



GOOD SHEPHERD UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

3940 Mountain Road, Slatington, PA 18080 610-767-9680

DECEMBER 3, 2023

Glance at the Week Ahead at Good Shepherd

Office Hours: T and W 11 am – 3 pm

Sun:	9:00 am	Faith Formation
	10:00 am	Worship Service <i>Scrip Orders Due</i>
	11:00 am	Youth Fellowship
	11:00 am	Choir Practice until 3:00 pm
Tue:	7:00 pm	Choir Practice 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Fri:	7:00 pm	AA Back to Basics
Sun:	9:00 am	Faith Formation
	10:00 am	Worship Service <i>Scrip Orders Delivered</i>
	11:00 am	Youth Fellowship

First-Time Guests

Welcome to Good Shepherd, an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. We are delighted that you joined us for worship. It is our prayer that you will experience the presence of God and know the love and peace that comes from sharing God's Spirit. If you are looking for a spiritual home, please consider Good Shepherd and speak with Pastor James.

REV. JAMES D. ROBISON, JR. can be contacted at the office (610) 767-9680, his mobile phone (484-571-6083), or via his email address at <jamdarrob@gmail.com>.

Our Church Staff

Pastor	Rev. James D. Robison, Jr.
Preschool Director	Karen Weaver
Organist	Yezi Chen
Choir Director	Beth Kutzner
Secretary	Eileen Andrews
Treasurer	Tammy White
Financial Secretary	Colleen Shields
Sexton	Matt Shields

Upcoming Events in the Life of Our Church.

- **The Youth Ensemble** will be presenting **special music during the 3:00 PM Christmas Eve service.** All youth ages 5 and up **are invited to participate.** Littles aged 3 and 4 may participate with an adult present.
- **The Chancel Choir will be presenting a Christmas Cantata on December 17th,** titled Touched by a Child, Touched by a King. If you would be willing to lend your voice, we will be rehearsing **today until 3 pm (lunch provided), with extended choir rehearsals on December 5 and December 12 from 6:30-8:30 pm.**
- **VALOR dinner** will be delivered **December 17.**
- We are **collecting 200 cans of corn** for **Northern Lehigh Food Bank** for **Christmas.** Corn needs to be at the church **by today December 3.**
- **Gingerbread House Fundraiser** for Faith Formation. Create one at home and add it to the displays decorated by the children. 25 cents=1 vote, which will be tallied on Christmas Eve.
- **Poinsettia Orders due Today.** Order forms in Narthex.
- **Candelabra Flower Orders due Sunday December 17.** Order forms in Narthex.



Anniversaries

Dec 3-Richard & Penny (Bowers) Keen
Dec 3-Allen & Robin (Zancofsky) Lichtenwalner

Our Worship Leaders Today.

Acolyte	TBD
Head Deacon	Jim George
Lay Reader	Eileen Andrews
Greeter	Madeline Balliet & Donna Keener
Altar Guild	Linda Coffin
Media Production Team	Deb Craig, Riley Fallon, Tracey Gursky, Eric Hantz, Bryan Horninger, Evan Horninger and Beth Kutzner



Altar Flowers are to Glory of God and in Memory of Arthur Brobst by Eileen & Randy Andrews.

The **Bulletins** are to the Honor and Glory of God.

The **Christmas Tree** in the Sanctuary is given in loving memory of Paul C. Roth, by Kevin & Tina Minnich & family.

Good Shepherd Prayer Care List

Family of...Dale Kern, Sr.

Family and Friends needing prayer: Loretta Conway Betz, David Blose, Nancy Conway, Tracey Gursky, The Hourt Family, Tina Conway Hunsicker, Jamie Klotz, Judy Mack, Dan Smith, Leona Zimmerman, Jane Achey, Gail Bell, Jim Craig, Rob Davis, Doug Farber, Lisa Gilly, Bonnie Kleppinger, Shawn Kress, Kevin Kroboth, Wayne Kuhns, Faith Mondrick Lauer, Chris Newhard, Connie Renner, Eleanor Schlinkman, Kylie Schneider, Alice Schnell, Sallie Solt, Mary Storm, Rich Taylor, MaryEllen White

Homebound Members: Marge Bass, Mary Bilheimer, Kay Costenbader, Dennis Derr, Betty Humanick, **Richard Kuntz**, and Susan 'Tillie' Waller.

