

ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Perkasie, Pennsylvania
Rev. Barbara Pence

Phone (215) 257-2880
9:00 am Faith Formation

Website: www.standrewsucc.org
10:15 am Worship Service

December 21, 2025
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Liturgist: Karen Peterson

PRELUDE
GREETING

ADVENT WREATH CANDLELIGHTING

Light two blue candles.

SING #165 vs. 1 -2 When God Is a Child

In a world full of fear, where do you see glimmers of joy?

We see glimmers of joy in birthday candles and homemade cards. We see joy in the laughter of children and the delight of grandparents. We see joy in meals around the table and in the singing of Christmas songs. We see joy when justice brings liberation and life to our neighbors.

You are right. Even in a fearful world, joy is all around us.

Today we light the candle of joy as a reminder of this good news.

Joy is here. Joy is real. We only have to look for it.

Light pink candle.

In a world full of fear, where do you see the presence of love?

We see love all around us. We see love when people hold open the door. We see love in a warm embrace, a homemade casserole, a phone call after a long day. We see love in random acts of kindness and intentional acts of empathy. We see love all around us.

You are right. Even in a fearful world, love is all around us.

Today we light the candle of love as a reminder of this good news.

Even in a fearful world, love is here. Love is world-changing. Love is shining bright.

We only have to look for it.

Light blue candle.

Thanks be to God for a love like that! Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE #165 vs. 3-4

When God Is a Child

If able, please stand in body or spirit

CALL TO WORSHIP

Mary said, "How can this be?"

We often say, "But God, I am afraid."

Joseph was going to dismiss Mary.

We often say, "We're afraid to do the hard things."

Even when we are afraid, God invites us closer.

Here in worship—

We pray together, we stand together, we sing together, we listen together.

Here in worship— we are not alone.

So when life gives you reason to fear, to worry, or to be anxious, remember this moment.

We are not alone.

Let us worship our with-us God.

Hymn #160 Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn

Please be seated

CALL TO CONFESSION

Friends, every day we are given choices—

the choice to say yes to God, to be a friend, to be an ally, to extend a welcoming hand.

Some days we choose wisely, but other days we let doubt and fear get in the way.

In this moment of prayer, we are able to confess and be forgiven.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Ever-reaching God, in these last days before the birth of your son, you invite us to live into our call. Instead of responding with a "yes," we hesitate. We admit that we ask often for a sign. We put you to the test, beg for miracles, for mercy, for proof of your holy word.

We doubt, even as we retell the old stories. We are like Joseph – shamed, questioning, fearful of the truth of Mary's dream – not wanting to risk to stand by another's side. We are as afraid as the shepherds in their fields, sometimes as cowardly and cruel as Herod. Forgive us when we choose fear over love. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God's love for us encompasses every doubt and fear we imagine. God did not turn from our ancestors when they fell short, and God will not turn from us. Our humanity is not a flaw. It is the gift of the divine, sealed in Emmanuel's humanity. **Praise be to God!**

SENIOR CHOIR In Silence We Wait Parker/Larson

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Immanuel, we turned off alarm clocks. We poured cups of coffee. We slipped shoes onto our feet and combed back fly-away hairs. We traveled to this room and settled into this space, all in hopes of drawing closer to you. So as we hear your Word read aloud, help us to feel your presence in our midst. For we are reaching out our hands. We are reaching out our hearts. Speak to us now. With hope we pray. Amen.

Scripture: Luke 1:26-39
 Matthew 1:18-25

The word of the Lord.

Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.

The Advent Wreath Christmas Program Sparkhouse

Please stand in body or in spirit

HYMN #185 Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Please be seated

Koinonia Time (community; communion; fellowship; intimacy)
(Please date, sign, and pass the pew pad to your neighbors)

Sharing Joys and Concerns
Prayers of Intercession

Lord's Prayer
Our Creator/Mother/Father/Spirit, 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

God has told us many times and, in many ways, where love flows from – it comes from the hand we extend when we have enough and even when we do not. Let us bring forth the true joy of this season and give as much as we are able.

