



**Spirit. Forgive us, and show us how to clear a path for you. Come to us in your Christ, and reveal your reign on earth. Amen.**

*Silence for Prayer and Reflection.*

Assurance of Forgiveness

God says: Remember these things, O Israel, for you are my servant; you will not be forgotten by me. I have swept away your transgressions like a cloud, and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you. I say to you in the name of Jesus the Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Lighting of the Advent Candles & Advent Song - "Light One Candle for Messiah"

Light two candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.  
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd, gently lead them homeward.

*~ We Hear God's Word ~*

Scripture Lessons

The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

Lori Scharneck

The Reading of Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

The Gospel Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Suzanne M. Spaulding

Hymn for Reflection

"Isaiah the prophet Has Written of Old"

NCH # 108

Isaiah the prophet has written of old how God's earthly kingdom shall come.

Instead of the thorn tree, the fir tree shall grow; the wolf shall lie down with the lamb.

The wolf shall lie down with the lamb.

The mountains and hills shall break forth into song, the peoples be led forth in peace;  
The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea, the sea,  
as the waters cover the sea.

Yet nations still prey on the meek of the world, and conflict turns parent from child.  
Your people despoil all the sweetness of earth; the brier and the thorn grow wild, grow wild,  
the brier and the thorn grow wild.

*~ Sharing Blessings With Others ~*

Prayers of the People

The Prayer of Our Savior

Minister: Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

**All: 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin 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.**

Offering our Gifts - Thank you for your faithful support of Shenkel's ongoing ministries  
*The Christmas Fund provides assistance dollars in situations of critical need, including  
Pension Supplementation, Health Premium Supplementation, Emergency Grants, and  
Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks to lower-income retired UCC pastors.*

Offertory/ Special Music

Offering Response

Hope in the God who reigns above, who holds us all in steadfast love;  
Whose spirit blows across the earth, preparing us for the second birth.

Prayer of Dedication

### **~ Holy Communion~**

Invitation

Minister: Luke, the evangelist, wrote ... the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread.

**People: In the company with believers in every time and beyond time, we come to  
this table to know the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread.**

Communion Prayer

Minister: God be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to God.**

Minister: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

**People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Pastor: Holy God, our loving Creator.....faithful people everywhere.

**All: Holy, holy, holy, God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory,  
O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the  
highest!**

Pastor: Merciful God, as sisters and brothers.....boldly what we believe.

**All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Pastor: Come, Holy Spirit. Come. And in all for whom Christ died.

**All: Amen.**

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Minister: Let us pray.

**All: We give thanks, gracious God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us  
the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and  
send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit,  
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

*~ Going out in Joy ~*

Sending Hymn

“There’s a Voice in the Wilderness”

NCH # 120

There’s a voice in the wilderness crying, a call from the ways untrod:  
Prepare in the desert a highway, a highway for our God!  
The valleys shall be exalted, the lofty hills brought low;  
make straight all the crooked places where Emmanuel, may go!

O Zion, who offers good tidings; to the heights of the mountains dare!  
Lift your voice to the cities of Judah: “Behold your God!” declare.  
Like the flowers of the field we perish; our human works decay,  
the power and pomp of nations shall pass like a dream away.

But the word of our God is forever, our Defender’s will is strong.  
God stands in the midst of the nations, To render right the wrong.  
Then God shall be as a shepherd, the lambs gathered to God’s breast;  
and pastures of peace shall greet them, and give to the weary rest.

Benediction

Postlude

“Grant Us Thy Peace”

arr. Dorothy Wells

*Announcements*

**The Prayer Community asks you to join with us this week in praying for:**

Ashlyn Augustine  
Brenda & Randy Berrick  
Kim Yocom & Barry Peterman  
Antony Gulotta  
Richard, Ricky, & Ryan Golden

*~ This week at Shenkel UCC ~*

Sun., 12/4 ~ Reflective Worship service with Communion at 8:30 am in sanctuary.  
~ Worship service with Communion at 9:45 am in sanctuary  
~ Speaker Janice Lee after worship in social hall  
Wed., 12/7 ~ Yoga at 4:30 pm

## *~Upcoming events at Shenkel UCC~*

- Sun., 12/11 ~ Reflective Worship service with Communion at 8:30 am in sanctuary.  
~ Worship service with Communion at 9:45 am in sanctuary
- Tues., 12/13 ~ Consistory at 6:30 pm
- Thurs., 12/15 ~ Card Making Class at 10 am  
~ Agape at 6:30 pm

Scripture Readings for December 11:  
Luke 1:46-55; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

There will be a Congregational Meeting immediately after the services on December 18<sup>th</sup> to approve the proposed 2023 Current and OCWM Budgets.

**Pottstown Cluster.** This month's items are mouthwash, toothpaste (kids and regular). Please place your items in the bin marked for the Cluster.

**Pottstown Cluster Holiday meal & Christmas gifts.** Shenkel's collection assignment for the Cluster's Christmas meal this year is 200 **cans** of gravy. Start looking for those sales now. Deadline to donate is Sunday, December 11. For Christmas, we are also collecting gifts for children ages newborn to 17 years old. The gifts can be unwrapped or a gift card. Deadline to contribute is also Sunday, December 11. Thank you!

**Volunteers Needed** for acolyte and scripture readers. If interested, please see Tootie.

**Youth Group** is selling luminaries again this year. Look for the envelopes in the narthex or see any youth or Gloria Mest. Cost is \$5 each or 3 for \$10.

### **Poinsettia Sunday**

We will be taking orders for a pot of poinsettias. More information next week.