for those who are wounded. As the light shines in the darkness, we proclaim the healing love of the Savior, who came to rescue the lost, help the hurting, and bind up the brokenhearted.

SUNG RESPONSE



O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Em - man - u - ell

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Rowan Patrick Mills *Son of Jessica and John Mills*

The sacrament of baptism is an outward and visible sign of the boundless grace of God, a celebration of God's unconditional, never-ending love. In as much as the promise of the gospel is not only to us but also to our children, baptism with water and the Holy Spirit is the mark of their acceptance into the care of Christ's church, the sign and seal of their participation in God's forgiveness, and the beginning of their growth into full Christian faith and discipleship. To the name you have given your child, Rowan Patrick, we will add the name "child of God, member of God's family." Jessica and John, do you desire Rowan to be baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ? If so, say "we do"

Parents: We do.

Will you, in time, encourage Rowan to discover the freedom of new life in Christ and to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, Friend and Companion? If so, say, "we will with the help of God."

Parents: We will, with the help of God.

Will you, by word and example, demonstrate your faith to Rowan by doing your best to love God and to love other people, to follow in the ways of Jesus, to resist oppression and evil, to seek grace, justice, and peace in the world? If so, say, "we will with the help of God."

Parents: We will, with the help of God.

Will you, as best you are able, seek to grow with Rowan in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating the presence of Christ and furthering the mission of Christ in the world? If so, say, "we will with the help of God."

Parents: We will, with the help of God.

Will you, Godparents Sarah and Victoria, support Jessica and John in this commitment and become a special friend and faith partner to Rowan? If so, say "We will."

Godparents: We will.

Let us join together as the people of St. John's and members of the body of Christ to make our promise as we welcome and embrace this beloved one...

As members of Christ's church, we promise this child and his parents our love, support, and care. Rowan, with joy and thanksgiving, we welcome you into Christ's church to share with us in ministry, for we are all one in Christ.

POURING OF THE WATER

BAPTISM PRAYER

We thank you, God, for the gift of creation made known to us in water and word. Before the world had shape and form, your Spirit moved over the waters. Out of the waters of the deep, you formed the firmament and brought forth the earth to sustain all life. In the time of Moses, your people Israel passed through the Red Sea waters from slavery to freedom and crossed the flowing Jordan to enter the promised land. You have come to us through water in the stories of Jesus who was nurtured in the water of Mary's womb, baptized by John in the water of the Jordan, and became living water to a woman at the Samaritan well. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and sent them forth to baptize with water and spirit. And now, O God, we pray that you bless, by your Holy Spirit, this water. Bless Rowan as he receives this sacrament, that he may be ever reminded of your abiding presence and claim on his precious life. Amen.

ACT OF BAPTISM

SUNG RESPONSE

Je-sus loves me! This I know, for the Bib-le tells me so. Lit-tle ones to him be-long; they are weak, but he is strong.

Yes, Je-sus loves me! Yes, Je-sus loves me! Yes, Je-sus loves me! The Bib-le tells me so.

SCRIPTURE READING

Micah 5:2-5a

(F)rom you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth, and he shall be the one of peace.

ANTHEM

A Waiting Carol (Advent Song).....Helen Kemp

He's coming! He's coming! Oh, tell us, who is coming?

Lord Jesus is coming to light our lives again.

Each candle is saying, "Get ready for his birthday."

Prepare us to greet him with love and joy, we pray.

We wait with joy to greet you. We wait with love to meet you.

Come quickly! Quickly come! We wait with joy. Come, holy Boy!

Oh, come, see the candles, they sparkle with light. They help us to wait for the Day of Delight!

Come, light up your voices, prepare for the Boy, The birth of the Christ child will fill us with joy!

Oh, come! -Helen Kemp

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1: 39-55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,
 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
 for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
 Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
 and holy is his name;
 indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
 from generation to generation.
 He has shown strength with his arm;
 he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
 and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things
 and sent the rich away empty.
 He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
 in remembrance of his mercy,
 according to the promise he made to our
 ancestors,
 to Abraham and to his descendants
 forever.”

ANTHEM

A New Magnificat.....Carolyn Jennings

My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in the Lord.

My mouth derides my enemies; I rejoice in God’s salvation.

*My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior,
 Who looks upon a lowly handmaid with favor. All generations shall call me blessed.*

My heart o’erflows, Alleluia!

*There is none holy like the Lord; there is no rock like our God.
 Let not your mouth be arrogant, for the Lord is a God of all knowledge.*

*For God who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy, holy, holy, is God’s name.
 And God’s mercy is giv’n to God’s people from generation to generation.*

My heart o’erflows, Alleluia!