All the young men and women serving our country: Colby Adams, Anthony Babb, Sean Bolza, Dalton Housenick, Kira (Kern) Kelsey, Michael Kelsey, Rebecca McMichael, Adam Moyer, Jacqueline Moyer, Spencer Perkins, Nicholas Sander, Benjamin Schaffer, and Janel Tracy.

Prayers for Students in higher education: Megan Bankes at Glenville State WV, Asa Blynn at Kutztown Univ., Dylan Coffin at Moravian Univ., Carissa Fallon at Penn State Univ., Riley Fallon at Penn State Univ., Ben Griffith at Wilkes Univ., Emma Hope at Kutztown Univ., Evan Horninger at DeSales Univ., Olivia Horninger at Cedar Crest College, Mitchell Hourt at Moravian Univ., Jade Rice at Bloomsburg Univ., Brody Ritter at the University of Delaware, Caden Shields at LCCC, Cameron Shields at Kutztown Univ., Caleb Sommers at Kutztown Univ., Calista Smoyer at West Virginia Univ., Gabriella Smoyer at Cedar Crest College, Luke Zook at Villanova Univ.

Offerings Mission Calendar

Our Mission focus for **December** is **AIDS Awareness.** Dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection and mourning those who have died of the disease. Objectives are to expand the visibility of timely and relevant Federal HIV policies, programs and resources to the American Public; to assess starting or increasing the use of new media tools by government, minority-serving organizations and other community partners to extend the reach of HIV programs to communities at greatest risk; to increase knowledge about HIV and access to HIV services for people most at risk for or living with HIV. www.hiv.gov or www.facebook.com/HIVgov

Joyful Noise Offering

Joyful Noise Offering is an outreach mission of the church that goes to individuals or families in need. Please drop your contributions into the red bucket during the offering.

Financial Update Offering & (Attendance)

Nov 05-	\$3,949.00	E-Giving	\$536.27	(90)
Nov 12-	\$1,663.00	E-Giving	\$222.16	(77)
Nov 19-	\$1,518.00	E-Giving	\$374.93	(63)
Nov 26-	\$1,494.05	E-Giving	\$114.19	(61)

Online offering at **Tithe.ly**
or text **GIVE to 610-615-7657**



Birthdays

Dec 3-	Sallie Solt
Dec 6-	Maddy Rex
Dec 8-	Dorothy Arnold
Dec 8-	Evan Hantz
Dec 8-	Carol Oswald
Dec 9-	Marie Bachman
Dec 9-	Shirley Blynn
Dec 9-	Mason Meinhardt
Dec 9-	Joshua Richardson
Dec 9-	Calista Smoyer

ORDER OF WORSHIP

DECEMBER 3, 2023 – FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

NOTE: People's responses in **bold**; * rise in body or in spirit

Gathering for God's WORD

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE ~ *Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart*

* SOLEMN DECLARATION

Our service is in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

* HYMN ~ *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

#119

* LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE ~ **Tammy, Holden, and Hatcher White**

Lighting a candle in the darkness helps us find our way. In darkness we lose direction. We cannot see where we have been or where we are going. A single candle, flickering brightly, helps us find our way again.

“Stir up Your might, and come to save us. Restore us, O God; let Your face shine, that we may be saved” (Psalm 80:2b-3)

[The first candle is lit]

Brightly, so that all may know

How one candle shows the way

Making our darkness bright as God's Day.

Restore us, O God; let Your face shine, that we may be saved.

Let us pray, **Dear God, on this first Sunday in Advent, let this light shine brightly as the days grow shorter, so that we will be ready for Your face to shine upon us at Christmas. In the Savior's name we pray. Amen.**

* HYMN ~ *One Candle Is Lit* (Verse 1)

#128

Preparing Our Hearts for God's WORD

* CALL TO CONFESSION

Like a faded, dry leaf that the wind blows away, our sins dry us up; faded and brittle, we are carried off by the wrongs we have done. Yet God loves us still and can restore and renew us with the water of life. Confident in God's mercies, let us confess our sin.

