

# BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018

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

Church Office: 610-868-4441

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Pastor Todd Fennell

Matt Miller, Consistory President

Susan Wright, Director of Music



December 24, 2023

Fourth 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 24, 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: O Come, O Come Emmanuel ...arr. M, Mc Donald, S. Nelson Bassoon: Meghann Wright  
*Dedicated to Special Friends*

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: By the word of God the heavens were made.

**C: By the Spirit of God was life begun.**

L: By the wisdom of God laws of God were laid.

**C: By the love of God was born God's Son.**

L: By the grace of God humankind was saved.

**C: By the power of God, the victory was won.**

**ALL: Let us worship God!**

\*HYMN: # 80 (Red UCC Hymnal) There's a Voice in the Wilderness

\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

**Loving God, Your care for us is evident in all You do!  
You made your love for us known in the coming of  
Emmanuel. Forgive our ingratitude after all You have  
done for us. Draw us to Your Word. Give us a new song  
to sing that will resonate throughout this world and  
begin with us today. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.**

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also, with you.**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (unison): #159 The King of Glory Comes Refrain Vs. 1 refrain**

**The King of glory comes, the ancient rejoices. Open the gates before him, lift up your voices. Who is the King of glory: what shall I call him? He is Emmanuel, the promised of ages. The King of glory comes, the ancient rejoices. Open the gates before him, lift up your voices.**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: Something New: "New Wine in Old Wineskins" Judy & George Morgan**

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: #175 Vs. 3**

**Four candles burning brightly announce that Christ has come, prepare my heart, believe it, and give the Christ child room, prepare my heart, believe it, and give the Christ child room.**

**READING OF SCRIPTURES**

Titus 3: 4-7

\* Luke 1: 26-38

Leader: This is the Good News

**People: Thanks be to God**

**MEDITATION: Pastor Todd**

**CAROL SING: #190 "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" vs.1,2**

**#183 "Once in Royal David's City" vs.1,4**

**#187 "O, Holy Night" vs.1,2**

**OFFERING INVITATION**

**OFFERING OF OUR TITHES and GIFTS**

OFFERTORY: "O, Jesus, Grant Me Hope and Comfort"  
...Franck, arr. C. Stein           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: #160 Awake! Awake, and Great the New Morn

\*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 placed in honor and reverence of the anticipation of the coming of the Christ Child, the Savior of the world by Len and Rebecca Kesselring.

GREETERS: Debbie Brown

USHERS: Lisa Williams, Gail Correll

LAY READER: Bill Rumble

## Scriptures

### Titus 3: 4 – 7 NRSV

<sup>4</sup> But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. <sup>6</sup> This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

### Luke 1: 26 - 38 NRSV

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Do not be

afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” <sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.” <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

### **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 is attached to your bulletin. Thank you!



*FROM US TO YOU.... MERRY  
CHRISTMAS AND A HEALTHY, HAPPY  
NEW YEAR!*

*Dan and Margy Sabetti*

*Ken and Cindy Beck*

*The Reiniger Family*

*Sharon and Philip Haines*

*George and Judy Morgan*

*Ina Denninger*

*Sue, Tom, Meghann and Katie Wright*

*Wendy Glassic*

*Debbie Brown*

*And Flash!*

## **2023 POINSETTIA DONATIONS**

### **IN LOVING MEMORY OF:**

- Herbert & Catherine Yost by the Rumble Family
- Bill & Carolyn Rumble by the Rumble Family
- Our Parents by Barbara & Mike Reiniger
- Bonnie & Tom Stout by the Stout and Ortwein Families
- Catherine Knipe by the Stout and Ortwein Families
- Bobbie and Leonard Kesselring Sr. by Len and Rebecca Kesselring
- Edward and DaMaris Stanley by Len and Rebecca Kesselring

- Loved Ones by Marion & Ted Hendricks
- Rev. Dr. Donald C. Esslinger by Rev. Dr. Denise Esslinger and Phil Parizeau
- Mr. & Mrs. Donald C. Young by daughter Deborah Young
- David & Andrew Young by sister Deborah Young
- Loved Ones by Judy & George Morgan
- Joe & Marie Wolfe by their daughter Marcie
- Catherine & Walter Williams by Anne & Walter Williams
- Dorothy & Richard Miller by Matt, Susanne & Jacob Miller
- Our Parents by Margy & Dan Sabetti
- Dolly my wife of 56 years by her husband Fred
- IN HONOR OF:
- Sue and Tom Wright for their love and friendship by Len & Rebecca Kesselring.
- Bev and Bill Rumble for their love and friendship by Len & Rebecca Kesselring.
- Sue Wright, in loving gratitude for the outstanding music program at Bethany UCC by Len & Rebecca Kesselring.
- And gratitude to the members of Bethany UCC who support the mission of the church to ensure a continued warm inviting atmosphere of Christian love for our community seeking the love of Christ through worship and Christian fellowship by Len & Rebecca Kesselring.
- All our children and grandchildren Love, Mom & Dad (Pappy Dave & Grammy Gail)
- Rev. C. Walter Long by Deborah Young
- All and a Merry Christmas from Barry & Ruth Smith



- My parents, family, and friends. You are loved.

