

GLORY



to God in the highest

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2340 State Street, East Petersburg, PA 17520
717-569-1632

Website: www.trinityeastpete.org

E-Mail: secretary@trinityeastpete.org

The Rev. Dr. Christopher M. Rankin, Pastor

The Rev. Harry G. Royer, Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr.Carolyn Call, Covenanted Minister of Mission

Mr. Michael Slechta, Director of Music and SOT Choir Director

Mrs. Christine Oetama, Organist

Mrs. Carmen Richards, Pianist

Mrs. Carol Kratz, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Sean McKelvey, Preschool Director

CHRISTMAS EVE

10:30 P.M.

SILENT REFLECTION

As on the first day of creation, on Christmas Day the Word illumines the world, shining forth to bring all things into being. Tonight we celebrate the incarnate Word, God becoming flesh to live among us in the person of Jesus Christ then and now. Emboldened by the good news of Christ's birth, along with the shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and all witnesses to the light of Christ, we declare to the world that we have indeed seen and been transformed by the arrival of "the salvation of our God." O come, let us adore!

WELCOME ALL VISITORS! We welcome all who worship with us. May the joy of Christ's presence and the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with peace and hope! We are honored by your presence and trust that you will join us again in the praise and worship of God. Please sign our guest book. **Welcome to the Eucharist!** All who seek to follow Jesus and who seek the gifts Jesus offers us are invited to share in this sacrament of Holy Communion. *Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.*

PRELUDES

Good News From Heaven the Angels Bring

Pachelbel

Nancy Enders, organ

Christmas Carol Medley

Jeff Hackenberger, violin; Nancy Enders, piano

COMING FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

THE PROPHETIC WORD Isaiah 9:2-7; 60:1-3

(Lighting of the altar candles)

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Our time of waiting is over. Christmas is here. Our days of preparation are completed. What has not been done will now have to be left undone. We have witnessed to this very hour, this very day, and we hope that the world has heard the good news which we have spoken.

Our circle of Advent candles is lit; now tonight we light the central candle, reminding us that Christ is the light of the world, the center of our lives, the shining beacon of hope for all the universe. Christ is born. Praise God!

Let us pray together.

We thank you, God, for your gift of Jesus Christ to the entire world. We thank you that Christ's coming makes hope, peace, joy, and love possible for every person in every nation. Encourage us to do our part to bring goodwill and peace to our families, our churches, our neighborhoods, and the world. Now let your Spirit put us in touch with you, the living God, through the words and music we hear tonight. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

ADORATION AND PRAISE

HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

No. 112

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM and INVITATION TO THE TABLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** (sung)

We turn to you, O God, in the midst of our lives.

We gather at your table to remember your mighty works of old.

Come to the table where Christ meets you. Eat, rejoice, and be glad!

CONFESSION OF SINS

CALL TO CONFESSION

What a rare gift this season brings. God loves us so much that God came to us in Jesus. Let us humble ourselves and confess our sins before the God of love.

(SEATED OR KNEELING)

SILENT CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN

Let us confess in the presence of God and one another.

God of grace and glory, illumine our lives this night. Too often, we have lost sight of your guiding star—we have recently been far too harried; we have forgotten the message of peace, hope, joy, and love, born this beautiful night; we have neglected our relationship with you, which draws us to this place; we have neglected our relationships with others, which nurture and strengthen us. Forgive us, we pray—when we walk in darkness, when we no longer reflect your light and your glory. Bathe us in your glorious light; inspire us to live lives of love and joy. Stir our hearts to return to you, through the wondrous gift of Christ born in us anew each day. Amen.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

HYMN OF PRAISE

The First Nowell (verses 1 & 2)

No. 118

THE WORD OF GOD

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 52:7-10

Isaiah proclaims news of great joy: "Your God reigns!" Just as God saved the people from oppression in Egypt, God delivers Israel from exile. All the earth will witness the saving acts of God.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

