



***Fourth Sunday of Advent
Christmas Eve Morning Service
December 24, 2023
Guest Speaker - Pastor Peter Kaltenbaugh
Assisted by Colten Custer***

***Trinity United Church of Christ
600 Main Street
Berlin, Pennsylvania***

**Prelude *Variations on "Hark! The Herald Angels - Janet Linker*
Away In A Manger – Diane Bish**

Welcome

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at Trinity United Church of Christ.

Announcements

***Call to Worship**

This is the fourth Sunday of Advent, a time to rejoice in the wondrous things that God is doing.

Our hearts are filled with the hope that is coming into the world.

The time is fast approaching, not for parties or presence, but for the awareness of God's loving gift to us--the gift of the Christ child.

Hymn No. 157

Away in a Manger

Call to Confession:

We confess, Gracious God, that we have not always turned to you for guidance. At times, we have allowed the world's time to dominate your time. Forgive us for our sins of hurriedness and impatience. Forgive us when we have slumbered instead of remaining alert, waiting and watching for you.

Silent Confession:

Assurance of Forgiveness:

God has given ear to our confession
and God's face has shined upon us!
In the name of Jesus Christ, you and I are saved:
saved from our sins,
saved to our faithful savior,
whose steadfast love is gifted to the world!

Response Gloria Patri

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world
without end. Amen, Amen.**

***Affirmation of Faith**

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hades.

On the third day he rose again;

he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath: "The Candle of Love"

Heavenly Father, The whole meaning of Christmas can be explained in one little four-letter word...LOVE. You sent your gift of pure love to us that first Christmas. Love descended from heaven to be born of a virgin. Love lay in the scratchy hay of a manger in a meager barn in Bethlehem. All of your love, God, was robed in the delicate skin of a baby and wrapped in swaddling clothes. This final week of Advent, help us to reflect on the magnitude of love that was made manifest in Jesus.

With Joy We Now Offer Our Gifts

***Presentation of the Offering – Singing of the Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise him all creatures here below;

Praise him above ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

Offering Prayer

Loving God, as we present our tithes and offerings to you this morning for your blessing, we remember the greatest blessing the world has ever received: your precious Son, sent to redeem us, to pay the price for our sins. Thank you for showing us how to give from the heart. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (using debts and debtors)

The Trinity Bells

**Mary Did You Know
Joy to the World**

Scripture:

2 Samuel 7: 1-11

1 Now when the king dwelt in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies round about,

2 the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent."

3 And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart; for the Lord is with you."

4 But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan,

5 "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to dwell in?'"

6 I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling.

7 In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"

8 Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel;

9 and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth.

10 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly,

11 from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house.

Romans 16: 25-27

25 Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages

26 but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—

27 to the only wise God be glory for evermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Gospel:

Luke 1: 6-38

1 In as much as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things which have been accomplished among us,

2 just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word,

3 it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,

4 that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed.

5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

8 Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty,

9 according to the custom of the priesthood, it fell to him by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense.

11 And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

12 And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer is heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth;

15 for he will be great before the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.

16 And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God,

17 and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

18 And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years."

19 And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news.

20 And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things come to pass, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time."

21 And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they wondered at his delay in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak to them, and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he made signs to them and remained dumb.

23 And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

24 After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she hid herself, saying,

25 "Thus the Lord has done to me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men."

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth

27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28 And he came to her and said, “Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!”

29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be.

30 And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,

33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

34 And Mary said to the angel, “How shall this be, since I have no husband?”

35 And the angel said to her,
“The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you;
therefore the child to be born will be called holy,
the Son of God.

36 And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.

37 For with God nothing will be impossible.”

38 And Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

***Hymn No. 141**

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Sermon - “How Can This Be?”

Guest Speaker - Pastor Peter Kaltenbaugh

Hymn No. 124

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

***Benediction**

Be people of hope.

Let hope live in your heart and share the hope of Christ with all you meet.

Share hope by noticing someone else's humanity.

Share hope by listening to someone's story.

Share hope by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share hope.

As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share hope with those you meet. **Amen.**

Go Now in Peace

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.

God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.

Go now in faith, steadfast, strong, and true.

Know He will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe.

Reach out to others so all the world can see.

God will be there watching from above.

