

Mt. Zion United Church of Christ
1054 Ridgewood Road, York, Pennsylvania 17406
Telephone: 717-755-6117
E-mail: mtzionuccyorkpa@comcast.net
Website: www.mtzionucc.org

Rev. Danielle E. Neff, Senior Pastor
Rev. Jeff Kardisco, Associate Pastor
Mr. Denny Daugherty, Adult Choir Director & Tech Director
Mr. Travis Pinci, Accompanist, Children's Music Coordinator, & Secretary

December 24, 2017

10:00 PM

CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas Eve is a joyous time for all who open their hearts and minds to our loving Creator. Let us allow the true meaning of Christmas to stir up love within us. During the service today, we will be serving communion. Please know that all are invited to participate in Holy Communion. If you are a guest, thank you for worshiping with us today. We invite you to take a moment to complete a visitor's card located in the back of the pew in front of you and place it in the offering plate when it is passed. We also invite you to sign your name in our guest book located in the back entrance of the sanctuary. We pray God's blessing upon you.

For today's service, we will be using the black and the red hymnal.

GATHERING MUSIC

What Child is This
O Holy Night

arr. Smith
by Adam

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

ALL SING (red hymnal, #112, v. 1)

O Come, All Ye Faithful

CALL TO WORSHIP¹

L: Glory to God in the highest!

P: And hope to every discouraged heart.

L: Glory to God in the highest!

P: And peace to every conflicted soul.

L: Glory to God in the highest!

P: And joy to every downcast spirit.

L: Glory to God in the highest!

P: And love to everyone.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

L: Let us pray. Holy God of Love, there is light in our lives because of the abundance of your love. A love so vast, so deep, so real, that you became one of us. May we live within the power of this love. And may we share its light with a world where too many dwell in darkness.

P: Amen.

***CAROL NO. 108** (red hymnal)

O Little Town of Bethlehem

***OPENING PRAYER**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH *Shining Light* Rend Collective

During the season of Advent, we light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, highlighting the qualities of God that Christ exemplifies in the world. In the lighting of the Advent wreath this evening, we see these qualities of hope, peace, joy and love brought into the world through the Christ-light. Through our faith in Christ, we are called to then receive His light, and be bearers of God's hope, peace, joy and love in the world.

Reading: John 1

Pastor Danielle

Dancers: Jen Cooper, Dani Kardisco, Sydney Cooper, Tama Allison, & Olivia Daugherty

***TIME OF CONFESSION**

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION²

ALL: O God, you seek us out and know us, and all that we are is open to you. We ask for your forgiveness when we make no room for Christ, and fail to welcome him into our lives. Forgive us when we follow shooting stars and squander our gifts in Herod's court. Grant us mercy when we sanitize your birthplace and erase from memory the poor and displaced. Forgive us when we sing sweet sentiments over Christ's birth, and fail to rejoice over his everyday presence. In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us. We turn to you, O Christ, perfect union of Spirit and humanity. We renounce evil; we claim your love; we choose to be made whole. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ACT OF PRAISE NO. 102 (red hymnal, stanza 1) *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*

ALL SING: Hark, the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King; Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled! Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies, with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark, the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

QUARTET ANTHEM

Long Ago, Prophets Knew by Green, Larson

READING OF LUKE 2: 1-20
CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

QUARTET ANTHEM

Hope is Born by Lee Dengler

OFFERING

CALL TO OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY *Joseph's Lullaby* by Bannister and Millard

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE NO. 148 (black hymnal, stanzas 1 & 3)

What Child Is This

ALL SING: What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping? This, this, the angels sing, is Christ, God's holy offering; Haste, haste your praise to bring the babe, the child of Mary.