THE SECOND LESSON

Hebrews 1:1-12

This letter opens with a lofty declaration of Jesus' preeminent status as the Son through whom God created the world and through whom our sins are cleansed. God speaks to us now through the Son, who is exalted even above the angels.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE 2:1-20

Glory be to You, O Lord

THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD

Praise be to You, O Christ

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, and has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PEOPLE'S OFFERING

VOCAL SOLO *O Holy Night* Adam/John Dwight/Thomas Greenfield
Theodore Slechta; Michael Slechta, Pianist

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Holy God, your beauty shines forth from the manger and your love flows from the cross. As you gather us around these signs of your love among us, warm us to extend your care among the hungry and all in need through these gifts we now present to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord!

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Mighty God, Wonderful Counselor, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. In ancient days, you created us in your image to be reflections of your glory. When we fell short and dimmed the brilliance of your light shining through us, you held our hands and walked with us out of the garden into all the corners of the earth. When we are afraid to look upon your glory, you came as a quiet traveler, as a burning bush, and as a pillar of light. You called us to be people of light, to walk no longer in darkness, and always, you light our way. Even when we walk in darkness, you shine your light and offer your grace, awaiting our return to you. In the fullness of time, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reveal your glory and grace. And so, with your people on earth and all the angels in heaven, we praise your holy name and join their unending hymn.

HYMN

The First Nowell (verse 6)
(Congregation may be seated)

No. 118

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD

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.

COMMUNICATION

As this grain was once scattered in the fields, and has come together in one bread, so we, with different needs and hopes, come together as one, for we share one bread.

The Bread of Life, broken for us.

The cup which we share is the cup of the New Covenant written in our hearts and witnessed by Jesus.

The Cup of Blessing, poured out for us and for the many.

(Those who wish to come forward will be invited by the pastor. We will commune by each section. The pastor will give you the wafer and you will dip it in the chalice held by the assistant. Grape juice is in the chalice with the cross and wine is in the other chalice. If you need the pastor and assistant to come to you, please indicate that to someone near you or the pastor. If you do not wish to come forward, you are invited to use the packaged elements in the narthex and commune in your pew. The pastor will offer a blessing after all have communed.)

POST COMMUNION PRAYERS

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

(SEATED OR KNEELING)

Joining our voices with the heavenly host and Christians throughout time and space. Let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need

Your spirit calls your church to rejoice in Christ's birth. As we gather at the manger, help us see your face in all babies needing comfort and care. Equip the church in the nurture and encouragement of all children. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

The rocks and streams proclaim your praise. Attune us to the joyful sounds and groaning of your creation. Stir us to tend the earth wisely, that the whole earth may dwell in abundance and peace. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Your messengers declare your joy to the world. Embolden leaders and nations to make your justice and peace known throughout the earth. Uphold justice advocates and social service providers who risk their safety to help others. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You choose those regarded as lowly to tell the good news of your love. Pour out your mercy and care on all who are sick, grieving, struggling, and the elderly who live alone. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You abide with your people in times of trouble. Accompany families and children who have nowhere to turn. Strengthen this congregation and local ministries in their care for those fleeing danger, abuse, or neglect. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let us pray together.

We thank you, wondrous God, for Jesus, God with us, in these gifts of bread and wine. As we have shared this feast of love, strengthen us to share your love with all the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

HYMN

Silent Night

No. 101

Please stand when all candles are lit.

The pastor will direct you to raise your candle at the beginning of the fourth verse.

SCRIPTURE READING

St. John 1:1-14

Please extinguish your candles

HYMN

Joy to the World!

No. 120

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

O Come All Ye Faithful

Martin

Nancy Enders, organ

CATCH THE VISION & SHARE THE JOY

The Chancel Flowers are given by Jane Portser in honor of our son Chip's birthday & Chip and Alaina's wedding anniversary.

