

December 7, 2025
10:15 AM
Second Sunday in Advent
Communion

THEME PARAGRAPH for bulletin cover:

In today's gospel text from Matthew 3, we meet John the Baptist preaching an urgent message in the wilderness. With his call to repentance, John pleads for change and transformation. He invites the people of Judea to join him in preparing the way of the Lord. "Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees" (Matthew 3:10), he says. Can we see John's words as less like a threat and more like a promise? The destruction from the swinging axe is not the end of the story. Sometimes it is necessary to fell existing structures to make way for new growth, which will refuse to be contained.

+ GATHERING +

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE At the Coming of Christmas - Nicolas Lebègue

WELCOME AND GREETING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

God is here, and God sees through every defense that fools the world. Since we cannot hide from God, there is nothing left to do but to be honest with each other and humble before God.

So, in humility, we confess our sins.

God, we have acted helpless, even when you called us to action. We have resisted your truth, even when our lies were exhausting. We have behaved as though we were alone, even when you were beside us. God, we have believed we were dying, even when you helped us grow.

God knows we can never undo the sins of this world.

The stories of a painful past still echo here today.

Yet before our first mistakes, God perfected the plan for salvation. God forgives your sins, all of them. Even when signs of our old lives remain, God's forgiveness is still at work.

God sets us free to chart a new path.

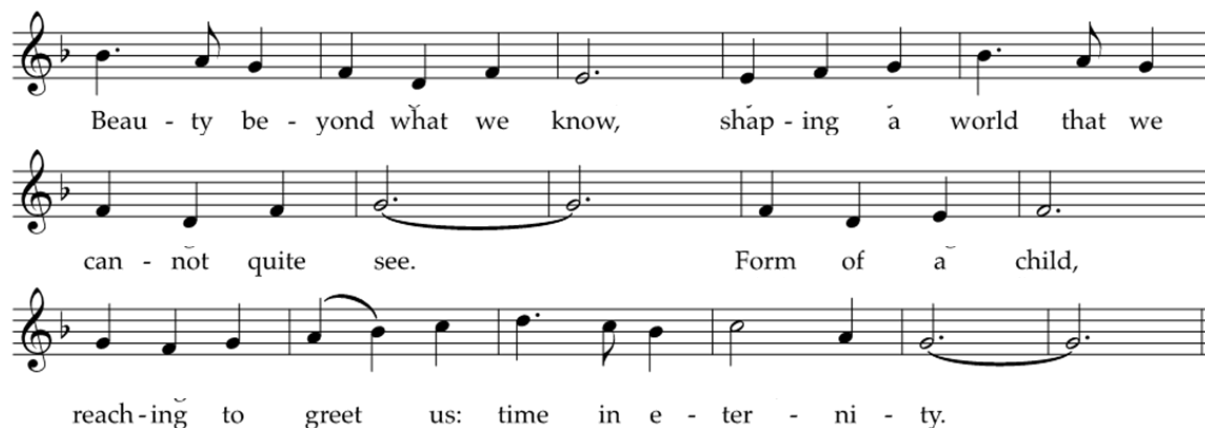
Thanks be to God! Amen

OPENING HYMN ELW 250 Blessed Be the God of Israel

GREETING

Peace to you and welcome,
from the God who grows severed trees,
the Savior who healed withered bodies,
the Spirit who gives wild new growth.
And also with you.

