

the inn

HOUSING THE HOLY



Sunday, December 5, 2021

8am and 10:30am

2nd Sunday of Advent

A Place At the Table – Peace

The pandemic has laid bare, and widened, economic disparity locally and globally. As we enter the Advent season, how can our churches become houses where the Holy will be born anew—offering respite, sustenance and care, opening the doors ever wider to those seeking shelter from the onslaught of life? No one church can do it all, but each can do something. As we study the biblical prophets that call us to care for our neighbors and “make room in the inn,” the lonely and frightened spaces within us are filled with the light of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

GUESTS, Welcome to worship. To learn more about us, please visit our website at www.unionucc.org or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/unionneffs . If you would like us to follow up with you contact Pastor Kris at 610-767-6961, pastorkris@unionucc.org

One of our core values as a church is extravagant welcome and hospitality. We believe in God’s inclusive love. No matter who you are or where you on life’s journey, you are welcome here.

Lay Reader: 8:00 Carol Pope, 10:30 Jancie Metzger

Ushers: 8am: Phil Wehr, Ron Pope, Kerry Snyder

10:30am : Aften Hamm, Scott Nagle, Tami Herzog Wassum, Suzanne Lorah, Pat Warmkessel, Don Penrod, Jennifer Haley, Suzann Schneider

Sound: Pat Sorg

Acolyte: Emily Glosan

***Please stand in body or spirit**

PRELUDE

Away In a Manger James R. Murray
Blake Hoppes

Welcome and Announcements

We Open the Door

Hope Waits for Us at Advent Amanda Udis-Kessler

Leader: Like the childhood game of “musical chairs,” we are convinced that there are not enough places at the table. And so we shrink the guest list just in case there is not enough, and we scramble to occupy the chairs first. And yet our sacred texts invite us to imagine and make real the gathering of all people to the table, robed in the garments of a Peace that comes with justice. This is what really matters—this is the fruit of what is right and good.

Choir/Solo:

Peace waits for us at Advent
Peace waits for us to rest.
Peace waits for our acceptance
of the truth that we are blessed.
In this time of preparation
for the work of co-creation,
for the birthing of a world
of gentleness and play.
Peace is born in us each day!

Leader: Today we offer the Light of Peace to illumine the
Door of Welcome.

May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our
church.

May Peace awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater
hospitality.

There *IS* room in this Inn, a House for the Holy.

ALL:
Peace waits for us at Advent
Peace waits for us to rest.
Peace waits for our acceptance
of the truth that we are blessed.
In this time of preparation
for the work of co-creation,
for the birthing of a world
of gentleness and play.
Peace is born in us each day!

The Peace

Leader: The [Peace] of Christ be with you!

ALL: And also with you!

Leader: As we rise and stand in body or spirit for the first song, I invite you to pass a “wave” of peace to the people around you (and the people worshipping at home)!

***Carol**

**#105 Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear Black Hymnal
(New Century Hymnal)**

10:30 Worship Children’s Time

Children’s Church

Pastors invite children forward to leave with Ms. Tiffany for Children’s Church (in the basement).

Congregation/ All:

Parents and Families – your children will return to you in the sanctuary by the end of worship.

If the timing doesn’t match and worship is longer than Children’s Church, please meet them in Room 7 in the Basement (the Preschool Rooms).

Song: This, This is Where Children Belong

Chords: F, C/E, Dm, B♭, F/A, Gm, Am/C, C, F, Gm, Am, B♭, F/C, B♭, F

Voice

The musical score is written for a voice part in 8/8 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of four lines of music. The first line starts with a half note on G4, followed by quarter notes on A4, Bb4, and C5. The second line starts with a quarter note on D5, followed by quarter notes on E5, F5, and G5. The third line starts with a quarter note on G5, followed by quarter notes on A5, Bb5, and C6. The fourth line starts with a quarter note on D6, followed by quarter notes on E6, F6, and G6. The lyrics are: 'This, this is where child-ren be - long, Wel-comed as part of the wor - ship - ping throng. Wat - er, God's Word, bread and cup, pray'r and song, This is where child - ren be - long.'

This, this is where child-ren be - long,
Wel-comed as part of the wor - ship - ping throng.
Wat - er, God's Word, bread and cup, pray'r and song,
This is where child - ren be - long.

First Reading

Baruch 5: 1-5 (CEB)

Take off your mourning clothes
and oppression, Jerusalem!
Dress yourself in the dignity
of God's glory forever.

Wrap the justice that comes from God around
yourself like a robe.

