

**“Whoever you are...wherever you are on life’s journey,  
you are welcome here.”  
God is Still Speaking**

THE REFORMED CHURCH OF THE

***Ascension***

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



***An Open and Affirming Congregation***

**December 8, 2019**

**11:00 AM**



As you prepare for the birth of the Christ-child,  
look for signs of PEACE this week.

***“The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the  
kid, the calf and the lion and the  
fatling together, and a little child  
shall lead them” —Isaiah 11:6***

1700 West Main Street, Jeffersonville, PA 19403  
**(610) 539-1693**

[www.ascensionucc.org](http://www.ascensionucc.org)

[info@ascensionucc.org](mailto:info@ascensionucc.org)

## Order of Worship

*Christ comes!—  
In the word on the street  
and the word that forgives,  
Christ comes.  
At the end of the day,  
at the ultimate end,  
Christ Jesus lives and leads.  
God be praised!  
Christ Comes!*

*Brian Wren*

## PRELUDE

“Patience, People” (Hennessy)

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS CHIMING OF THE HOUR RECEIVING THE LIGHT

## CHORAL INTROIT

“A Voice Cries Out” (Joncas)

## CALL TO WORSHIP

*please remain seated*

**Leader:** Come together, worship God, and dare to hope:  
The One who comes will not judge by  
appearances,

**People:** **but will defend the poor with justice  
and decide with equity for the meek of the  
earth.**

**Leader:** Come together, worship God,  
and dare to believe the promise:

**People:** **Christ will baptize us with the Holy Spirit,  
and with fire.**

Leader: Come together, worship God,  
and dare to respond to the call:

**People:** “Repent, and bear fruit worthy of repentance,  
for the reign of God is near!”

### **HYMN**

“Soon and Very Soon”

*Glory to God 384*

*Verses 1, 2 and 3*

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*in unison*

Visioning God, we confess our limited capacity to see beyond what is, to what will be, according to your promise. We have difficulty discerning with spiritual eyes. We confess that when we allow ourselves to be captured by outer images of poverty and homelessness, of crime and violence, we easily lose sight of your promises. We pride ourselves in being people of facts, not fantasy; of present reality, not future possibility. Failing to trust with child-like faith that you are surely about the business of reconstruction in our world, we do not work for you and with you as is our privilege, our calling, and our responsibility. Forgive us, we pray.

*please rise*

### **HYMN**

“Soon and Very Soon”

*Glory to God 384*

*Verse 4*

Leader: Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

*Isaiah 2:5*

*please be seated*

### **MOMENT OF WAITING**

*(we will wait upon the Lord in silence for one minute)*

# LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

## PASSING THE PEACE

*Let us greet one another with the words,  
“The peace of Christ be with you.”*

## THE CHILDREN’S TIME

*please be seated*

## HYMN

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” *Glory to God 96*

## THE SCRIPTURE READINGS

Hebrew Lesson          Isaiah 11:1-10          *page 640*

## ANTHEM

“Awake! Awake! Salvation Comes” (Caldara/Arr. Hopson)

Epistle Lesson          Romans 15:4-13          *page 163*

## HYMN

*please rise*

“Creator of the Stars of Night” **Verses 1&3** *Glory to God 84*

V1.            Creator of the stars of night,  
                 your people’s everlasting light,  
                 O Christ, redeemer of us all,  
                 we pray you hear us when we call.

V3.            At your great name, O Jesus,  
                 now all knees must bend, all hearts must bow:  
                 all things on earth with one accord,  
                 like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.

*please remain standing*

Gospel Lesson          Matthew 3:1-12          *page 2*

*please be seated*

## **SERMON**

### **THE 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.  
Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom,  
and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

### **BRINGING BETHANY GIFTS FORWARD**

### **THE OFFERING OF OUR TITHES & OURSELVES OFFERTORY**

“Midwinter Solitude” (Pulchanski)

### **DOXOLOGY**

*please rise*      *tune: Winchester New*

**All:** *singing*

**On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
Announces that the Lord is nigh;  
Awake and hearken, for he brings  
Glad tidings of the King of kings!**

## **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

*in unison*

God of promise, we look beyond outward reality and see with eyes of imagination the world you envision. In this way we gain new meaning, new purpose, and new energy for service. We make this offering now as a sign of our commitment to look, wait, and work for the coming of your realm among us in all its glorious fullness. Bless our giving, we pray. Amen.

## **CLOSING HYMN**

“Comfort, Comfort Now My People” *Glory to God 87*

## **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

### **CHORAL RESPONSE**

“While We Are Waiting, Come” **Verse 1** *Glory to God 92*

V1. While we are waiting, come;  
while we are waiting, come.  
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,  
while we are waiting, come.

## **TAKING THE LIGHT INTO THE WORLD**

### **POSTLUDE**

“Humbly We Await the Savior” (Unger)

*The flowers are given to the Glory of God,  
in memory of Karen Lowe, who passed away last  
Sunday, 12/1, by Sandy Maben*

# Here are ways you can embody PEACE during the second week of the Season of Advent:



**Monday: SNIP** | Make recycled paper snowflakes, especially if you live where you don't often get real snow. Think of the peacefulness of a snowy night and the beauty in God's handiwork. *#LoveOfCreation*

**Tuesday: FORGIVE** | What better time than this week to "make peace." Reach out to a friend or relative with whom you have had disagreements. *#LoveOfNeighbor*

**Wednesday: CREATE** | Cut seven green and red paper strips. On each strip, write the name of a place in our world that is in need of peace. Staple the strips as links in one long garland. Each day pick a strip of paper and pray for God's peace to come to that place. *#LoveOfChildren*

**Thursday: REUSE** | Save all of the candle ends from candles at your church (and your own, too). Collect pinecones, melt the candle ends and drizzle some of wax on the pinecones to make eco-friendly fire starters. *#LoveOfCreation*

**Friday: SHARE** | Share Christ's peace - give a care package to someone who needs a pick-me-up. This might be someone who lives alone or has no family nearby to share time with during the holiday season. *#LoveOfNeighbor*

**Saturday: BUILD** | Create your own nativity scene at home - do it slowly so that you all may find peace as you 'see' the story of Christmas. Use any objects you can find as the characters - let your mind be creative. *#LoveOfChildren*

What image depicts the promise of God's PEACE,  
awaiting fulfillment in your life?

Share it on Social Media with **#3greatloves**



*We welcome you to our Community of Faith. We pray that God will speak to you during this worship experience. If you have need of pastoral assistance, we encourage you to contact Pastor Dwayne at the church office number listed below or make an appointment with him today.*

*We welcome children in worship at all times. If you would prefer, childcare is available. Please see one of our ushers. Children's bulletins and crayons are available from the ushers.*

<b>Ministers</b>	All the people of the Congregation
<b>Pastor</b>	The Rev. Dwayne A. Mosier
<b>Minister of Music</b>	Dan Weckerly
<b>President of the Consistory</b>	Liz Brunton
<b>Vice President of the Consistory</b>	Michele Luke
<b>Secretary of the Consistory</b>	Molly Lorenz
<b>Moderator of Spiritual Council</b>	
<b>Elders:</b>	Liz Brunton, Joan Hagerman, Mary Lambon Molly Lorenz, Barbara Montague Graham
<b>Chair of the Diaconate</b>	Michele Luke
<b>Deacons:</b>	Liam D'Aquila, Sandy Dounce Michele Luke, Lynda Waltman
<b>Church Secretary</b>	Judy Parker
<b>Sexton</b>	Emeric Suto
<b>Treasurer</b>	Sandy Maben

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