ADVENT HYMN God of the Starlight and Moon



LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

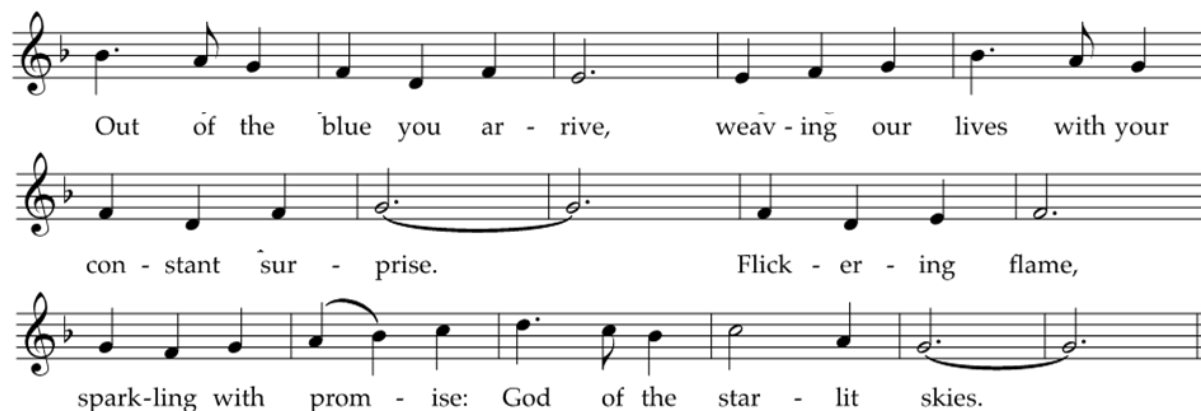
When deep blue darkness steps aside for softly spreading flame,
we take comfort from the warmth of living light.

This candle on our Advent wreath represents the joy of life, which spreads as we share it.
The unpredictable flicker of life brings comfort even when the future remains a mystery.

In time every person will know the warmth of God's love.
But not yet, not fully.

The second candle is lit.

ADVENT HYMN God of the Starlight and Moon



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son and the peace he brings – a peace that nurtures growth in us and the world around us. Open our eyes and our hearts to see him when he comes, out of the blue. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

+ WORD +

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

READING: Isaiah 11:1-10

At the conclusion of the reading:

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Word of God, come down on earth, liv - ing rain from
heav'n de - scend - ing; touch our hearts and bring to birth
faith and hope and love un - end - ing. Word al - might - y,
we re - vere you; Word made flesh, we long to hear you.

GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12

At the beginning of the reading:

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At the conclusion of the reading:

This is the gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 711 O Day of Peace

STATEMENT OF FAITH *for the season of Advent*

**We are an Advent people,
a people of hope.**

**For us, Advent is a time of waiting,
and so we wait.**

We wait for the coming of the One

**who is the fulfillment of God's promise,
the fulfillment of hope,
the declaration that we have been redeemed.**

**Even so, we are not a naïve people.
We know that the world in which we live
will continue to be filled with pain and sorrow.
We know that hatred and violence will continue to exist.
We know that death and separation will continue to be a part of our lives.**

**But because we are an Advent people,
we know that none of these things will win in the end.**

**The Holy One is coming,
to make holy once again
all that was, is, and ever will be.**

**And in our waiting and our hoping,
we work and worship,
pray and play,
in all things hoping that peace, love and joy will show up,
out of the blue,
in our lives and in our world,
now and forever.
Amen**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

**God of grace,
hear our prayer.**

**Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.
Amen.**

+ MEAL +
God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

**People, Look East -Krug
St. John's Handbell Choir**

OFFERTORY



I O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel - come you a - right?

Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light!

Oh, kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, your lamp with - in my breast

to do in spir - it low - ly all that may please you best.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray.

God, we cherished what we thought belonged only to us: our money and our time and our families and our freedom.

Yet in a moment, we recognize that every truly good thing was a treasure we had taken from your open hand. We thought such treasures were ours to earn and to own.

You grow what we give away. So we give you these gifts as a sign of your love and faithfulness. We pray in the name of the One for whom we wait, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Holy Jesus, be our guest.

For you are already here.

God is with you.

And also with you.

People of God,
lift up your hearts in praise.

We lift them to our God.

Let us give thanks
to the God of our salvation.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION ELW 490 Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

TABLE BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Please pray with me.

Jesus, the world looks different from your table. Here, there are no strangers, and grace is never a surprise. Life always thrives in the desert, and a promise never shades with doubt. Soon as we rise from this table, our memories of this goodness fade. Bring us back every day to your promises: astonish us again. Amen.

+ SENDING +

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

As you leave from this place, adjust your expectations to God's promises.

There is friendship after loneliness,
there is hope after every last breath.

There is already life in the desert.
There is even delight in decline.

**For we tell the story
of new life from the grave.**

In the world drained of color
God arrives out of the blue.