Place the eternal one's glory
on your head like a crown.

God will show your brilliance everywhere under heaven.

God will give you this name
by which to be called forever:
The Peace That Comes from Justice,
The Honor That Comes
from Reverence for God!
Get up, Jerusalem!

Stand on the high place,
and look around to the east!
See your children gathered
from the west to the east
by the holy one's word,
as they rejoice that God has remembered them.

Second Reading

Philippians 1:3-11 (CEB)

I thank my God every time I mention you in my prayers. I'm thankful for all of you every time I pray, and it's always a prayer full of joy. I'm glad because of the way you have been my partners in the ministry of the gospel from the time you first believed it until now. I'm sure about this: the one who started a good work in you will stay with you to complete the job by the day of Christ Jesus. I have good reason to think this way about all of you because I keep you in my heart. You are all my partners in God's grace, both during my time in prison and in the defense and support of the gospel. God is my witness that I feel affection for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus.

This is my prayer: that your love might become even more and more rich with knowledge and all kinds of insight. I pray this so that you will be able to decide what really matters and so you will be sincere and blameless on the day of Christ. I pray that you will then be filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes from Jesus Christ, in order to give glory and praise to God.

Message The Freedom of Feelings

Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates, Penn Northeast Conference Minister

Prayers of the People

Make of My Heart a Stable Amanda Udis-Kessler

ALL: (sung)

**Make of my heart a stable,
a house for the holy,
a warm and sturdy place
for [peace] to live and grow.**

Leader: In this moment we open the doors of our hearts to
honesty before God

about what we've done and left undone that created less hope in
a hurting world.

Let us breathe out this regret...
and breathe in the life-giving, for-giving Spirit of God...
and out again with the Peace of Christ...

ALL: (sung)
Make of my life a stable,
a house for the holy,
a warm and sturdy place
for [peace] to live and grow.

Leader: In this moment we open the doors of our lives to the call
of the Spirit,
inviting us to become more than we can ask or imagine.
Let us breathe out our fear...
and breathe in the courage of the Spirit of God...
and out again, with the Peace of Christ...

ALL: (sung)
Make of our church a stable,
a house for the holy,
a warm and sturdy place
for [peace] to live and grow.

Leader: In this moment we open the doors of this church,
filling it with the compassion of Christ for all those who are
struggling. We remember and pray for...

... those who are suffering economic hardship, and insecurity in
basic needs; may abundance be shared.

... those who are suffering mentally, finding it difficult to cope;
may paths open and hope return.

... those who are suffering illness or injury;
may healing abound.

.... those who are suffering loneliness and isolation;
may companionship and solace arrive.

... those who are suffering discrimination, fear and violence;
may they know respect, respite, and safety.

May the Advent of Compassion be born in us,
reside within us,
move outward from us,
to meet the needs of the world,
making a house for the Holy that is each and
every child of God.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

The Prayer of Jesus

**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 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,
for ever. Amen.**

Donate to God's Mission and Ministry at UNION UCC

OFFERING ENVELOPES you can mail your envelopes to the church. The church address is on one side, just add a stamp.

ELECTRONIC GIVING This is a great time to try e-giving!

Choose a weekly, semi-monthly or monthly donation to be transferred electronically. Fill out form at <http://www.unionucc.org/egive.pdf> and send to

financialmanager@unionucc.org

DONATE ONLINE with your Credit or Debit Card

Go to <http://www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give/> and click **GIVE ONLINE**.

AMAZON SMILE Donate to Union UCC, Neffs (Search by zip code 18065) while you shop at Amazon. <https://smile.amazon.com>.

Offering – we will not be collecting your offerings during the service. Please plan to share them at the welcome table as you arrive or as you leave worship.

Thank you for being the church with us!

A Story of Innkeeping: Offering

Leader: Some scholars have wondered if “The Inn” and its “Keeper” were part of Joseph’s family—after all, he went back to his hometown for the census. Or perhaps Joseph’s own family did not or could not make room for them and they had to look elsewhere for a place to lay their head. As many of us know, family can be complicated. We’ll never know the real circumstances of Joseph’s family relations but the story can help us gain deeper compassion for what we DO know—too many people experience rejection, even from family. What if we endeavored to BE family to those who need it most, to “house the Holy” in ways we have not yet imagined?

Christmas Mission Offering This year our special offering will go to: 1. **The Allentown Warming Station at the YMCA** provides shelter, food, and a safe place for those experiencing homelessness. Doors are open 7pm-7am for a safe place to sleep and to get a meal.

