

**St. Paul's United Church of Christ
Zion United Church of Christ**

301 West Penn Avenue, Robesonia, PA 19551
St. Paul's UCC: 610-621-5770 -- office@sprucc.org -- www.sprucc.org
Zion UCC: 610-659-2775 -- mestme@aol.com -- www.1Zion.org

*No matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey,
you're welcome here.*



*Welcome to our Combined
10:15am Worship Service
In-Person & Streaming Online*



**Sunday, December 12, 2021
3rd Sunday of Advent**

Welcome

*May God's loving presence be very real to you,
and may you receive strength and guidance today
That will enable you to handle life's challenges.*

Children's Bulletins

Crayons and activity bulletins are available in the narthex.

The activities match today's Bible readings and are designed for 3-6 & 7-12 year olds.

Biblias en Español

Biblias Bilingües en Español y Inglés están disponible en el vestíbulo narthex en la mesa de visitantes azul.

(Bilingual Bibles in Spanish & English are available in the narthex hallway on the blue visitors' table).

Nursery

Persons of all ages (including children) are very welcome to participate in the entire worship service. Due to the COVID pandemic, for the safety of children, we are currently not offering a nursery during worship. Normally, we have supervised nursery for 0-8 year olds, located on the first floor.

Junior Worship

For the safety of children, we are not offering Junior Worship during the pandemic. Normally, the option of "Junior Worship" is offered downstairs, on the 1st & 2nd Sunday of the month, following the children's sermon, for elementary age children to learn more about today's scripture lessons.

Restrooms

Restrooms are located both on the first and second floors to the left of the elevator.

Changing Tables

All four of our restrooms have changing tables. Each restroom has two "child care protection seats" to keep toddlers safe and secure while their parents use the restroom.

Water Fountains

For the safety of all, our water fountains are disabled during the pandemic.

Sunday School & Adult Faith Formation Classes

Classes for all ages are held at 9:00am.

Sunday Worship

Sunday Worship is held at 10:15am.

Prayer and Care

If you would like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list, or request a pastoral call, please call or email the church office. You are welcome to take home with you a copy of *Our Daily Bread* daily devotional booklet, located on a table in the narthex hallway.

Looking for a Church to Call Home

If you are looking for a new church family home, we would be happy for you to consider St. Paul's or Zion United Church of Christ. For more information about St. Paul's, Zion, and the UCC, we invite you to talk with our pastors, an usher, a greeter, or any member of our churches.

More Information....

Additional literature about our missions, ministries, and fellowship opportunities is located on the *Blue Visitor Table* in the narthex hallway, or contact us using the contact information on the front page of this bulletin.

Please let us know if we can be in prayer with you or if there is any way in which we can help make your worship experience more meaningful.

*{Symbols used in this bulletin: *= if able please stand; ♪# = Red Hymnal Page; ♪# = Blue Hymnal Page}*



www.sprucc.org



Free WiFi

Virtual Worship Service

Online: [Live Stream](https://www.sprucc.org) at [sprucc.org](https://www.sprucc.org) - Live or Watch & Listen Later on [St. Paul's UCC YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)
[Facebook Live](https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/) (St. Paul's) at <https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/> - Live or Watch & Listen Later
[Phone Stream](tel:1-888-649-5770) at 1-888-649-5770 - Live or Listen Later
[Zoom](https://zoom.us/j/104401368?pwd=301301): Meeting ID: 104 401 368; Passcode: 301301 (or call 1-301-715-8592) - Live Only

If you have any access problems, please let us know at 610-621-5770 or Office@sprucc.org

ORDER FOR WORSHIP

We Gather

*We are coming together as a community of faith to worship our God,
and provide for one another our love, support, and care.*

*Please Do Not move the red ribbons or sit where they are placed.
They are there for your safety and the safety of those around you to help designate social distancing.*

A TIME OF GATHERING

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

GREETING AND WELCOME

*{To center your hearts and minds,
you are invited to individually offer this prayer silently
during or before the Prelude}*

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP[®] *(Silently Before Worship Begins)*

Dearest Father, be with us as we enter into this time of worship. Today we are thinking “Joy.” We are also focusing on the “Greens” that you have created and blessed for our use. Thank you for your detailed plans as you created our earth with joy. In the name of the branch of Jesse, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen

{Those who are able, please rise}

{Please remember to wear a mask whenever singing}

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

“Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn” (verses 1, 2, 4) NCH # 107
Reprinted at the back of the bulletin.
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*INVOCATION

Leader: In the name of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: John the Baptist shouted: “Bear fruits worthy of repentance.”

