



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

Third Sunday of Advent "How Much Is Enough?"

JOY

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

December 12, 2021

*Connecting with the Community,
Growing Disciples, and Serving Jesus Christ*

*Our Worship can be viewed on our website
PantherValleyChurch.org*

PRELUDE

We invite you to begin your personal preparation at the beginning of the prelude.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING WORDS

**Joy waits for us at Advent
Joy waits for us to sing.
Joy waits for our amazement
at the grace in everything.
In this time of preparation
for the work of co-creation,
for the birthing of a world
where wonder is restored.
Joy is born in us once more!**

THE LIGHT OF JOY

Today we offer the Light of Joy, Hope and Peace to illumine the Door of Welcome. May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our community. May Joy awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater hospitality. There *IS* room in this Inn, a House for the Holy.

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THE PEACE

FIRST READING Isaiah 12: 2-6 (CEB)

God is indeed my salvation;
I will trust and won't be afraid.
Yah, the Lord, is my strength and my shield;
he has become my salvation."
You will draw water with joy from the springs of salvation.
And you will say on that day:
"Thank the Lord; call on God's name;
proclaim God's deeds among the peoples;
declare that God's name is exalted.
Sing to the Lord, who has done glorious things;
proclaim this throughout all the earth."
Shout and sing for joy, city of Zion,
because the holy one of Israel is great among you.

HYMN

PVEC Choir

SECOND READING Luke 3:7, 8,10-14

Then John said to the crowds who came to be baptized by him, ...
Produce fruit that shows you have changed your hearts and lives.
The crowds asked him, "What then should we do?"

He answered, "Whoever has two shirts must share with the one who has none,
and whoever has food must do the same."

Even tax collectors came to be baptized. They said to him, "Teacher, what
should we do?"

He replied, "Collect no more than you are authorized to collect."

Soldiers asked, "What about us? What should we do?"

He answered, "Don't cheat or harass anyone, and be satisfied with your pay."

The people were filled with expectation, and everyone wondered whether John
might be the Christ. John replied to them all, "I baptize you with water, but the
one who is more powerful than me is coming. I'm not worthy to loosen the strap
of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

MESSAGE *Simple Joy*

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Make of my heart a stable, a house for the holy, a warm and sturdy place for joy to live and grow.

In this moment we open the doors of our hearts in honesty before God about what we've done and left undone that created less hope in a hurting world.

Silently pause

Make of my life a stable, a house for the holy, a warm and sturdy place for joy to live and grow. In this moment we open the doors of our lives to the call of the Spirit, inviting us to become more than we can ask or imagine.

Silently pause

Make of our church a stable, a house for the holy, a warm and sturdy place for joy to live and grow. In this moment we open the doors of this church, filling it with the compassion of Christ for all those who are struggling. We remember and pray for...

Lift up names in your heart or out loud...

... those who are suffering economic hardship, and insecurity in basic needs; may abundance be shared.

... those who are suffering mentally, finding it difficult to cope; may paths open and hope return.

... those who are suffering illness or injury; may healing abound.

...those who are suffering loneliness and isolation; may companionship and solace arrive.

**... those who are suffering discrimination, fear and violence;
may they know respect, respite, and safety.**

May the Advent of Compassion be born in us, reside within us, move outward from us, to meet the needs of the world, making a house for the Holy that is each and every child of God. Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

We invite you to pray the prayer in the language you are used to speaking. Today we are highlighting the prayer in the Ecumenical Text which was developed in contemporary language by the English Language Liturgical Consultation in 1988.

**Our God in heaven,
Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
Now and for ever. Amen.**

THE STORY OF INNKEEPING ~ THE OFFERING WITNESS

We invite you to take this time to express your gratitude to God for all that you have been given by dedicating your time, talents, witness, service, and resources. The gifts you give are helping God build the community of love in this place and in our world. We offer several ways that you can give your fiscal pledge: in person by placing your offering in the “church mailbox” in the narthex, dropping it off at the office, by mail, through our website www.panthervalleychurch.org, or add PVEC to your online bill pay. Thank you for your generosity.

CLOSING CAROL

“What Child Is This”

What child is this who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping?