Debbie Brown

#### MONETARY DONATIONS:

- In loving memory of our father and “pappy” Harry W. Denninger by the Brunner and Wright families
- In loving memory of my husband, Harry W. Denninger by his wife Ina
- In loving memory of Parents Harry J. & Laura Denninger and Jacob H. & Ella Miller by Ina Denninger

In loving memory of father Thomas Wright Jr. and sister Teresa Ann Latteman by Tom Wright and family

- In memory of our Parents by Ken and Cindy Beck
- In Memory of Loved Ones by Pastor Todd and Jean Fennell
- In Memory of Les and Joanne Albaugh, Elvin and Mabel Bennyhoff, Thomas and Helen Fritz by Minh, Lisa, Jenna, Kaitlin, & Erin Nguyen and John Albaugh.

In memory of Wayne and Lois Shelly by their daughter, Nedra

- In honor of Bill Rumble with thanks for recording and emailing our services by a Grateful Congregation

*Please let Margy or Debbie know that you are picking up your Poinsettia.*

# There's a Voice in the Wilderness

Isa. 40:3-11  
 J. Lewis Milligan, 1930

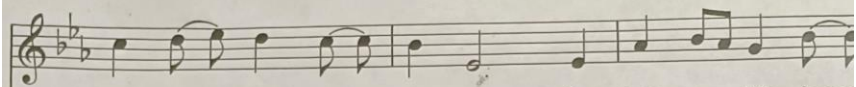
ASCENSION Irregular  
 Henry Hugh Bancroft, 1938

Unison

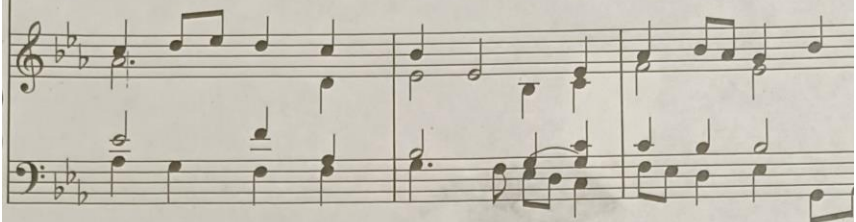
1. There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, a  
 2. O Zi - on, that bring - est good tid - ings, get thee  
 3. But the word of our God en - dur - eth, the

call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the de - sert a  
 up to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late  
 arm of the Lord is strong; He stands in the midst of

high - way, a high - way for our God! The  
 peo - ple the com - ing of their King. Like the  
 na - tions, and he will right the wrong. He shall



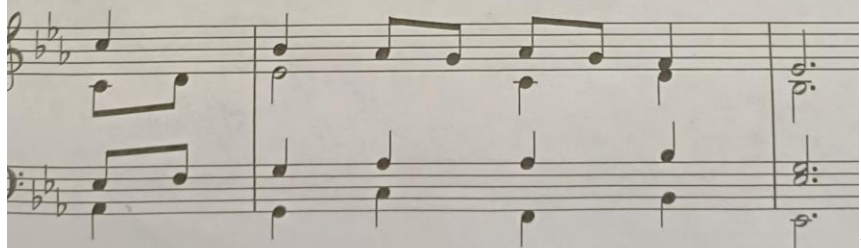
val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the loft - y hills broug  
flowers of the field they per - ish, the works of men de -  
feed his flock like a shep - herd, and fold the lambs to hi



low: make straight all the crook - ed pla - ces  
cay, the power and pomp of na - tion  
breast: in pas - tures of peace he'll lead the



where the Lord our God may go!  
shall pass like a dream a - way.  
and give to the wea - ry rest.



# 160 Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

G Am7 G C D D7

1 A - wake! a - wake, and greet the new morn, for  
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -  
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when  
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though

G C Am7 D7 G Am7

an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for  
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is  
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so  
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall

G C D G Am7 D C G

soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.  
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;  
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.  
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.

D G D Em Am D  
 Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -  
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul, and hymns of lov - ing -  
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in  
 Love be our song and love our prayer, and love our end - less

Em D7 G C B7 Em  
 geth - er, he o - pens wide the heaven - ly door and  
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to  
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and  
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - ery day we share and

Am7 D7 G Am7 G  
 lives now in - side us for ev - er.  
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.  
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.  
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

## THIS WEEK AT BETHANY

### **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24 Fourth Sunday in Advent Christmas Eve**

10:45AM      Worship in the Sanctuary  
8PM            Candlelight Service Prelude  
8:30PM        Candlelight Service

### **MONDAY, DECEMBER 25 Merry Christmas!**

Office Closed

### **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26**

Office Closed

### **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27**

No Rehearsals. Enjoy the time off!

### **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28**

9:00AM        1:00PM Office Hours

### **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31 New Year's Eve**

10:45AM      Worship in the Sanctuary, last day of Pastor  
Todd's time with us.

#### *The Advent Wreath*

*The first hanging of the large Advent wreath in the Chancel took place in 1968. A ladder was used to hang it from the ceiling and this was done by the Bealer family. Then for a time, it was not utilized because the climbing became unsafe. Harry Denninger designed the pulley system that allows us to hang this beautiful advent wreath as a stunning accent to our holiday decorations. The candles are no longer lit on the wreath for fire safety reasons.*