

# ZION REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, December 8, 2024 – 11:00am Worship



*Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.*

Albert Einstein

## GATHERING MUSIC AND BELLS

*Saviour of the People, Come  
Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*

J. S. Bach and D. Buxtehude  
Paul Manz

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to those on site and those beloveds online.

Congregational Meeting after worship.

Bobby Joe Valentine Concert.

Christmas Activities: Christmas Pageant, Coffman Gifts, Christmas Caroling, Cookie Exchange

## PRELUDE

*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* 17<sup>th</sup> century French tune Benjamin Kolodziej

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come! Come into the place where God listens!  
Where you need no money, no status, no fine clothes!

**All: We come as we are  
Broken, whole  
Sick, well  
Satisfied or with deep needs**

One: Come to sing  
Come to cry  
Come to hear  
Come to see  
Come and be ready or  
Come to be made ready

**All: We are here  
God is here too**

**Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand  
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.**

### **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE**

One: Each of our Advent candles  
represents God's generous goodness,  
the advent of Jesus, God's greatest gift,  
the Spirit's fluttering flicker of joy.  
As we light each candle,  
we recognize the gifts  
God has given us this week.

**All: God, we breathe in your peaceful refuge,  
for you have made a place where we can safely rest.**

### **\*HYMN**

*Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne*

Red 126

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

One: Today, as we confess our sins, we recognize how easily we overlook the gifts God gives.  
And we accept the sad truth that our limitations often create the conditions for sin. Let us  
pray.

**All: God, we want a faith that feels  
like more than words,  
but we lack your power  
to embody goodness.  
We hear your call to serve others  
yet feel too worn out to make the food.  
We hunger to taste justice  
but fear the burning spice of the meal.  
We want our place at your table  
but resist sitting beside a stranger.  
We have lost our appetites  
for mere thoughts and prayers,  
but we fail to match  
our intentions to our actions.  
Forgive us and restore us  
with the healing wholeness of your presence.**

### **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

One: My friends,  
God knows you are imperfect.  
But God did not invite you here today  
for what you have done  
or how you have behaved.  
God loves you.  
God always cared  
much more for you  
than for your shortcomings.

God forgives you  
all your sins.  
Now repeat after me.  
We accept God's forgiveness.

**All: We accept God's forgiveness.**

One: We take our place in God's purpose.

**All: We take our place in God's purpose. Amen.**

## CHORAL REFRAIN

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

GG 121 Verse 1

## SCRIPTURE

Luke 3:1-6 (NRSV)

Lector: Rich Owens

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

One: Listen to what the Spirit is teaching us.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## SPECIAL MUSIC:

*Gesu Bambino*

Petro A. Yon

Amber Nilson (flute), Barbara Hendershot (chimes), and Byron Stay (flugelhorn), C. M. Moblard (organ)

## WORD FOR CHILDREN

### SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:68-79 (NRSV)

Lector: Rich Owens

'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,  
for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them.  
He has raised up a mighty saviour for us  
in the house of his servant David,  
as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,  
that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.  
Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,  
and has remembered his holy covenant,  
the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,  
to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,  
might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness  
before him all our days.  
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,  
to give knowledge of salvation to his people  
by the forgiveness of their sins.  
By the tender mercy of our God,  
the dawn from on high will break upon us,  
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace.'

One: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

**\*HYMN**

*God of Grace and God of Glory*

GG 307

**INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY**

*Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*

J. S. Bach

**\*DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Alleluia, Alleluia,  
Praise God above ye heavenly host  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (in unison)

**God who reigns in highest heaven yet dwells within each living being, accept our gifts of praise. May they be used for Your purposes in Your church and in Your world. May we continue to glorify You and enjoy You forever. Amen**

**\*HYMN**

*Let There be Peace on Earth*

See Insert

**BENEDICTION**

One: God is with you—loving, sustaining, upholding.

**All: We are rooted in the abiding grace of God  
and set free on the wing of the Spirit.**

One: Go and be God's goodness and love.

Go and be Christ's justice and peace.

Go and be the Spirit's hope and joy.