Bring gifts of incense, gold, and myrrh; come, join in jubilation; The Holy Child, though meek and mild, has come with God's salvation. Raise, raise the song on high, the mother sings her lullaby; Joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the child of Mary.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SOPRANO SOLO (sung by Debbie Butcher)

O Holy Night by Adam

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION[†]
INVITATION

L: This is a magical night. God-with-us has come to touch our world, our lives. God-with-us has come to bring us out of darkness into a glorious light. God-with-us invites us now to come to the table, believing in the promises of God fulfilled tonight. Here we hear angels, and see shepherds, and are transformed by a baby. Here love is offered, and love is found, in sharing of the bread and cup. Here we find our journey's end and its beginning. This table is open to anyone who wishes to know Christ better. May the God of holy nights be with you!

P: And also with you!

L: People of God, this is the night of transformation.

P: This is the night when God bends low.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

L: Children of Bethlehem, lift your voices in joy to God.

P: Our voices join with all who celebrate the Birth this night.

L: God of wonder, we come to this table to be surrounded by the mystery of heaven's radiance. Lift us from the ordinary, that we may be touched by things extraordinary this night. We praise you for coming to humankind, for being a child for all children, and for living as Son of Man for all humankind.

P: "For unto us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

L: Into a silent and fearful world, you sent your son Jesus to Bethlehem, born that we might draw nearer to you. So with shepherds, angels, and Mary and Joseph, with those who sing carols and those whose pain only brings silence, we lift our songs to you:

P: Holy, holy, holy are you, God of the manger. Creation hears the angel songs and rejoices. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the one who is born this night. Hosanna in the highest!

REMEMBERING THE STORY

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION & THE LORD'S PRAYER

ALL: 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. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE WINE

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

(The outer ring of cups contain grape juice, the inner rings contain wine.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

ALL: We thank you, O God, for your presence at this table. Grant that the angel's song may be continually on our lips, that Christ's light may radiate in our lives, and that we may bear the good news of your love in a dark and waiting world. Amen.

CANDLELIGHTING SERVICE

CAROL (see p. 5)

Silent Night, Holy Night

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Carol of the Bells

Traditional

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.

Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!

Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent, night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light,
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;

Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Merry Christmas to All!

Welcome Team & Communion Servers: Becky & Jerry Hester; Dan Kinard, Mary Jane Snyder

Worship Tech: Mary Jane Snyder

One poinsettia is placed upon the altar in honor of Zachary Shiffer's 10th birthday from Nanna and Pop-pop, Sue and Jim Shiffer.

One poinsettia is placed upon the altar in honor of Steve and Christal's 15th wedding anniversary and in honor of our whole family being together for Christmas by Mike and Kathy Ferree.

The bulletins are sponsored by the Bevivino family in honor of all the participants of the Christmas Eve Services today. Merry Christmas and thank you for sharing your time and talents with our Church family!

Thank you to Jen Cooper, Dani Kardisco, Sydney Cooper, Tama Allison, Olivia Daugherty, and Debbie Butcher for enhancing today's worship with their talents. Thank you to the vocal quartet for their meaningful musical contribution this evening. The quartet is made up of: Debbie Butcher, Brenda Beyer, Dave Firestone & Braden Bicher.

Thank you to Patsy & Lee Brown, of Brown's Tree Farm, for donating our Christmas tree and wreaths.

If you commune, please complete a communion card found in the pew racks and place it in the offering plate.

During the candle lighting ceremony, please hold lighted candles vertical, and **tip the unlighted** candle to the lighted one.

Please pick up your 2018 offering envelopes if you haven't already done so. They are on the table in the west narthex. All contributions must be received at the church on or before December 31st, 2017 in order to get credited to your 2017 giving statements.

Mt. Zion is Streaming! This service will be posted on the Mt. Zion website at: <http://www.mtzionucc.org/services-online.html>, with both a live feed (during the actual service) and a version you can watch later. We offer a hearing assistance system called *Listen Technologies*. If you would like to use a receiver, please check with the volunteers at the sound booth at the rear of the sanctuary.

¹by Joanna Harader, www.spaciousfaith.com

[†] Much of tonight's liturgy was adapted from Ministry Matters, Christmas 2014 worship options.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.