

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, 2018

3:00 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 welcome infants and children and all their wiggles & voices in our worship! For your comfort, we also have a children's corner in the back of the sanctuary where your child can relax and play and you can still participate in the worship experience. We also have nursery care downstairs during our 10:30 AM worship service. Please see a member of the welcoming team for assistance!

We pray God's blessing upon you. For today's service, we will be using the red & black hymnals.

CAROL SING

CAROL NO. 149 (Worshipping Hymnal, see p. 6)

Away in a Manger

CAROL NO. 102 (red hymnal, stanzas 1 & 3)

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

PRELUDE (sung by Braden and Jordan Bicher)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

People: **O Come, O Come Emmanuel – join us in your peace.**

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Leader: The prophets foretold his birth and said, “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel”

People: O Come, O Come Emmanuel and bring your kingdom near!

Leader: Mary sang with praise saying, “My soul magnified the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant – for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.”

People: O Come, O Come Emmanuel and do great things among the nations!

Leader: This is the night; the night where the Word has become flesh and dwelt among us, the night when Emmanuel has brought his kingdom low to us, the night when we all sing out with praise for incredible things that God has done for us. This is the night of our Savior’s birth, the night where we are all set free from sin and death – the night when we receive the greatest gift in all of creation.

People: Emmanuel has come! The Prince of Peace, God With Us, is here among us in our worship and our praise. We will rejoice in the hope of his kingdom which has no end!

***CAROL NO. 145** (black hymnal)

Once in Royal David’s City

***OPENING PRAYER**

WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM

Sing to the Child

by Dengler

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Leader: The Christ candle now shines among the four candles of Advent to illuminate our hope, our peace, our joy, and our love... a reminder that through these things Christ will show us the Kingdom of God.

People: One light conquers darkness, illuminating hope, peace, joy, and love.

Leader: When we live each day with Christ in our heart.

People: one love smothers hate

Leader: When we live each day with Christ in our heart.

People: one breath calms busyness

Leader: When we live each day with Christ in our heart

People: one baby brings eternal life

Leader: Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us – our Messiah and friend.

People: Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Giver of Everlasting Life be with us this night and throughout our lives. Amen.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

*TIME OF CONFESSION

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION²

ALL: God of Joy, we come to celebrate again the arrival of Love Incarnate here in our very midst. Your glorious arrival is enough to cause the forests to sing for joy, yet we still find reasons to complain and sigh. Your light of salvation is bright enough to illuminate every corner of our lives, yet we still find ourselves shrouded in worry and doubt. Your gift of Love is big enough for the whole world, yet we still find ourselves resentful that your love extends to those whom we deem to be unworthy. God, you invite us into the light of the stable where the overlooked and forgotten have gathered to celebrate the miracle of your love. Give us the strength and courage to join you at the manger. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON²

ACT OF PRAISE NO. 105 (red hymnal, stanzas 1 & 3)

Angels We Have Heard on High

ALL SING: Angels we have heard on high, singing sweetly through the night. And the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight. Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing; Come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

READING OF JOHN 1: 1-5 CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM

All is Well

arr. Graham

OFFERING

CALL TO OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY (Sung by Dani Kardisco)

In the Bleak Midwinter with Still, Still, Still by Holst, Rossetti, arr. Raney

OFFERTORY RESPONSE NO. 128 (black hymnal, v. 4) *In the Bleak Midwinter*

ALL SING: What can I offer, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise one, I would do my part; but what can I offer: all my heart.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

Leader: Sisters and brothers this is a night of paradox – a night when we gather in the dark of a familiar sanctuary and light candles together, remembering the light that shines in the darkness....This table is not our table, but it is God’s table, and it is open to anyone who wishes to know Christ better. May the God of holy nights we with you!

People: And also with you!

Leader: Sisters and brothers this is a night of new birth.

People: This is the night when God breathes once again into the creation He has made.

Leader: Lift your voices to God and sing in celebration with all of the angels!

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

Leader: God of all creation – alpha and omega, who was and is and is to come – we acknowledge that you have been throughout the whole of creation since its very beginning, and yet we yearn for your presence among us....We praise you for coming to humankind, for being a child for all children, and for living for us all.

People: “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.”

Leader: O God, you sent your Son Jesus into this broken world, born that we might draw nearer to you. With all the shepherds, angels, and Mary and Joseph, with those who sing carols and those whose pain only brings silence, we lift our songs to you...

People: 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 AND 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, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE JUICE

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS *(all cups contain grape juice)*

During the sharing of the elements, we will be singing various Christmas Carols. Words for the songs will be listed on the screens. The hymnal numbers are also listed below if you'd prefer to use a hymnal. We will be singing the first verse of each hymn.

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, #107 (red hymnal)

O Little Town of Bethlehem, #108 (red hymnal)

O Come, All Ye Faithful, #112 (red hymnal)

The First Noel, #118 (red hymnal)

What Child is This, #148 (black hymnal)

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. 7)

Silent Night, Holy Night

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

POSTLUDE (played by Ryan and Jordyn Myers)

Angels We Have Heard on High

Traditional

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Traditional

¹The opening prayer was adapted from a prayer written by Lisa Frenz. Originally posted in *Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Holy Communion*, and posted on *Lisa's Liturgies*.

<https://sites.google.com/site/lisasliturgies/home>. Accessed on the *Re:Worship* website at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/11/opening-prayer-christmas-eve.html>. on December 6, 2018.

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²The prayer of confession and the assurance of pardon are from the *Ministry Matters* website at <https://www.ministrymatters.com/worship/entry/3412/worship-elements-christmas-eve-2017-option-3>. Originally written by Rev. Laura Jaquith Bartlett of the United Methodist Church and shared with permission to use in worship. Accessed on the web December 12, 2018.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Away in a Manger 149

She gave birth to her firstborn, a son . . . and placed him in a manger. Lk. 2:7

Unison

1. A - way in a man-ger, no crib for a bed, the lit - tle Lord
2. The cat - tle are low-ing, the Ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord
3. Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay close by me for -

Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love thee, Lord Je - sus, look
ev - er, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in

down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
down from the sky and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
thy ten - der care, and fit us for heav - en, to live with thee there.

*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: Tim Snyder, Robin Schriver, Barb Stebbins, & Bonnie Murphy

Worship Tech: Clyde Snyder

One poinsettia is placed upon the altar in honor of Zachary Shiffer's 11th birthday from Nanna and Pop-pop, Sue and Jim Shiffer.

One poinsettia is placed upon the altar in honor of Ben & Emily Miller's graduation from Pennsylvania State University on December 15, 2018 by Jill & Stan Miller.

The bulletins are presented in honor of Ben Miller's engagement to Alexis Bear by Jill & Stan Miller.

Thank you to Jordan Bicher, Braden Bicher, Debbie Butcher, Dani Kardisco, & the Worship Choir for enhancing today's worship with their talents.

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 2019 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, 2018 in order to get credited to your 2018 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.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.