* CONFESSION

God-with-us, even in Advent, we confess that You can seem far away. You are hidden when we need You near. In our hurt, doubt, and fear, we do not try to draw closer to You; instead, we lash out ~ against You, our neighbor, even those we love. Forgive us, we pray, and come to save us! Let Your face shine until our tears are dried, our sins are faded, and our hope is restored. After all, we belong to You, and in Your hands, we can be made new. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

* ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The grace of God, given to us in Christ Jesus, strengthens us to the end so that we may be blameless when Christ comes again. Thanks be to God, who is faithful and has called us into the fellowship of the Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord! **Praise be to God. Amen!**

* *Angels We Have Heard on High* (chorus only)

#155

CHILDREN'S TIME

BLESSINGS

Hearing God's WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Shine Your light on Your WORD so that by Your Spirit we might see Your wonder. Amen!

A **READING** from Psalm 80:1-3, 17-19 [NRSV]

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us! Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved. Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself. Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name. Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

RESPONSE

The WORD of the Lord. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Reflecting on God's WORD

HOMILY ~ Where Are You, God?

SPECIAL MUSIC ~ *Candles of Advent*

Chancel Choir

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father which 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.

Responding to God's WORD

INVITATION TO SHARING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

God has enriched us in every way ~ in speech, knowledge, and spiritual gifts. **Amen.**

OFFERTORY ~ *This is My Father's World*

* DOXOLOGY

#47

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God above, ye heavenly host
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Faithful God, we thank You that Christ is being revealed in every time and place. Strengthen our testimony and spiritual gifts; increase generosity in us, we pray, as we wait for the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

HOLY COMMUNION

Luke, the evangelist, wrote of our risen Lord, that when he was at the table with two of his disciples, he took bread and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, and their eyes were opened, and they recognized him in the breaking of the bread.

In company with all believers in every time and beyond time, we come to this table to know the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread.

Holy are You, Eternal One. You brought light into being, casting stars in the sky, and created the evolving earth and all that dwells within it. You sent Your own child, Jesus, who reached into unexpected places, calling women beyond the limits of their times; equipping men for nurturing love; welcoming children into Your holy embrace. And so, we recall that on the night of betrayal and desertion, the Light of the world took bread, broke it and gave it to the disciples saying ... and we proclaim **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

God, You transform all that is before You so that at the touch of Your grace we are never the same. You illumine and bring light to all peoples; Light to the nations;

Light into our hearts; Light on our WAY. Transform, illumine, and bless these ordinary gifts of bread and fruit of the vine into the extraordinary presence of Christ-with-us. **Amen.**

Through the broken bread **we participate in the body of Christ. Amen.**

Through the cup of blessing **we participate in the new life Christ offers. Amen.**

AGNUS DEI ~ song a 'Capella

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We have been fed, Holy One, by Your presence. We await Your birth into our hearts. May Your light shine within us so that we may walk side-by-side and welcome the birth of Your Son. Amen.

* **HYMN** ~ *Come, O Long-expected Jesus* #125

Living God's WORD

* **THE COMMISSION, BENEDICTION, AND THREE-FOLD AMEN** #312

POSTLUDE ~ *Sing of a God in Majestic Divinity*

Liturgy from *Feasting on the Word, Worship Companion, Year B, Volume 1*

CCLI#1783708

SIGN UP SHEETS IN THE NARTHEX FOR:

CHRISTMAS EVE ACOLYTES FOR 3:00 PM, 5:00 PM, AND 7:00 PM

CHRISTMAS EVE LAY READER FOR 7:00 PM SERVICE

CHRISTMAS EVE GREETER FOR 5:00 PM SERVICE

SNOW REMOVAL VOLUNTEERS – DECEMBER 2023 THROUGH APRIL 2024

2024 ALTAR GUILD, ELDERS AND DEACONS MONTHLY SIGN UP

2024 FLOWER AND BULLETIN CALENDAR SIGN UP SHEETS