

BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018

Hours: Mon, Tues and Thurs. 9:00-1:00

Church Office: 610-868-4441

E-Mail: bethanyunitedchurch@rcn.com

Web address: www.uccbethany.org

Pastor Todd Fennell

Matt Miller, Consistory President

Susan Wright, Director of Music



Second Sunday in Advent

December 10, 2023

Second Sunday in Advent

“Moving Forward United in Faith”

“Committed to Christ, United by Love. We are about God, Christ, the Word, and the Future. No matter who you are or where you are on Life’s journey, you are welcome here. We are Bethany United Church of Christ.”

BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 10, 2023

10:45 AM

If you are looking for a church home, we invite you to become part of the community of faith and mission here at Bethany.

**(*) PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE
(Bold Text is said or sung by everyone)**

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE: "Hark the Glad Sound!" ... F. Ritter
4 Hands, 2 Pianos

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

P: Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended.

L: A voice cries out: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,

**P: Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Let us worship the God who came in Jesus and will come again. Amen.**

*HYMN: #158 Blessed be the God of Israel

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

O God, in the Advent season, You reveal again Your coming into the world. Thank You for revealing Yourself afresh in the midst of our distractions. Give us attentive hearts and spirits to discern Your presence in our midst. Bless all who are suffering with your healing love and grace. In Jesus, Emmanuel we pray. Amen.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also, with you.

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (unison): #176 Lift Up
Your Heads O Mighty Gates vs.1

**Lift up your heads, O mighty gates behold, the King of
glory waits! The King of Kings is drawing near, the
Savior of the world is here.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: Something New:
“A New Spirit” Rebecca & Len Kesselring

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: #175 Vs. 3

**We light the second candle, and hear God’s Holy Word,
it tells us, cling to Jesus, prepare to meet your Lord, it
tells us, cling to Jesus, prepare to meet your Lord!**

READING OF SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 40: 1-11

* Mark 1: 1-8

Leader: This is the Good News

People: Thanks be to God

SERMON: “God is No Gentleman”

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERING OF OUR TITHES and GIFTS

OFFERTORY: “Hail to the Lord’s Anointed” ...A. Pote
Chancel Choir

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE: #196 In the Bleak Midwinter
vs.4

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were a wiseman, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God of Justice and Love, transform these offerings, that they may be gifts of justice and love for a world in need of hope and help. Let love flow through these offerings, that they may become gifts of love for the world. Amen

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

**CALL TO PRAYER – PASTORAL PRAYER
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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

***HYMN: # 161 People Look East**

***BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL BENEDICTION: #178 Emmanuel, Emmanuel
Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.**

POSTLUDE

Our worship ends, our service begins!



FLOWERS and BULLETINS: are dedicated to the honor and Glory of God by Len and Rebecca Kesselring.

GREETERS: Dan & Margy Sabetti

USHERS: Dan & Margy Sabetti

LAY READER: Dan Sabetti

Scriptures

Isaiah 40: 1 - 11 NRSV

40 Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵ Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶ A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All flesh is grass;
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷ The grass withers; the flower fades,
[[when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸ The grass withers; the flower fades,]]
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹ Get you up to a high mountain,

O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”
¹⁰ See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him
and his recompense before him.
¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms
and carry them in his bosom
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Mark 1: 1 - 8 NRSV

¹ The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ.

² As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way,

³ the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.’ ”

⁴ so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness,

proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed,

“The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

THIS WEEK AT BETHANY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 Second Sunday of Advent

10:45AM Worship in the Sanctuary

1:45PM Live Nativity

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

9:00AM 1:00PM Office Hours

7PM Darts vs. Fritz Wesleyan

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12

9:00AM 1:00PM Office Hours

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

5:30PM Handbell Rehearsal

7PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

9:00AM 1:00PM Office Hours

7PM Consistory in FH

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 Third Sunday in Advent

10:45 Worship in the Sanctuary

End of the Year Sale

While cleaning out the office I came across the ends of items that were sold in the past here @ Bethany. They are on a table in the Narthex and may be purchased by placing a donation in the jar. Think stocking stuffers or mementos.

The Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross is an annual UCC offering that expresses our thanks to retired and active UCC pastors and lay church workers and their families that are facing financial need and other emergency needs. An envelope will be coming soon for you to donate.

Thank you!

POINSETTIA PLANTS



Anyone wishing to place a poinsettia plant in our Sanctuary to help decorate and beautify our church for the Christmas holidays, is asked to fill in the necessary information below and return it to the church office accompanied by your payment. Checks are payable to "Bethany

UCC" marked Poinsettia in your memo area. **The deadline for all orders is Sunday, December 17.**

RETURN WITH PAYMENT TO CHURCH OFFICE

_____ Red Poinsettias @ \$10.00 a plant

IN MEMORY OF _____ or
(circle one)

IN HONOR OF _____

Please place in bulletin as follows:

Given by: _____

_____ DONATION ONLY (Money is given directly to the Church)

_____ I want the poinsettia plant(s)

TOTAL _____

Blessed Be the God of Israel

Unison

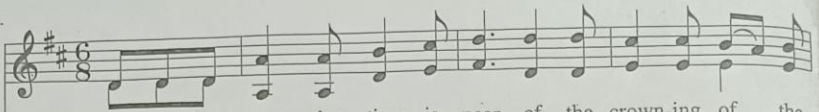
1 Blessed be the God of Is - rael, who comes to set us free,
 2 Now from the house of Da - vid a child of grace has come,
 3 On all by death im - pris - oned the sun be - gins to rise,

who vis - its and re - deems us, and grants us lib - er - ty.
 a Sav - ior who will lead us to our e - ter - nal home.
 the dawn - ing of for - give - ness up - on the sin - ner's eyes,

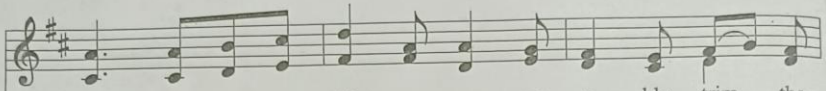
The proph - ets spoke of mer - cy, of free - dom and re - lease;
 Be - fore him goes the her - ald, fore - run - ner in the way,
 to guide the feet of pil - grims a - long the paths of peace;

God shall ful - fill the prom - ise to bring our peo - ple peace.
 the proph - et of sal - va - tion, the har - bin - ger of day.
 O bless our God and Sav - ior with songs that nev - er cease!

People, Look East



- 1 Peo-ple, look east, the time is near of the crown-ing of the
 2 Fur-rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is plant-ed
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall
 4 An-gels an-nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to



year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble, trim the
 there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish, that in
 brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er, bright as
 earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley hum - ming with the



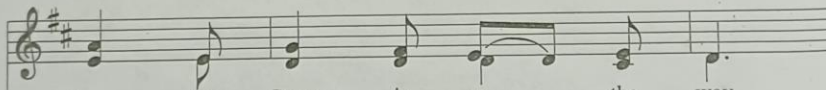
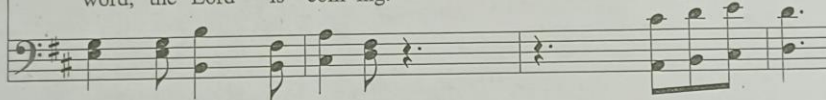
Peo-ple, look east and sing to - day:



hearth and set the ta - ble.
 course the flow-er may flour-ish,
 sun and moon to - geth - er.
 word, the Lord is com-ing.

Peo-ple, look east:

Peo-ple, look east:



Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 Love, the Star, is on the way.
 Love, the Lord, is on the way.