People: When the people saw no need to repent, John said, “This One who is coming is able to raise up repentant people from the stones.

Leader: Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees;

People: Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

Leader: So today we search how to bear good fruit!

We Repent

*This is a time to confess our wrongdoings and neglects, ask for
God's mercy, admit our need for God's forgiving grace,
hear the assurance of our forgiveness,
and then give God our thanks and praise.*

*CALL TO CONFESSION (Leader)

We come before the altar of God to repent as John the Baptist exhorted.

*Confession of Sin (Unison)

O Holy God, between our confessions, our pride tends to escalate. Satan moves in and we are tempted to say unkind words, to neglect to do kind actions. Help us to confess these sins daily, to repent daily, so that you can rejoice over us. Help us to be like healthy plants, facing you day and night, through waking and sleeping, to be capable of producing fruit from the roots you formed at Creation. Amen

*SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

{A time to silently offer our personal prayers of confession}

{Please remember to wear a mask whenever singing}

*PRAYER FOR MERCY

"Kyrie"

Red #518

Leader (*spoken*):

Lord, have mercy upon us.

People (*sung*):

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Leader (*spoken*):

Christ, have mercy upon us.

People (*sung*):

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Leader (*spoken*):

Lord have mercy upon us.

People (*sung*):

Lord, have mercy upon us.

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*ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Leader)

Producers of good fruit, be assured that God is pleased with us. Let us continue to grow in our faith, in our wisdom, in our joy, and in God's grace and forgiveness..

*CALL TO PRAISE

Leader: Let us offer our praise to the Lord.

People: May Jesus Christ be praised.

{Please remember to wear a mask whenever singing}

*SUNG RESPONSE OF PRAISE "Let's Worship and Adore Him"

♪ Blue # 247

Let's worship and adore Him,

Let's worship and adore Him,

Let's worship and adore Him,

Christ the Lord.

*Music: Wade's Cantus Diversi; arranged: Tom Fettke
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{Please be seated}

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE - JOY

READING OF SCRIPTURE: *(Responsively)*

Scripture: Isaiah 12:2-6

Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

People: With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

Leader: And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted.

People: Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;

Leader: let this be known in all the earth.

People: Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE: *(Leader)*

We light this third Advent candle, the pink candle, for joy. Rejoice! Rejoice! The Lord is near!

{The third Advent wreath pink candle is lit.}

PRAYER:

Leader: Let us pray...

ALL: Creating God, thank you for the presence of joy as you the Father, and you the Son, and you the Holy Spirit danced together and laughed together and yearned to share all of that joy with more than yourselves so you created the earth and all that is in it and sprinkled joy over all creation. May we find that joy today. Amen

We Hear the Word of God

We seek to learn more about God's love and grace, and how we are to live our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Bible is our primary text on faith, which we consider to be scripture - sacred writings.

*We believe the Bible to be the "inspired word of God."
Gospel (which means "Good News") refers to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are Christians' most central books of the Bible.*

PROCLAMATION OF SCRIPTURE

Old Testament Lesson: [Zephaniah 3:14-20](#)

New Testament Lesson: [Philippians 4:4-7](#)

Leader: The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON: [John 15:1-17](#)

Leader: The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

{Please remember to wear a mask whenever singing}

HYMN

"All Things Bright and Beautiful" vs. 1, 3, 4

W&R # 30

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Children's Message

Sermon - "The Sacredness of the Greens"

We Respond with Thanks

*We have heard God's call and have come and worshiped,
we have confessed our sins and been assured of our forgiveness, we have
learned more about God's grace and God's will. We now respond by
re-affirming our faith in God,
praying with and for one another, trusting in God's providence in our world,*

{Those who are able, please rise}

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH - from Ephesians 4:1-6**

We shall lead a life of humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as we were called to the one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. Amen

{please be seated}

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray....

