

**“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 24, 2019

7:00 PM



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

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Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24, 2019

7:00 PM

Order of Worship

PRELUDE

“O Holy Night” (Phillips)

CHIMING OF THE HOUR RECEIVING THE LIGHT

INTROIT

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel” Vocalist: Liam D’Aquila

CALL TO WORSHIP

- Leader: Do not be afraid; for see-
I am bringing you good news of great joy.
- People: To us is born this day in the city of David,
a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord.**
- Leader: This will be a sign for you: you will find a child
wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger.
- People: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
peace!**
- Leader: Let us go now to Bethlehem.

HYMN

please rise

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” *Glory to God 133*

silence

CALL TO CONFESSION

- Leader: In Jesus Christ our Lord, the grace of God has
appeared, bringing salvation to all.
With confidence and joy,
- People: let us confess our sins.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

unison

Great and glorious God, through Jesus Christ our Savior you have shown us that the blessed age of grace has appeared, and the hoped-for time of salvation has come. Yet we cling to the glories of the present age – worldly passions and impious pursuits, self-indulgent, crooked, and ungodly ways. Redeem us from evil and cleanse us from sin, through Christ, who gave himself for us, so that we might be your people, holy and whole. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: Hear this good news of great joy:
in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

Leader: Glory to God in the highest,

People: **and peace to God's people on earth.**

A LITANY OF DARKNESS AND LIGHT

Leader 1: We wait in the darkness, expectantly, longingly, anxiously, thoughtfully.

Leader 2: The darkness is our friend. In the darkness of the womb, we have all been nurtured and protected. In the darkness of the womb, the Christ-child was made ready for the journey into light.

All: **You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.**

Leader 1: It is only in the darkness that we can see the splendor of the universe – blankets of stars, the solitary glowing of distant planets.

Leader 2: It was the darkness that allowed the Magi to find the star that guided them to where the Christ-child lay.

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

Leader 1: In the darkness of night, desert peoples find relief from the cruel, relentless heat of the sun.

Leader 2: In the blessed desert darkness, Mary and Joseph were able to flee with the infant Jesus to safety in Egypt.

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

Leader 1: In the darkness of sleep, we are soothed and restored, healed and renewed.

Leader 2: In the darkness of sleep, dreams rise up. God spoke to Jacob and Joseph through dreams. God is speaking still.

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

Leader 1: In the solitude of darkness, we sometimes remember those who need God's presence in a special way – the sick, the unemployed, the bereaved, the persecuted, the homeless, those who are demoralized and discouraged, those whose fear has turned to cynicism, those whose vulnerability has become bitterness.

Leader 2: Sometimes in the darkness, we remember those who are near to our hearts – colleagues, partners, parents, children, neighbors, friends. We thank God for their presence and ask God to bless and protect them in all that they do – at home, at school, as they travel, as they work, as they play.

All: You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.

Leader 1: Sometimes, in the solitude of darkness, our fears and concerns, our hopes and our visions rise to the surface. We come face to face with ourselves and with the road that lies ahead of us. And in that same darkness, we find companionship for the journey.

Leader 2: In that same darkness, we sometimes allow ourselves to wonder and worry whether the human race is going to survive.

All: We know you are with us, O God, yet we still await your coming. In the darkness that contains both our hopelessness and our expectancy, we watch for a sign of God's hope.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Leader: Jesus Christ is the Light of the World!

People: A light no darkness can extinguish.

please be seated

HYMN "Away In a Manger" *Glory to God 115*

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 9:2-7 *page 638*

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2:1-20 *page 58*

THE PAGEANT

"Angels From the Realms of Glory" (Steven Van Wye)

Vocalist: Liz Brunton

THE OFFERING OF OUR TITHES & OURSELVES

During the offering we will come forward, up the middle aisle, and place our offerings in the manger located at the chancel rail. After you have placed your offering in the manger, you will receive a candle and be directed by the ushers to form a circle around the sanctuary.

OFFERTORY

“Nestled in the Hay”

(Kleinschmidt)

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Glory to God 144

**What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him - give my heart.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

in unison

Searcher of Hearts, you know our thoughts before they are spoken. You refine our impure acts, so they conform to your will. May what we say reflect your purpose for creation, and what we do be consistent with your intent. Shape what we give you to suit your pleasure and fashion us to fit your design. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

The pastor will light a candle from the Christ Candle and will then light the candles of those around the sanctuary. Unlighted candles should be dipped when lighting it from a neighbor's candle.

Lighted candles should not be dipped, to avoid dripping wax on the floor or neighbor.

Candles will be extinguished following the Charge and Benediction.

HYMN

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Glory to God 122

Please lift your candle during the singing of the last verse

OFFERTORY PRAYER

in unison

We give thanks, Holy One, for the world of wonder you have made – forest and field, sea and sky, and for the gift of grace that you have given – a little child, lying in a manger. Receive these gifts of tenderness and love, of gratitude and praise, and use them for your glory; in the name of Jesus Christ, the child of Bethlehem, we pray. Amen.

candles are extinguished

CLOSING HYMN

“Joy To The World” **Verses 1, 2, & 4** *Glory to God 134*

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Leader : Go forth to sing and bless God’s name.

People : **Glory to God in the highest !**

Leader : For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.

People : **Alleluia ! Praise the Lord !**

Leader : The Lord look upon you with favor.

POSTLUDE

“Joy, Joy, Joy” (Michaels)



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.

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

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