SENDING HYMN ELW 249 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's cry

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to wait and watch.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE Puer Nobis - David Schack

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PRAYER LIST

Please continue to keep the following people connected to our congregation in your prayers: Bob Moran, Leonard Gibeon, David Mounts, Ed & Billie Schanely, Steve Keyser, Andrew Breuninger, Renee Fels, Rebecca Jellen, Richard Ditzler, Joy Miller, Alyson Harvey, Audrey Sell, Marie Wolfe, Erik Ockenlaender, Bob Ernst, Sr., Mary Eberle, Tom Gracie, the Isett family, Brandon Blanchard, Gladys Kazalonis, Elizabeth Brossett and family, Fred Orrik, Nem Nonkovic, and John Moore.

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, December 8	6pm Leadership Christmas gathering
Wednesday, December 10	7pm Confirmation Learning
Saturday, December 13	9am-2pm Christmas Bazaar
	10am Wreaths Across America
	at Friedens Union Cemetery
Sunday, December 14	9am Sunday School
	10:15am Worship and Annual Meeting
	Following worship Caroling



Scan to sign up
to go caroling!!

Sign up to assist with worship on Christmas Eve or to go Caroling
on December 14th following worship
outside PB's office door.

Or try one of our QR codes to add your name to the list.



Scan to sign up
to help
Christmas Eve

Adding Machine Needed The mint duty team is in need of one or two adding machines to replace the ones they are using which are no longer working well. If you have one or would like to purchase one to donate, that would be helpful.

St. John's Annual Meeting will be during worship next Sunday, December 14th. Copies of the proposed 2026 budget are available in the parlor and narthex. Please take time to review the proposed budget and direct any questions to Mike Herm, treasurer, BEFORE the annual meeting. Mike will be available after worship today and Dec 7.

Advent Tree Gifts

Pennsburg Manor gifts need to be returned to St. John's – *wrapped and with the tag attached* – by Sunday, December 14.

The online gift registry with gift suggestions for the Rev. Harvey Davis Family Fund through KenCrest is at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B084FA8AD2CAAFD0-60605686-advent#/> The gifts from the online registry need to be returned to St. John's – *unwrapped* – by Sunday, December 14.

We appreciate your generosity in helping residents of Pennsburg Manor and children served by KenCrest have a wonderful Christmas this year!

Our 3rd annual Wreaths Across America ceremony will be held at Friedens cemetery on Saturday, December 13th at 10:00 am.

For \$17 you can sponsor a wreath to be placed on a veteran's headstone. You can either place it yourself during the ceremony or have a volunteer place it for you. When ordering, please make sure it says Sponsor Group: PA0778 - Perkiomen Valley VFW Post 5954. Scan the QR code or visit online at:

<https://wreathsassamerica.org/pages/175562>

For more information contact Sharon Shipe at 215-896-1324 or Shipe112@comcast.net.

This fall, the Reformed churches in the Upper Perkiomen Valley will offer a more contemplative, mid-week worship opportunity – all are welcome!



3rd Wednesdays from 6-7 PM

Dec 17 – New Goshenhoppen UCC, East Greenville

Jan 21 – Friedens UCC, Sumneytown

Valley Choral Society presents Illuminare on Saturday, Dec. 13 at 3pm at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Pennsburg and Dec. 14 at 3pm at Trinity Lutheran Church in Perkasio.

Longest Night Services



WORSHIP CENTERED ON PEACE
HOPE AND HEALING

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

2:00 PM – ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN

1244 St. Paul’s Church Road, Pennsburg, PA

6:00 PM – ST. JOHN’S LUTHERAN

3104 Main Street, Green Lane, PA

Join us at St. John’s

Christmas Eve Wed, December 24

3:00 PM - Family Christmas worship with carols,
communion and special children’s message

7:00 PM - Traditional Christmas worship with
candlelight and communion

10:00 PM - Traditional festival Christmas worship
with choirs, candlelight and communion

Christmas Season

Sun. December 28

Service of Lessons and Carols at 10:15 AM

Sun. January 4

Service of Epiphany at 10:15 AM