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader: Hear us, O God.

People: Your mercy is great.

LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)

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 forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE

"Let's Worship and Adore Him"

♫ Blue # 247

We lift our prayers up to Him,

We lift our prayers up to Him,

We lift our prayers up to Him,

Christ our Lord.

*Music: Wade's Cantus Diversi; arranged: Tom Fettke; Text: Benjamin D. Motz
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OFFERING TIME AND TALENT

{Prayer Needs, Joys, Opportunities for Study and Service, and other Announcements}

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Leader: It is challenging to give in faith.

People: Yet God provides when we give in faith.

Leader: It is challenging to give our purse-strings to God.

People: Give us faith and trust, O Faithful God.

RETURNING GOD'S TITHES AND PRESENTING OUR OFFERINGS

Online Giving

*{As we share in hybrid worship, there is no passing of the plate in person.
A plate is placed in the rear of the sanctuary for offerings to be placed
when arriving or departing from the sanctuary.*

*Whether worshiping in person or online,
the safest way to offer your tithe and offering to God through his church
is through St. Paul's UCC secure [Online Giving](#) option on our website at sprucc.org. [St. Paul's UCC Click Here](#)
or Zion UCC's online giving at www.1zion.org - [Zion UCC Click Here](#)
Offerings may also be mailed to St. Paul's UCC; 301 West Penn Ave; Robesonia, PA 19551
or Zion UCC; PO Box 97; Womelsdorf, PA 19567}.*

OFFERTORY

{Those who are able, please rise}

{Please remember to wear a mask whenever singing}

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE** *"Let's Worship and Adore Him"*

♫ Blue # 247

**For He alone is worthy,
For He alone is worthy
For He alone is worthy,
Christ the Lord.**

*Music: Wade's Cantus Diversi; arranged: Tom Fettle
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***OFFERTORY PRAYER** *(Leader)*

Gracious and Loving God, we thank you for all the goodness you bestow on us. Accept our gratitude as we bring our best fruits to your altar. May we be alert for your pleasure in our giving. **Amen.**

We Are Sent Out

*In response to God's love and grace,
we go out into the world to share God's Good News
through our words and actions.*

***COMMISSION**

Leader: Let us go to plant the seeds of replenishment in creation.

People: Let us do this with joy.

Leader: Let us watch for the birds and the butterflies and the bees.

People: Protect us from the bees while they do their work.

Leader: Help us to restore creation and consider it holy.

**People: We dedicate ourselves to the salvation of our own souls and the saving
of your world.**

ALL: Amen.

***BENEDICTION**

{Please remember to wear a mask whenever singing}

***THREE FOLD SUNG AMEN**

♪ **Red #558**

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***SENDING HYMN**

“Joy To The World”

W&R # 179

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*{Acolyte carries the light back into the world, leading us,
as we now go to carry God's light and love back into the world.}*

POSTLUDE

TIME OF FELLOWSHIP

ALL are invited

to share in a time of Refreshments and Fellowship
in the downstairs Miller Fellowship Hall



The Altar Flowers are Sponsored by

Tim and Sheri Rowe

In Honor Of

Rev. Dr. Ben Motz and Rev. Mary Etta Mest



The Flow of the Worship Service

Our worship service has an intentional order to it. The flow of worship is called the liturgical movement. The movement reminds us weekly of our journey in faith of moving from being separated from God by sin, to being restored by God's grace as disciples of Christ. It is based on the sixth chapter of the Biblical book of Isaiah.