2. **Parkland C.A.R.E.S. Food Pantry** serves members of the community affected by and suffering from hunger. The food pantry at Kernsville Elementary School serves over 130 families each month.

You can support these important efforts with your gifts using an envelope from your packet for “Christmas Mission,” or a blank envelope marked Christmas Mission, or by donating online <http://www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give/> using the Christmas Mission category.

Thank you for your 401G investments of GENEROSITY and GOOD in our community and neighbors.

MUSIC OFFERING

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Spiritual

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN TRANSITION TIMES OF PASSAGE: Farewell Liturgy

Leader: Our church family is constantly changing. People come and go. Babies are born. Children grow up. People commit themselves to one another. Loved ones and friends among us come to the end of their lives.

Individuals move into our community and church life. Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences, and new opportunities.

It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage, of endings and beginnings. Today we share the time of farewell with a friend who is leaving.

In September 2006 this local church called the Rev. Dr. Patience Stevenson to serve as the Pastor of Visitation.

Rev. Patience: I thank Union United Church of Christ, its members and friends, for the love, kindness, and support shown me these last thirty years. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

PEOPLE: We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that you now leave to enter a new time in your life. We express gratitude for your time among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.

Rev. Patience: I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

Leader: Do you, the members and friends of Union United Church of Christ release the Rev. Patience Stevenson from the duties of Pastor of Visitation?

PEOPLE: We do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you offer encouragement for her ministry as it unfolds in new ways?

PEOPLE: We do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you, Patience, release this local church from

turning to you and depending on you?

Rev. Patience: I do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you offer encouragement for the continued ministry here and on the relationship with another who will come to serve?

Rev. Patience: I do, with the help of God.

Leader: On behalf of the Penn Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ, I witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness, and release. The member churches of our Conference hold each of you in prayer. We pledge our support in the transitions signified in this service.

Leader: Let us pray: O God, we give thanks for remembered times when we, together, have shared the life of faith. We thank you for the moments we have shared with Patience in worship, in learning, in service. We pray that Patience will be aware of your Spirit's guidance as she moves to a new time in her life. This we pray in the name of Jesus the Savior. Amen.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS AND WORDS OF THANK YOU **Penn Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ, Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates**

Consistory and Church and Ministry Gift Aften Hamm, President

Staff Gift Pastor Kris

Congregation Gift Donna Christman, Chair of Church and Ministry

Words from Rev. Patience

***Closing Carol**

Leader: For today's closing carol we sing "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear," a carol written by Edmund Sears and one of the earliest social gospel hymns written. Sears was writing from Boston in the years just before the Civil War began and this hymn emphasizes the message of the

angels, “peace on earth, goodwill to all.” You can hear this clearly in a stanza missing from some hymnals:

“But with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song, which they bring:
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!”

Let us remember that in true peace, all can hear the love-song of the angels. Let us offer our own love-song now.

Benediction

May God’s Door of Welcome
swing open in your heart and in your life.

May Christ’s humble first dwelling
remind you of the plenty you already know.
And may the Spirit lead you into
more possibility and hospitality than you can imagine,
making room in The Inn for all.

May it be so for you.
May it be so for us.
May it be so for this church.
Amen.

Carol #131 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear Black Hymnal (New Century Hymnal)

Postlude

Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella Renaissance carol
Blake Hoppes

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$6,067.00
Calendar 2021 (Jan.-Oct.)	\$302,292.00
Calendar 2020 (Jan.-Oct.)	\$295,013.00
Change from Last Year	+2.5%
Budget (July-Oct.)	\$119,270.00
Actual (July-Oct.)	\$115,293.00
Giving vs. Budget	-6.3%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

Attendance Last Week	
8:00 am	32
10:30 am (includes children)	82
Children's Church	12

2021 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	150lbs,
Total YTD:	5,346 lbs, \$647

Christmas Mission to date: \$38.00

Presentations to the Glory of God

Spread the Good News and Children's Bulletin: Mary Bachman

Be a sponsor for \$20, send to Union UCC through your offering envelope or online marked Spread the Good News or \$8 for Children's Bulletin.

Contact Marissa to sign up for a certain date or to sponsor in honor or memory of someone.

Thank you to our team of angels and elves for their work in decorating the church for Christmas: Kathy Bonsell, Claire Kern, Deb Topp, Deb Wenner, Tiffany Lakatosh, Christian Ed Committee, Worship Committee – Susan Glosan, Edie Fella, Ron Pope, Dan Haftl, Julie & Phil Wehr, Eric & Pam Minnich family, Pastors Kayli and Kris.

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