**All: And may God go with you! Amen.**

**POSTLUDE**

*Angels We Have Heard on High* Traditional French melody

Mary McDonald

Liturgy is from, *More Than Words*, © 2024 Barn Geese Worship. Used by permission. We are utilizing their materials providing for an extended Advent as we prepare for Christmas.

## Praying with One Another

*Prayer is one of the most important spiritual disciplines of our faith, promoting communication with God, and love for God and neighbor. Join us in prayer as we pray for all those in our communities that we have touched or that have touched us and those that simply crossed our paths. Let us also remember to pray for peace and safety around the world and to pray with and for our Zion siblings:*

Bruce Albright, Janis Albright, Koda Bell, Lon Bender, Brenda Bowers, **Naomi Brackett**, Linda Cantilena, **Richard Cantilena**, Christine Coleman, Kim & Bill Cook, Donna France, Avery Goodrich, Michael Graff Jr. (son of Sue and Mike), **Sue Graff**, Beth Gross, Jim Hatfield, Beth Hauver, Elwood Hauver, Warren Hendershot (Barb's father-in-law), Lyn Hoffmaster (Claire-Marie's sister), Dee Krause, **Barry Landis**, Jerri Livingston, **Susan Lohman**, Peggy Lowman, Darrin Miller, Heather Morgan, **Susan Moscato** (Anthony's mother), Mary O'Malley, Linda Pittman (friend of Barry Landis), Crystal Reed (Lori Schmidt's daughter-in-law), **Family of Stephanie Resetar** (Daughter of Karen & Wells Ridenour), David Ridenour, Wells Ridenour, **Betsy Roulette**, Daisy Schlotterbeck, Ralph & Scherry Sellers, Staci Shafer, Tina Shafer, Jessica Stark, Thelma Summers, Tracy Roach Walls.

**\*\*New additions to the Prayer List will be printed in bold for the first week.**

### Worship Leaders

The lector this week is Rich Owens

Ushers for this week are Domenick Gerlando, Barb Hendershot, Matt McDonald, William Wantz

Acolyte for this week is Toby Bell

Children's Church leader is Susie Clutz

Greeters: Front Door - Christine Coleman & Blaine Dockery

### Next Week's Worship & Calendar

The lector next week is Wells Ridenour

Next week's ushers are William Brewer, Calvin Livingston, Gerald Saum, Jean Simmons

Mondays are Pastor Scott's day off and he doesn't check emails on this day. In an emergency, please call or text him.

12/8 Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 9:30am

Congregational Meeting after Worship

Bobby Jo Valentine Concert 4:00pm

12/10 Staff Meeting 11:00am

Tuesday Evening Ministry 5:00-6:30pm

12/11 Potluck and Devotional 6:00pm

12/12 Choir Practice 5:30pm

12/13 Deadline for January Newsletter

12/14 Easy-cise Class 9:00am

Christmas Caroling – Meet at Zion 5:00pm

### Birthdays

Jeanne Stoner 12/10

Koda Bell 12/12

Carol France 12/13

Scherry Sellers 12/15

### Anniversaries

Karen & Wells Ridenour 12/12

## Outreach and Service Opportunities

**Micah's Backpack** will be collecting **Hot Chocolate, Hot Apple Cider** during the month of December. We are also in need of **Scarves, Gloves and Socks** for the children we help.

**Tuesday Night Ministry** is collecting **Oatmeal and other Hot Cereals** for the month of December.

Thank you for your help in these outreach ministries.

## Other Announcements

**Wednesday Night Devotional and Potluck** – We will meet Wednesday evening 12/4 at 6:00pm for a potluck dinner, and discussions. We will be discussing "JOY", the theme of the following Sunday's text. If you would like to join online (Zoom), please let Pastor Scott know.

**Congregational Meeting** – Today after worship – Voting on the Proposed Budget for 2025 and members to the Consistory – Susie Clutz, Calvin Livingston, Rich Owens, Tina Shafer, Rick Waters, and Alyn Wilson.

**Bobby Jo Valentine Concert** - Today at 4:00pm. Light refreshments will be served. Bring your friends. Concert is free, a good will offering will be appreciated.

