

## Panther Valley Ecumenical Church

December 14, 2016 Food & Faith: gathering at the table to talk  
about what brings us together.

### "Room for All"

#### Food for thought:

*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.*

~ Luke 2:1-7 New Revised Standard Version

In each heart lies a Bethlehem  
an inn where we must ultimately answer  
whether there is room or not.

When we are Bethlehem bound,  
we experience our own advent in His.  
When we are Bethlehem bound,  
we can no longer look the other way  
conveniently not seeing stars-  
nor hearing angel voices.  
We can no longer excuse ourselves  
by busily tending our sheep or our kingdoms.

Let's go to Bethlehem  
and see this thing that the Lord has made known to us.  
In the midst of celebrations and wrapped presents  
let's ponder in our hearts the Gift of gifts.  
Through the tinsel and bright lights  
let's look for the gold of the Christmas star.  
In the excitement and confusion, in the merry chaos,  
let's listen for the brush of angels wings.  
Let's go to Bethlehem so we might kneel before the manger  
that cradles our Savior, who is Christ the Lord!

~ Ann Weems, Kneeling at Bethlehem

## **Room for Others**

**It is no use saying that we are born two thousand years too late to give room to Christ. Nor will those who live at the end of the world have been born too late. Christ is always with us, always asking for room in our hearts.**

**But now it is with the voice of our contemporaries that he speaks, with the eyes of store clerks, factory workers, and children that he gazes; with the hands of office workers, slum dwellers, and suburban housewives that he gives. It is with the feet of soldiers and tramps that he walks, and with the heart of anyone in need that he longs for shelter. And giving shelter for food to anyone who asks for it, or needs it, is giving it to Christ. ...**

**If Mary had appeared in Bethlehem clothed, as St. John says, with the sun, a crown of twelve stars on her head, and the moon under her feet, then people would have fought to make room for her. But that was not God's way for her, nor is it Christ's way for himself, now when he is disguised under every type of humanity that treads the earth.**

Dorothy Day 1897-1980 Selected Writings, ed Robert Ellsberg

**A question to chew on:**

Q – What does it look like to make room for Christ?