WORSHIP SERVICES ON DECEMBER 26: There will be two services on Sunday, December 26: 8:00 a.m. Service of Word and Sacrament; 10:30 a.m. Service of Lessons and Carols. We invite you to join us for Christian Education classes for all ages at 9:00 a.m.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be closed on December 27.

Ministering Tonight

Pastor/Celebrant

Rev. Dr. Christopher M. Rankin

Lector/Assistant

Diane Rice

Ushers/Greeters

Paula Dennes, Denise Huggins, Karen Olley

Thank you to all who are assisting with our service this evening! A special thanks to the Sound of Trinity Choir, Nancy Enders, Jeff Hackenberger, and Michael & Theodore Slechta.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DECEMBER 26 SERVICES: We will continue to celebrate Christmas at both services on December 26. The service of lessons and carols will be at the 10:30 a.m. service. This service is adaptation of the Festival of Lessons & Carols at King's College in Cambridge.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be closed on December 27.

DEVOTIONALS: The January-March edition of *These Days* is available in the Narthex or on the lower level by the portico entrance.

2022 CHANCEL FLOWERS AND WORSHIP AIDS SPONSORS

Contact Carol in the church office to sign-up for chancel flowers and worship aids for 2022. We recently changed florists and so the new price for flowers will be \$60. The price for worship aids will remain at \$26. Chancel Flowers dates available are: **January 9 & 16**. Worship Aids are available **January 2, 9 & 16**.

If you have any flower cans from recent chancel flowers, please return them to the church!!!

THE JANUARY PARISH POST is available on both floors of the church building.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE IN THE NORTH WINDOW is given in memory of Leon L. & Ethel Gruber by son Greg, daughter Sharon Armstrong, and granddaughter Jessica.

THE CHRISMON TREE: The Chrismons on the small tree in the stairwell were made by the late Edythe Geib. Several people have asked about the Chrismon tree. The term “Chrismon” comes from the Latin “Christi monnogramma” which simply means “monogram of Christ”. Therefore, a Chrismon is a Christian symbol that represents Christ. There is a descriptive list of the various Chrismons next to the tree.

THE ADVENT CANDLES AND CHRIST CANDLE are dedicated to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Grace M. Dodson (mother) and Dolores A. Dodson (aunt) of Donna Wolf, given by the family and friends. The candle stand and wreath are in memory of S. Leona Wolf, mother of the late John Wolf.

THE PEW CANDLE HOLDERS, made by John Barr, were given by John and Dolly Barr.

THE NATIVITY SCENE ON THE FRONT LAWN was made by Mike Wagner.

THE CRECHE ON THE LOWER LEVEL BY THE ELEVEATOR was made by Mike Wagner.

CHURCH COVENANT IN THE MIDST OF THE PANDEMIC

As an individual who attends Trinity United Church of Christ I covenant to work with my fellow church members, family and friends to keep our community safe and healthy.

I covenant to . . .

Wear a face mask as a symbol of love and care for others.

Sit six feet apart from others, leaving room for God to work in the in-between spaces.

Clean up after myself in the spaces I use because germs are everywhere I go too!

Honor and respect the sacredness of each person in this space and to stay home if I don't feel well or have been around someone who is waiting the results of a COVID test, knowing God is with us wherever we are, whether inside or outside the walls of the church.

Work together with my church family in creating a safe and healthy space to gather for worship, fellowship, or church activities as one body, united in God's love.

Acknowledge the hard work ahead, and the commitment to care for one another.

Together, we as the church, covenant to care and love one another in new and different ways as we:

- Share God's love with our community
- Serve God's children
- Bring healing and wholeness to those in need
- Share the Gospel in liturgy, music and study



St. Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!’

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

DECEMBER 25, 2021

(C)

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD/
CHRISTMAS DAY

FIRST LESSON. Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

SECOND LESSON. Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. (For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire." But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." And, "In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end.")

GOSPEL. John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

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