**Children's Christmas Pageant** - Join us next Sunday during worship for the Children's Christmas Pageant. They have been working very hard on this and it will be an exciting and enjoyable presentation.

**Cookie Exchange** - Join us after worship on December 22<sup>nd</sup> for a wonderful time of exchanging Christmas goodies! Please bring 3 dozen of your favorite cookies for the exchange and be prepared to go home with an assortment of cookies. The extra cookies will be shared with Zion's guests for the Historic Houses of Worship Tour.

**Historic Houses of Worship Tour** – Once again we will be participating in the Historic Houses of Worship Tour on December 26<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 – 7:00pm. We are looking to volunteers to greet our visitors, handle refreshments, and give tours of our church. If you can help, please contact the church office.



**Bobby Jo Valentine**  
Heart-Opening Folk/Pop

Zion Reformed UCC  
201 North Potomac Street  
Hagerstown, MD  
December 8, 2024 @ 4PM.

"Catchy songs with good  
tunes and intelligent,  
thoughtful lyrics in the  
tradition of Bob Dylan and Cat  
Stevens"  
Stephen Schwartz, Creator of  
Wicked and Godspell

Please RSVP to  
[zionrucs@myactv.net](mailto:zionrucs@myactv.net) or  
(301) 739-7244

**Service Credits**  
**CCLI Number: 6212519**  
**December 8**

**Gathering music:** Saviour of the People, Come. Settings by J. S. Bach and D. Buxtehude. © 1940 by G. Schirmer.

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People. Composed by Paul Manz. © 1962 by Concordia Publishing House. Performed by C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.

**Prelude:** Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence. 17<sup>th</sup> century French tune. Setting by Benjamin Kolodziej. © 2015 by Concordia Publishing House. Performed by C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.

**Hymns:** Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne. Red 126. Tune: Margaret. Composed by Timothy R. Matthews (1876). Words by Emily E. S. Elliot (1864). Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.

God of Grace. GG 307. Composed by John Hughes (1907). Words by Harry Emerson Fosdick (1930). Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.

Let There Be Peace on Earth. Composed by Jill Jackson and Sy Miller. Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.

Source(s): Hymnary ([hymnary.org](http://hymnary.org)).

**Special music:** Gesu Bambino. Composed by Petro A. Yon. © 1917 by J. Fischer. Performed by Amber Nilson (flute), Barbara Hendershot (chimes), and Byron Stay (flugelhorn), C. M. Moblard (organ)..

**Offertory:** Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring. Composed by J. S. Bach. Arr. by Lani Smith. © 1991 by Lorenz Publishing Co. Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC. CCLI number: 2782641

**Postlude:** Angels We Have Heard on High. Traditional French melody. Arr. by Mary McDonald. © 2014 by Lorenz Publishing Co. Performed by Byron L. Stay (trumpeter) and C. M. Moblard (organist) of Zion Reformed UCC.

## Our Mission Statement

*To share the gospel of Christ in such a way that we find God, grow our faith,  
discover our purpose and make a difference.*



## Zion Reformed United Church of Christ

**Welcome** to the Zion Reformed United Church of Christ, an **Open and Affirming Church** striving to welcome and value all people and creation. I am glad you have joined us this morning. I believe you will find Zion Church an open and safe place to ask the difficult questions of life and a community that honors each spiritual journey. I encourage you to ask me or our members about our community, explore our bulletin and website and gift us with your contact information (phone, address, email) in our Guest Book or Pew Card. I/we are ready to answer any question or to help connect you to any program that we can. I hope to greet you in person after the service or that you'll contact me.

Many blessings, Pastor Scott

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### To Give Electronically

#### **Zion Reformed United Church of Christ**

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Web: [www.zionreformed.church](http://www.zionreformed.church) | Facebook: @ZionRUCC

Join us via Zoom: Meeting ID: 876 0291 7867 Password: Peace

#### **Rev. Dr. E. Scott Winnette, Pastor**

Phone: 240-675-3227 | Email: [pastorwinnette@gmail.com](mailto:pastorwinnette@gmail.com)