*The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble put on strength.
 Those who were full are hungry, and those who were hungry are filled.*

*Strong is the arm of the Lord, who has scattered the proud in their hearts;
 God has put down the mighty and lifted those of low degree.*

*The Lord kills and brings to life; God brings low and also exalts.
 God lifts up the poor from the dust to sit with rulers and inherit a seat of honor.*

*Strong is the arm of the Lord, who was scattered the proud in their hearts.
 God has filled the hungry, the rich have been sent empty away.*

*For the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s and on them God has set the world.
 My heart o’erflows. Alleluia!*

*God will guard the faithful flock, and human might shall not prevail.
 The Lord will judge the earth; and will exalt the pow’r of God’s anointed.*

*For the Lord has helped the servant Israel in remembrance of God’s love and mercy,
 Which was promised to Sarah and Abraham, and to their children’s children forever.*

My heart o’erflows, Alleluia! Amen. -The Song of Hannah, 1 Samuel 2; The Song of Mary, Luke 1

SERMON

“Something About Mary”.....Rev. Tom Adil

*HYMN

Canticle of the Turning



1. My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the God of my heart is great,
2. Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,
3. From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a stone will be left on stone.
4. Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re - mem - ber who holds us fast:



and my spir - it sings of the won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
and your mer - cy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
Let the king be - ware for your jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant from his throne.
God's mer - cy must de - liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my weak - ness you did not sprun,
Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn,
The hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can nev - er earn;
This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the prom - ise which holds us bound,



so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

JOYS & CONCERNS/PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/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.

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

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.....Setting by Vincent M. Ryan

Offering plates will be passed to the congregation in the pews during O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

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.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God of All Joy, Holy Hope,

We delight in living in your ways as we create your Realm here on earth. These offerings of talents, treasures, and time are not to appease you but to collaborate with you. As co-creators, we seek your intentions and celebrate your love for us and our neighbors. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN

Come, O Long-Expected Jesus.....Hymn 122

Stanzas 2 and 3 may be sung in harmony.

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Canticle of the Turning.....Setting by Barbara Harbach

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

Worship Assistants

Hospitality:

Bill Leslie, Bob Bertollette,
Margie Jewell, Gale Linderman,
Rick O'Connor, Scott Vanderburg

Elder of the Morning:

Bill Cagney

Deacon of the Morning:

Rick Fanciullacci

Audio Technician:

David Douglass

Chancel Flower Ministry:

Sarah Hogan

Driver:

Kay Peebles

Greeters:

OPEN

Social Host:

OPEN

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christmas Eve

4:00 pm

Family Worship

With the Holy Family

Prelude starts at 3:45 pm

Lessons and Carols
with Holy Communion

Musical Leadership:
Children's Choir
Piano & Organ

Holy Family:
Andy, Katy, & Baby Pete Mohler

11:00 pm

Candlelight Worship

Prelude starts at 10:45 pm

Lessons, Carols,
and Candle Lighting
with Holy Communion

Musical Leadership:
Chancel Choir | String Quartet
United Ringers | Piano & Organ



2025
Offering
Envelopes



Are available in the Narthex



We're proud to share the **New Church Website!**

As announced this fall, we've been working on a new online presence for St. John's — and now, we're excited to finally share it with you! Ushering in a new year full of promise for the church, the new site is designed to provide easy access to the information that matters most to lifelong St. John's members and first-time visitors alike.

Scan here to visit the new site:



Important Notice!

All donations designated for 2024 must be received by the church office BEFORE Monday, December 30th

Donations received after that date will be credited to your 2025 donation account. Your contributions may be delivered in person via offering plate, mailed to the church, or placed in the drop box located on the office door. Contributions through EasyTithe can be made through December 31st.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

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	22	Sun	10:15 am 10:45 am 11:30 am	Fourth Sunday of Advent Mills Baptism Morning Worship, Sanctuary Connect3, Activity Room Fellowship, Assembly Hall
Dec	24	Tues	4:00 pm 7:00 pm 9:30 pm 11:00 pm	Christmas Eve Family Service with the Holy Family, Sanctuary AA, Assembly Hall Music Ensemble Warm ups Candlelight Service, Sanctuary
Dec	25	Wed		Merry Christmas! – Office Closed
Dec	26	Thurs		Day After Christmas – Office Closed
Dec	29	Sun	10:15 am 10:45 am 11:30 am	First Sunday after Christmas Morning Worship, Sanctuary Connect3, Activity Room Fellowship, Assembly Hall

Chancel Flowers

In memory of Robert & Cora Ellen Furniss from their son, David
 In memory of Earl Bruce Kirk's December 28th birthday, from
 his daughter, Barbara Kirk



Weekly amount needed for Current Income 2024	\$7,884.62
Weekly amount needed for OCWM 2024	\$798.00

A Look at the Week of December 8, 2024		A Look at the Week of December 15, 2024	
Attendance: December 8, Second Sunday of Advent	124	Attendance: December 15, Third Sunday of Advent	127
Attendance: December 11, Holden Evening Prayer	19	Attendance: December 18, Holden Evening Prayer	10
Offering For Current Income	\$8,041.50	Offering For Current Income	\$7,462.02
Offering For Our Church's Wider Mission	\$324.50	Offering For Our Church's Wider Mission	\$1,073.00

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

Luke 1: 39-55

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to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Micah 5:2-5a

(F)rom you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth, and he shall be the one of peace.