Refrain:

This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
(Refrain)

BENEDICTION

May God's Door of Welcome swing open in your heart and in your life.
May Christ's humble first dwelling remind you of the plenty you already know.
And may the Spirit lead you into more possibility and hospitality than you can
imagine, making room in The Inn for all.

**ALL: May it be so for you. May it be so for us. May it be so for this church.
Amen.**

POSTLUDE

*Today's flowers are given by Betty Schultheis in honor of
her son Scott's birthday.*

Blue Christmas Open House ~ December 21 from 6pm – 8pm

Christmas Eve ~ December 24: “The Inn”

Family Candlelight Service at 4pm

Candlelight Communion Service at 7pm

Credits: *This liturgy is adapted from The Worship Design Studio. Used by permission. © www.worshipdesignstudio.com/theinn*

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Hymn: What Child Is This, CCLI #30983, Public Domain

Announcements & Upcoming Events

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

All of us who have lost loved ones and are missing them dearly, Henry & Terrie Newbold, Bob having heart surgery this week, Edwin Fernandes, Ryan who has cancer, Lindsay, Loretta & Lauren, The Masterson Family, Bob, The Schultheis Family in the death of Betty's sister, Patti Pakkila, Matthew, Uncle Larry, Heather & Family, Heath, Lois, Gordon, Patti in hospital, Pat Custard, Herb T., Beth C., Vinnie Candido, Alice, Rick Nelson, Friends @ Heath Village, Mike, Ellie, Cindy & Family, Katie, Joe & Elaine O'Reilly, Amy Testa, Jim, Adam, Kailin (surgery) and her parents, Marie, Jim & Michelle, Janet, Wanda, Yvonne, Helen, Claire, Grey, Bernadette Jacobus, Robbie, The abducted missionaries in Haiti, Eloise Mial, Dong-Hee Nam, Kathy Pflugfelder, Kailynn, The De La Cruz Family, Rich K., Ann Custard, Anne Ellis, George Cappola, Bridget, Refugees and those seeking asylum, Zachary, Churches as they try and do ministry in a new time.

REMINDER FOR CHRISTMAS ANGELS

All gifts are due back at church by Sunday, Dec. 12th. They will be taken to Allamuchy School on Dec. 13th. Please wrap your gifts and attach the angel with its letter showing on the outside of the package. Please also write the angel letter on your package in case the actual angel should come off. Thank you to all who are participating in our annual angel program.

CHRISTMAS SALE to benefit The Bell Choir has beautiful handmade items by Penny Newell, Cylvia Ultz **AND FAYE KENNEDY!** (Sorry we forgot you last week Faye.)

HOMEMADE SYRUP by Lynne Moore
\$10 with proceeds going toward Campership

BOOK CLUB STARTING All invited to participate. First meeting 1/10/22 at 2 pm to discuss the first pick, The Chilbury Ladies Choir by Jennifer Ryan. Unless someone new would like to join us who works, we will continue meeting in the afternoons on the **2nd Monday of each month.**

Book list as of now:

Rules of Civility by Amor Towles - Feb.

Once We Were Brothers by Ronald H. Balson - Mar.

Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi - Apr.

The Elegance of the Hedgehog by Muriel Barbery – May

MYSTERY STILL UNSOLVED - The Case of the Missing Vacuum

Liz Silva is looking for the labeled *Sunday School* vacuum that has been kept in the entry closet down near the office. It is a green and grey bagless upright. We have searched everywhere we could think of, please let us know if you have seen it or find it. Thank you!

PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

1490 Route 517 Hackettstown, NJ 07840

~Welcome—we were built for you!~

Panther Valley Ecumenical Church is a multi-denominational church serving northwest New Jersey since 1969. We are formally affiliated with:

The Episcopal Church, The United Church of Christ,
The Presbyterian Church USA, and The United Methodist Church.

We are a congregation of many Christian traditions who worship together in accordance with Christ's prayer: "that they may all be one."

May God's Blessing go with you this week.

Pastor: Ninabeth Metcalf

Email: pvecpastor@gmail.com

Music Director: Diane Van Dongen

Church Administrator: Nikki Nicinski

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FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH