

Hanging
of the
Greens



December 4, 2022

***Those who are able, please stand**

Panther Valley Ecumenical Church

Second Sunday of Advent

December 4, 2022

Special thanks to Rev. Mike Atzert for being our guest pastor today.

As we joyfully greet each other today and share the gifts of friendship and love, you are invited to begin your personal preparation for worship at the beginning of the prelude.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: As quietly as the winter steals upon us, the season of expectation approaches.

All: We wait for our redeemer, for God's promise to be fulfilled.

One: The day is coming quickly. The God of mercy draws near.

**All: Therefore, we wait expectantly, attentive to all the signs of his coming.
Come quickly, Lord Jesus!**

***HYMN #238**

Angels We Have Heard On High

Verse 1

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains, and the mountains In reply
echoing their joyous strains, Gloria, in excelsis Deo

THE ANGEL

LIGHTING OF THE 2ND ADVENT CANDLE

The Ledwith Family

THE COLLECT

Merciful God who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and Forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LESSON: Old Testament: Isaiah 11:1-10

Cylvia Ultz

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of

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counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord, He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the falling together. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

PSALM 72:1-7, 18-19

Give the King your Justice, O God,
And your righteousness to the King's Son,
That he may rule your people righteously
And the poor with Justice;
That the mountain may ring prosperity to the people;
And the little hills bring righteousness.
He shall defend the needy among the people,
He shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.
He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure,
From one generation to another.
He shall come down like rain upon the mown field,
Lilt showers that water the earth.
In his time shall the righteous flourish;
There shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel,
Who alone does wondrous deeds.
And blessed be his glorious Name forever!
and May all the earth be filled with his glory.
Amen. Amen.

EPISTLE: Romans 15:4-13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instructions, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promise given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, “Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name;” and again he says, “Rejoice, O gentiles with his people and again Praise the Lord all you Gentiles, and let all the people praise him;” and again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.” May the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea proclaiming, “Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near. This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. “I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and Fire. His winnowing fork in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

HANGING OF THE GREENS

INTRODUCTION: Anne Ellis

THE MANGER: Dan Ledwith

***HYMN #217** *Away in the Manger (v.3)*

EVERGREENS: Penny Newell

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WREATHS Lynne Moore
***HYMN #384** *Love Divine All Love Excelling (v.1, 3)*

THE TREE Henry Newbold
***HYMN** *O Christmas Tree, Fair Christmas Tree*

*O Christmas Tree! Fair Christmas Tree! A type of Life Eternal!
O Christmas Tree! Fair Christmas Tree! Your boughs are ever vernal.
So fresh and green in Summer heat, and bright when snows lie round your feet
O Christmas Tree! Fair Christmas Tree! A type of Life Eternal.*

CRISMONS Sherry Anderson

ANGELS Michelle Visco
***HYMN #240** *Hark the Herald Angels Sing (v.1, 3)*

THE STAR Terri Newbold
***HYMN #245** *The First Noel (v.1, 2)*

THE CAMEL Jim Visco
***HYMN #254** *We Three Kings (v.1, 2)*

THE CROSS Connor Samanns
***HYMN #295** *In the Cross of Christ I Glory (v.3, 4)*

THE CROWN Anne Cuff
***HYMN #715** *Rejoice, the Lord is King (v. 1, 3)*

THE DOVE Sarah Ledwith
***HYMN #218** *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (v. 1,4)*

THE CRECHE Carol Phillips & Lindsay, Peyton, Jackson & Chase O'Brien
***HYMN #219** *What Child is This (v. 1, 2)*

THE LIGHTS Cylvia Ultz
***HYMN #103** *Immortal, Invisible, God (v. 1, 4)*

GIFTS OF JOY AND THANKSGIVING

When they saw the Star had stopped they were overwhelmed with joy.
On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother and

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They knelt down and paid him homage. Then opening their treasure chests they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Now as a sign of the joy that comes into our hearts with the birth of the Christ child and with thanksgiving for all the gifts of God, let us too pay homage and bring our offerings forward.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

THE INVITATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

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

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

... and with all the faithful of every time and place who forever sing to the glory of your name:

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.

... Great is the mystery of faith:

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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF BREAD AND CUP

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (unison)

Mighty God, holy is your name. We thank you for gathering us at your table and feeding us with the bread of life. As we leave this table to go to the many places where you call us, send your Spirit to accompany us, so that we may share in your magnificent work: lifting up those who are laid low, showing mercy to all in need of human kindness, and feeding the bodies and hearts of all those who are hungry. Amen.

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PRAYERS OF JOY AND CONCERN

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*THE DOXOLOGY (unison)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Announcements & Upcoming Events

Please pray for: Our Church, Zoe, Donna (Covid), Joy to Ashley Washer & Family in the birth of their newest addition, Susan Magnetta & Family, John & Gabrielle, Diane, Steve, Ellen, Stephanie & Ryan Angus, The Weinrich Family with Greg's death Rob, Stacey, Amanda, Cecelia, Elle, Brady, Jaylyn, Savannah, Billy, Charlotte, Kathy & John, Bill, Lois, Phil, Lisa, The Family of Greg Weinrich in his death, Desmond, Drew C., The memory of Joseph August

As usual, **poinsettias** will arrive the week before Christmas and will be available to take home your orders after the Christmas Eve service.

