



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

Worship in the United Methodist Tradition
EPIPHANY
January 2, 2022

*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.

*“Imagine yourself as an oasis of peace.
And imagine there are ripples that move away
from that center of peace and touch others.”*

~ Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Mpilo Tutu

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: God is making all things new,

ALL: For God’s words are trustworthy.

ONE: God is the Alpha and Omega,

ALL: The Beginning and the End.

ONE: We enter this new year with hope,

ALL: That we will draw closer to God;

ONE: For God has drawn near to us.

ALL: Together, we are Christ’s body.

OPENING PRAYER

**O Star-flinging God, whose light dances across eternity,
dazzle us into your presence this new year.**

Open our hearts to the mystery of your love.

Awaken us to your presence, knit to the ordinary.

Reveal to us what is possible, but not yet present.

Heal us, that we might be healers.

Reconcile us to you and to ourselves, that our living might be reconciling.

**Stop us often, we pray with news that is good with hope that holds with
truth that transforms with a Word tailored to this trail we're on.**

**May the word of your grace guide our steps like the sun by day and the
north star by night, as we travel into the gift of a new year. Amen.**

HYMN

As With Gladness Men of Old

As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold
As with joy they hailed its light
Leading onward beaming bright
So most gracious Lord may we
Evermore be led to Thee

As with joyful steps they sped
To that lowly manger bed
There to bend the knee before
Him whom heav'n and earth adore
So may we with willing feet
Ever seek Thy mercy seat

SCRIPTURE Matthew 2:1-12 New Revised Standard Version

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then,

opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

MESSAGE

ANTHEM

Star of Wonder

WESLEY'S COVENANT PRAYER

I am not my own self-made, self-reliant human being.

In truth, O God, I am Yours.

Make me into what You will.

Make me a neighbor with those whom You will.

Guide me on the easy path for You.

Guide me on the rocky road for You.

Whether I am to step up for You or step aside for You;

Whether I am to be lifted high for You or brought low for You;

Whether I become full or empty, with all things or with nothing;

I give all that I have and all that I am for You.

So be it.

And may I always remember that you, O God, and I belong to each other. Amen.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Wondrous Star that shines so bright! Shine in the bleakness and misery. Shine in the shadows and gloom. Shine in our hearts when our hopes are failing. Shine in our lives when we feel out of place and lost. Shine in our world when the systems and structures of the world oppress and condemn. Shine in us, so that we may shine Your light and life to the world. Bright Morning Star, shine our way. Amen.

THE OFFERING

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.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God of new beginnings, as we move into this new year, stir in us the feelings of expectation! Kindle our hearts and minds to see possibilities for our world and for your kingdom. Help us to believe that the world we have can be better: more loving, more just, more compassionate, and looking much more like the world you've imagined for us. Lord, help us to give generously this day to empower that to happen. In the name of Christ, Savior and Redeemer, we pray. Amen

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

ONE: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

ONE: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them to the Lord.

ONE: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

ALL: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

...

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending name.

ALL: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your son Jesus the Christ, in whom you have revealed yourself, our light and our salvation.

...

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus the Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

ALL: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirits on us gathered here,

...

Through your son Jesus the Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

ALL: AMEN

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 Traditional text written in the 16th century for the Book of Common Prayer. This prayer is utilized by the Episcopal Church and the United Methodist Church.

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. Amen

BENEDICTION

May the love of Christ that shines in you shine brightly in the world wherever you go. And the blessing of God, Divine Giver, Radiant Light, and Fountain of Life bless you and keep you always.

POSTLUDE

“God calls on us to be his partners to work for a new kind of society where people count; where people matter more than things, more than possessions; where human life is not just respected but positively revered; where people will be secure and not suffer from the fear of hunger, from ignorance, from disease; where there will be more gentleness, more caring, more sharing, more compassion, more laughter; where there is peace and not war”.

~ Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Mpilo Tutu

Credits: *Opening Prayer* is written by Glenn Mitchell. *Prayer of Joys and Concerns* is written by Rev. Mindi. Offering prayer comes from the Discipleship Ministry website of the UMC.

Image: Star of Bethlehem Quilt, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.
<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=56307> [retrieved December 28, 2021]. Original source:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Star_of_Bethlehem_Quilt_MET_DT1820.jpg.

Hymn: As With Gladness Men of Old, CCLI #4772707, Public Domain

Stewardship Snippet

Jan 2, 2022 (Second Sunday after Christmas Year C)

John 1-12: But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.

Many came to Jesus to accuse, ridicule and scorn Him, but the name of Jesus in the ear of the believer is the most beautiful of all names, for it is through our union with the Lord Jesus that we have been brought back into sweet communion with the living God, for there is no other name in heaven or on earth that has the power to seek and to save that which was lost. For 2022, set a goal to be more generous. Start by increasing your charitable giving above last year's offering, but also aim to give away your time, to serve your neighbor, to be lavish in compassion, extravagant in love...just as Jesus taught us to do and be!

~Donna Weinberg

Announcements & Upcoming Events

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Hermina, Healthcare workers, The loss of Desmond Tutu, Lenny & Norma, Jackie, Matthew, for healing for people with COVID.

PVEC COUNCIL MEETING

The Council will meet at 11:45am on January 16th.

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

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