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

Amen

***Response – Sung with Dismissal**

***Going Forth**

Postlude

**Carillon on "Come, All Ye Shepherds"
Gordon Young**

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Those Remembered in prayer:

God's guidance and protection for Armed Forces.

Shut Ins:

Lew & Barb Berkley, Roy Bucher, Helen Diest, Mary Forespring,
Cynthia Kelly, Lois Krause, Debbi Luteri, Lois Saylor.

Healing Concerns:

Mark Amyot, Melvin & Bonnie Baughman, Donnie Baxter, Jim
Benoit, Paige Boyer, Father Elijah Bremer,
Rhonda Brown, Clinton Clark, Ray Coleman,
Jim Coughenour, Tammy Coughenour, Greg Croner,
Pam Crooks, Nancy Custer, Reon Engleka, Tory Foltz, John Foor,
Nancy Gindlesperger,
Art & Marlene Gotchen, Andrea (Shaulis) Harris, Michael Harris
Larry Hay, Cindy McCullen-Janicki, Brenda & Larry Leister, Jim
Little, Judy McCullen, Larry McCullen, Bonnie Murphy,
Carl (Edison) Paul, Kathy Picking, Larry Pritts, Brian Reed, James
Robb, Brett Sarver, Nancy Schrock, JoAnne Smith,
Peggy Stayrook,
Betty Strasser, Larry Tinkey, Paul Trulick, Adeline Vieregge,
Robin Walker, Harry Watkins, Nancy Weighley, Gerald Zorn

Extra prayers for the family of Harry Gindlesperger.

The Saints In Action

TODAY- 4th Sunday of Advent & Christmas Eve

9:00 a.m. Worship

10:10 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Next Sunday – December 31 - First Sunday after Christmas

9:00 a.m. Worship

10:10 a.m. Sunday School

Giving From 12/17/2023

	Rec	Budget	Over/Under
General	\$1839.10	\$3155.58	-\$1316.48
Ben	\$371.00	\$182.69	\$188.31
Maint	\$186.00	\$163.46	\$22.54
Mem	\$225.00		\$225.00
Total	\$2621.10	\$3501.73	-\$880.63

Benevolence includes Donations to Food Pantry of \$15.

Worship Attendance: 133

Sunday School: 43

Where You May Find. . .

The Nursery: *is on the lower level for children and their parent. A big screen TV is mounted in the room so that you may watch the service.*

At the Sanctuary Entrances. . .

Large Print Bulletins

Recycling Boxes for Bulletins

Hearing Amplifiers

These Days – Devotional

Assisting in Worship

Sound: Tom Croner (Board), Pam Bush (Camera)

Ushers: Amanda Custer, Sheron Engleka

Acolytes: Colten Custer/Cohen Clark

Flowers on the altar in honor of our Lord, Christ Jesus's birthday by Sue Coughenour.

The Bulletin is given in memory of her grandparents, Dan & Anna May Weighley, and uncle, Jamie Weighley, by Craig, Amanda, Knox, and Tatum Stiffler.

The Whole Congregation in Ministry and Assisted by

Church Secretary: Pam Bush, Jean Ann Darr

Financial Secretary: Renee Gindlesperger

Chancel Choir Director Emeritus: Linda Gallick

Handbells: Jeanne Hillegas

Virtual Organist: Rick Kimmel

Consistory Elders:

Tom Calvert, President, 814-267-3771

Rus Ogburn, Vice President, 814-267-5650

Sheron Engleka, 814-267-4166

Consistory Deacons:

*Amy Clark, Julie Petro, Ann Slifco
Leanna Coughenour, Gale Hay, Tom Croner
Amanda Custer, Debbie Boyer, Gaye Maust*

Newly Elected Consistory Members:

Pam Bush, Jim Darr, Jean Hart, and Bill Landis

**Church Office Hours – Tuesday through Thursday
9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Church Office Phone: 814-267-3234

Mailing Address: PO Box 86, Berlin, PA 15530

Email: berlinucc@yahoo.com

Website: www.berlinucc.org

Changes to upcoming Supply Minister assignments.

December 31 David Ackerman

January 7 Jay Shaffer

January 14 Peter Kaltenbaugh

January 21 Bill Deal

January 28 James Vander Schuur

Bolded dates indicate “Communion” Sundays.

The Sunday School study on I Peter will be put on hold for the next several weeks. Tom Calvert will be teaching instead with very interesting videos on the Holy Land which brings the Bible alive with Jewish culture and scenery. Please join Tom in the Fellowship Hall after morning Worship Service. Snacks and beverages are usually provided.

Hugs & Kisses Youth group has organized a group event to the Johnstown Tomahawks Faith and Family night on Saturday, January 27th at 7PM for anyone who is interested. They have created us a group ticket ordering link so you can order your own tickets and we will all be put in the same section together for the hockey game.

The link is <https://fervo-enterprise.com/event/trinityunitedgroup>

If you have any trouble – email Amanda Custer at amb00rn@yahoo.com and I can send you the link via email if interested. This is open to anyone from our church, friends, and family who want to attend. Tickets are \$13.12 with taxes/fees included. Also Friday, February 9th at 6:30 PM will be family game night in our church basement. This is for ALL AGES, so bring your favorite game and a snack and come join in some fun and fellowship.

Birthright of Somerset Tree

The Birthright tree has been posted in Fellowship Hall once again, just inside the door on the Vine Street entrance. It has tags on it so please take the tag, purchase the item on the tag, and return the item and the tag so that the tag can be used again next year.

The Garrett Christian Community Church Choir and Friends

will present their annual Christmas cantata, “Good News From Home” on Sunday evening, January 7, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at their church at 800 Walker Street in Garrett. There will be candle lighting and a time of fellowship will conclude the evening. This is the former Garrett United Methodist Church.

The Souper Bowl Competition is fast approaching. There will be two winners again this year, so we will have to be on our game and regain our #1 spot. The four quarters of the competition will be the four Sundays in January and the two Sundays in February before the actual Superbowl. If making monetary donations, please mark your envelope “**Souper Bowl**” and make your check payable to Trinity UCC.

Live Streaming Options

From time to time, despite our efforts to provide you with reliable streaming services, we encounter problems. We are still investigating the reason we did have our Veterans Program live stream to Facebook. There are two other options for viewing which is our actual website at berlinucc.org or YouTube under Trinity United Church of Christ, Berlin PA.

Pastoral Care: For those in need of pastoral care please contact Tom Calvert, President of Consistory at 814-267-3771, who will arrange for a pastor to provide comfort and assurance in a time of crisis. If you need **immediate** pastoral care, contact Jay Shaffer at 814-483-0398.

Poinsettias On the Altar

In memory of Ed & Etta Landis, and Taylor Landis by Barb and Bill Landis.

In memory of Frank and Ruth Ream by Bill, Ann and Willie Slifco.

In memory of John and Dorothy Slifco by Bill, Ann and Willie Slifco.

In memory of Frank Ream Jr. by Bill, Ann and Willie Slifco.

In memory of Marlin, Linda and Doug McClintock by Debbie Boyer.

In memory of Edna Mae Chappie (Grandma Mae) by Dave, Missy, Matthew and Kaitlyn Miller.

In memory of daughters, Joyce Custer and Jane Countryman Emerick by Don and Nancy Custer.

To the Glory of God by Bob & Carol Brown

In memory of Carl and loved ones by Karol Saylor.

In memory of my husband Tom Bush by Pam Bush.

In memory of Carl Bittner by Nancy Bittner & Family

In memory of Charles and Mary Smith, and Phillip Henry and Mary Bittner by Nancy Bittner & Family

In memory of Frank Ream Jr. by Nancy Bittner

In memory of Wayne Potter and Shirley Riley by Lillian Potter.

In honor of our family, Scott, Lauren, Andy, Melissa, Ky and Kam by Mark and Lori Gindlesperger.

In memory of my mother, Donna Kimmel, grandparents, Harold and Hilda Kimmel and Lloyd and Blanche Firestone and aunt Edna Mae Chappie by Rick Kimmel.

In memory of Laramie Grace Ickes by Kevan and Connie Ickes.

In honor of our wonderful friends in Berlin by Allen and Betty Strasser.

In memory of our parents, Roy and Ruth Romesberg and John Edward and Dorothy Hay, and our uncle and aunt, Bill and Evelyn Altfather, by Larry and Gale Hay.

In honor of parents and grandparents, Walter and Myra Miller by Renee, Tyler and Kaitlyn Gindlesperger.

In honor of parents and grandparents, Lloyd and Susan Miller by Kevin, Teagan and Taelyn Miller.





Have A Blessed Christmas!