OFFERTORY

If able, please stand in body or in spirit

Offertory Response
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host.
Praise Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Precious God, take these gifts in the spirit they were given, with joy and love for our siblings. We give you thanks for the ability to share your divine love in a tangible form with our neighbors. We dedicate the gifts for the residents of Phoebe Home and Bethany Children's Home to your glory. Use what we have here to bring that joy where it is needed most. Help us to remember, as we await Christ's birth, to give more generously than we receive, knowing we will always be rich in your abundant love. Amen.

Please be seated

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

(If you are participating online, you're invited to have the elements of bread and the fruit of the vine or something similar to join us around Christ's Table.)

INVITATION

COMMUNION PRAYER

God be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Holy God, In every age you draw near to your people...

Therefore we join with your people in every place,

and with the great company of heaven,

in praising your name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest!

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SHARING THE MEAL

(If you are unable to come forward for communion, please let an usher know and the pastor will bring communion to you.)

Please stand in body or in spirit.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God-with-us,

We give you thanks for this meal of love and remembrance.

As you accompanied Joseph and Mary on their uncertain path,

accompany us in the week ahead.

Strengthen us to be signs of your steadfast love—

in our homes, our church, and our community.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Hymn #181 Of the Father's Love Begotten

BENEDICTION

In a fearful world, may you look for God's spirit.

May you reach for each other's hands.

May you choose courage whenever you can.

And in all things, may you remember

that good news is louder than fear.

In the name of the one who calls,

the one who sends, and the one who journeys with us—

go in peace and **be not afraid**. Amen.

Please be seated

Postlude

Portions of today's liturgy are reprinted from Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion*, Copyright 2015 and *What Do You Fear: Insisting on Hope This Advent*, Words for Worship Advent-Epiphany, *Worship and Prayers* by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | *sanctifiedart.org.*" and Sparkhouse Digital @2024.

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Head Usher for December are Herb Volk and Ron Grace
Ushers today are Doris Lindmeier and Deb Kantner
Altar Guild this week is Ethel Dietrich and Doris Lindmeier

Pastor Barb's contact information: Email – pastorbarb90@gmail.com; Cell 267-374-5692

Consistory 2025

Elders: Ron Grace, Doris Lindmeier, Lee Metzger (President), Karen Peterson

Deacons: Robert Creager, Cindy Grace, Tara Howell, Lance Ide, Erin Rush,

Herb Volk (Vice President)

Consistory Secretary – Angela Stofflet; Treasurer – Jen Flexer

165 When God Is a Child

Refrain

When God is a child there's joy in our song. The last shall be first and the

a tempo

weak shall be strong, and none shall be a -

1-3 4

fraid. 1 Hope is a star that
2 Peace is a rib - bon that
3 Joy is a song that
4 Love is a flame that

1-3 4

WORDS: Brian Wren (1936-)
MUSIC: John Carter (1930-)
Words © 1989 Hope Publishing Company
Music © 1998 Hope Publishing Company

GATES
Irregular

rit. *to Refrain*

shines in the night, lead - ing us on till the morn - ing is bright. When
cir - cles the earth, giv - ing a prom - ise of safe - ty and worth. When
wel - comes the dawn, tell - ing the world that the Sav - ior is born. When
burns in our heart, Je - sus has come and will nev - er de - part. When

rit.

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 - jice, re - jice, 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 - spir - 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.

185 Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King:
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Right-eous-ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb:
Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

WORDS: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt.
MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831-1915)

MENDELSSOHN
7.7.7.D.

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King."

181 Of the Father's Love Begotten

Unison

1 Of the Fa-ther's love be - got - ten, ere the world be - gan to be,
 2 O that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when a vir - gin, blest with grace,
 3 Let the heights of heaven a - dore him; an - gel hosts his prais - es sing;
 4 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly Ghost, to thee,

he is Al - pha and O - me - ga, he the source, the end - ing he,
 by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing, bore the Sav - ior of our race;
 powers, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him, and ex - tol our God and King;
 hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing and un - wea - ried prais - es be:

of the things that are, that have been, and that fu - ture
 and the babe, the world's Re - deem - er, first re - vealed his
 let no tongue on earth be si - lent, ev - ery voice in
 hon - or, glo - ry, and do - min - ion, and e - ter - nal

years shall see, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!
 sa - cred face, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!
 con - cert ring, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!
 vic - to - ry, ev - er - more and ev - er - more! A - men.