- (1) God welcomes us and invites us
- (2) We respond to God's call by worshipping Him
- (3) We confess our need for God's forgiveness and grace
- (4) We are assured of God's forgiveness and grace
- (5) We learn more about God's will through scripture, song, and sermon
- (6) We grow closer to God and one another through prayer
- (7) We give God thanks by offering our time, talent, and treasure
- (8) God sends us into the world to share His love and grace with others



Worship Service Resource Credits

Biblical quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible (1989) by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

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- ② *Gathered By Love* by Lavon Baylor. (1994). United Church Press; Cleveland, OH.
- ③ Occasional Services; A Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. (1982).
- ③ Reprinted with permission from *Sundays and Seasons*. (2021). Augsburg Fortress.
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- ⑤ scouting.org - resources for Boy Scouts of America
- ⑥ Reprinted with permission from *Worship Ways of the United Church of Christ*. (2013).
- ⑦ *Lecturn Resource*. (2014). Logos Productions, Inc.; Grove Heights, MN.
- ⑦ Edmonds, Robert Lee (Editor). (2008). *In Our Own Way; Living a Scouting Life Through Faith; A Handbook of Prayer and Devotion*. Dallas, TX: Red Honor Press
- ⑧ Reprinted with Permission from *Lecturn Resource*. 2014. Logos Productions, Inc., Inver Grove Heights, MN.
- ⑨ Miller, Earl D. (1994). *Consecrating Stewards*. Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ.
- ⑩ The Rev. Dr. Benjamin Motz
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About Today

Church Season: Advent - is a season of preparation for the coming of Christ: (1) the second coming of Christ; (2) the preparation for the anniversary of Jesus' birth on Christmas; and (3) the reminder to be daily aware of Christ's presence for the Kingdom of God is near. The season of Advent takes place during the four weeks before Christmas.

Color of the Paraments (cloths on the altar, pulpit, and lecturn):

Blue - symbolizes the hope found in the anticipated coming of Christ

Violet - symbolizes royalty and penitent preparation for Christ our King, who offers forgiveness

Rose/Pink - symbolizes joy, as expressed by Jesus' mother Mary

The suggested scripture lessons are from the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), which selects passages throughout the Bible over a three year cycle. The RCL is the most common lectionary used by Christian churches. We are in **Year C**, which emphasizes the Gospel of Luke.

The Bible is in two sections: Old Testament - OT (scripture prior to Christ's birth), located in the first 2/3 of the Bible; and New Testament - NT (about Christ & early church). The first four books of the NT are called the "Gospels," which Christians consider the most central books of the Bible.

This Sunday, December 12 -- Lectionary Reading for the 3rd Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6 Philipians 4:4-7 Luke 3:7-18

Zephaniah

This OT book is a revelation to the minor prophet Zephaniah, whose name means "God hides," "God shelters," "God protects," or "God treasures." Zephaniah is the great-grandson of king Hezekiah and perhaps a disciple of the major prophet Isaiah. Zephaniah is prophesying during the reign of Josiah (640-609 B.C.), and was a contemporary of the major prophet Jeremiah. Zephaniah tells of the coming judgement of God over the whole world (including Jerusalem), because of corruption and idolatry; however, following this judgement will be rejoicing in God's salvation.

Isaiah

The book of Isaiah (OT) is attributed to three prophets. The first of whom is from where the book gets its name, and is about Isaiah's call to become a prophet and his prophecy that Jerusalem will face God's judgement regarding its immorality in order to be God's Holy City (chaps. 1-39, written 738-688 B.C.), the second is about living in exile in Babylon (chaps. 40-55, written 597-539 B.C.), and the third is about the return from exile to Judah and the rebuilding of the Temple (chaps. 56-66, written 520-515 B.C.). A prophet is one who is divinely appointed by God to lead and instruct.

The Letter of Paul to the Philippians

This epistle (letter) (NT) was written by the Apostle Paul from prison in the 60s A.D. Paul and Timothy are sending this letter to the church in Philippi, thanking and rejoicing with them for their steadfast faithfulness, prayers, and support, cautioning them of missionaries who focus on physical wants and needs, and encouraging them to stay true and united to his and Timothy's teachings and example. Paul was a Christian, Jew, Pharisee, Roman citizen, and church leader, who had a direct encounter with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus after Jesus' ascension into heaven. Paul wrote more of the NT than any other person.

The Gospel According to Luke

The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles is attributed to Luke "the beloved physician," written around 59-90 A.D. Not having met Jesus personally, Luke undertook the task of "investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account" of Jesus Christ, "so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed."

Next Sunday, December 19 -- Lectionary Reading for the 4th Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a; Psalm 8:1-7; Hebrew 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)



Link to Website's
Upcoming Events