Important Dates

- Sun. 12/4** Guest Preacher, Rev. Mike Atzert & Communion
Traditional Hanging of the Greens
Annual Congregational Meeting after worship
- Thur. 12/15** Please return your Stewardship Pledge Cards by this date.
- Sat. 12/17** \$5 Pancake Breakfast with Santa & Mrs. Claus from 9-11am
- Wed. 12/21** 3rd Annual Blue Christmas Service 7-8pm
- Sat. 12/24** Christmas Pageant @ 3:30pm
Adult Christmas Eve Service 7pm – Readings & Carols

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Special Thanks - We wouldn't be us without you!

PVEC is so grateful to Rev. Dcn. Jeanette Hile for her time, organization and enthusiastic effort as our guest preacher.

Cylvia has been this church's rock through the upheaval and transition of Ninabeth's new placement last June. Her dedication and commitment are unknown to most, but invaluable to PVEC's livelihood. She has also been responsible for securing the guest pastors we have met over the last few months so that PVEC could have communion during worship monthly.

Much appreciation to the Search Team for continued work in trying to secure a new pastor.

Writing reports is never fun, so we are grateful to all the commission and committee chairs who submitted theirs in order to complete this year's Annual Report. This couldn't be accomplished without help from treasurers Betty J. & Zoe and Finance's Rick Wilson. We thank former Treasurer Betty J. for her dedication and organization over the last 2 years as she has passed the torch to Zoe for now.

Zoe has been the BEST temporary treasurer over these last months and has kept the church and office on schedule seamlessly. She is truly missed as she convalesces.

Thank you, Penny, for purchasing a new microwave for the kitchen when the old one was destroyed by the "cabinet collapse." We are also grateful for Penny in volunteering her time to work in the church office (and all over the building) one day per week.

We appreciate Donna for her hard work on the 2023 Stewardship Campaign and as chair of the commission. Please extend your gratitude to her as Anne Ellis takes over in 2023.

During these especially challenging times, YOUR donations and other contributions support PVEC and its ministries. Thank you for these precious gifts as every dollar counts.

Donna will be joining the Christian Ed Team in 2023 and contributing to the established and appreciated efforts of Dan & Sarah, Ashley, Elizabeth and Liz.

Remember to take advantage of the work Care & Nurture's Lynne has put into creating a schedule of kind volunteers willing to help church members and friends in numerous ways. Thank you, Lynne, for coordinating this group.

Kudos to Carol for continuing the collection for the Pajama & Book Collection Program (infant to young adult) for CASA SHaW. Collection boxes are in the narthex and by the office until December 16th.

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Thank you Kathy Z. and Family for decorating inside and outside PVEC for the holidays! It looks beautiful. Also, our Food Pantry clients are so appreciative for your hard work of continuous shopping and packing for their needs during these difficult times.

Anne Cuff is valued for finding readers for services and has made a schedule through the month of March. Many thanks to our scripture readers as well!

Besides keeping the church clean and running The Youth Squad, our Liz S. picks up donations from Wawa weekly to assist our Food Pantry and a local Easter Seals group home. She has become dear to them as she cares for that group in many special ways, especially during the holiday season.

How does one thank John S. for all his (and Connor and Dot's) energy in taking care of our property? From pig-wrangling to goose chasing, from collapsing kitchen cabinets to repairing roof leaks, from surprise inspections to finding more affordable snowplow vendors, maintaining a beautiful garden that produces healthy vegetables and wildflowers - this man is a gift to PVEC.

The Worship Team sent out lovely greeting cards and angel ornaments to all members of our church. Hope yours made you smile and let you know we miss you. They are also responsible for the beautiful decorating in the sanctuary. Special thanks to Betty S. for ALL the ways she keeps PVEC moving forward, including most recently creating the Hanging of the Greens bulletin.

We love our choir and bell choir too! Sincere thanks for the talented direction of Diane & Faye in providing musical enjoyment and meaningful accompaniment during worship.

And much appreciation to those volunteers, organizers, committees and commissions, and behind the scenes people who keep PVEC going these days. You know who you are! Remember we need more help, talent and fresh ideas so please consider volunteering your time as the new year is a new start for us all.

GOOD NEWS FOR US - AND THOSE PIGS!

Allamuchy Mayor Rosemary Tuohy, informed us that the pregnant potbellied pig was captured on Saturday and taken to a farm in Independence to have her babies very soon. She will then be moved to a pig farm locally.

The male who is still around and expertly sneaking food out of the trap was caught the same day but broke out. He apparently loves cooked ham (!) and they are using that to try to entice the smarty-pants. When he is caught, he will be taken to where she is also located. As the story goes...it is believed he is her son as these pigs were in Hackettstown months ago, then wandered to Bilby Rd. up the railroad tracks, to the state park, then to us. At that

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time she had 2 babies with her and 1 was captured which is why they believe this one is her son.

The mayor plans to help us further by making repairs to the ravaged church property when the saga has ended. Good news!

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.

Guest Pastor: Rev. Mike Atzert

Music Director: Diane Van Dongen

Church Administrator: Nikki Nicinski

Email: pvecsecretary@gmail.com

Office hours: Mon. – Fri. 9:00am – 2:00pm

Website: <http://www.panthervalleychurch.org>

Tel: 908-852-5444

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FAITH ~ FAMILY ~ FRIENDS

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