

December 28, 2025  
10:15 AM  
First Sunday after Christmas  
Lessons and Carols

+ GATHERING +

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

WELCOME and GREETING

PRELUDE    This Endris Night - Gordon Phillips

CALL TO WORSHIP

How beautiful on the mountains  
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,  
who brings good news,  
who announces salvation,  
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

**How beautiful in the valleys  
are the hearts, the minds, the voices  
of all who proclaim God's love.**

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices;  
together they shout for joy,  
for in plain sight they see  
the return of the Lord to Zion.

**In silence and song,  
in protest and prayer,  
in love and laughter  
we proclaim what we know:  
God is here among us.**

Break forth; shout together for joy,  
you ruins of Jerusalem.

**God's comfort is among us.  
God's grounding is beneath us.  
God's joy surrounds us.**

All the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.

**Everyone will know what God has done.  
This Christmas, love is born!**

CAROL ELW 269 Once in Royal David's City

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God-with-us, we gather again at your cradle today to marvel at your presence: the Almighty in one little huggable bundle. Even as we are drawn down to you, you call us to look up, look out, look around. You meet us here, and surprise us by appearing to us new each day. Show us who you are, our God always with us, and we will be astounded by your presence again. **Amen.**

+ WORD +

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

FIRST READING: Luke 1:5-20, 24-25

*An Angel of God Visits Zechariah*

*Reflection Question*

When has someone brought you news so good you could hardly believe it? What message have you recognized as a message from God, even if only in retrospect?

PRAYER

God of unbelievably good news, you moved Zechariah from incredulity to faith. Move us to have such faith too, that when the goodness you promise seems too good to be true, we proclaim it anyway. **Amen.**

CAROL ELW 250 Blessed Be the God of Israel

SECOND READING: Luke 1:26-38

*Mary Greets the Angel Gabriel*

*Reflection Question*

When have you surprised yourself by how quickly you answered God's call to love or serve?  
When has someone else surprised you like this?

PRAYER

God of divine disruption, you surprised Mary with a holy opportunity and gave her the courage to consent. Cultivate such courage in us. Give us the curiosity to say yes, open to where you will lead. **Amen.**

MUSICAL OFFERING

Ave Maria - Carlo Rossini  
Sadie Hanish, soprano

THIRD READING: Matthew 1:18-24

*Joseph Dreams of an Angel of God*

*Reflection Question*

Has your commitment to God's message ever caused conflict or pain in your life? If so, how did God show up to bring you through such times? If not, what examples—personal or historical—can you think of who endured this?

PRAYER

Gracious God, when serving you causes rifts in our human relationships, inspire understanding and compassion, that even in division or disagreement we might know your goodness. **Amen.**

MUSICAL OFFERING

Joseph dearest, Joseph mine - setting by Eugenie Rocherolle

Emma Bowersox, piano

FOURTH READING: Luke 2:8-20

*The Shepherds Receive Good News*

*Reflection Question*

When has your fear turned into wonder or even joy?

PRAYER

Radiant God, you showered the shepherds with starlight and surprised them with a newborn ruler in a manger. Send your love to us on angel wings of wonder. When awe leaves us trembling, speak peace to our hearts. **Amen.**

CAROL ELW 290 Go, Tell It On the Mountain

FIFTH READING: Luke 2:25-38

*Anna and Simeon Recognize the Infant Savior*

*Reflection Question*

When has an elder, mentor, parent, or prophet told you something you needed to hear?

PRAYER

Holy God, Simeon and Anna waited a lifetime to witness your arrival. They didn't know just what they were waiting for, but they kept the faith and proclaimed Jesus' birth with confidence and joy. Thank you for the elders in our church and our lives who have proclaimed good news boldly for us to hear, too. **Amen.**

CAROL ELW 276 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

SIXTH READING: Matthew 2:1-18

*Herod Kills the Innocents of Bethlehem*

*Reflection Question*

Who is still waiting for God to bring peace, joy, or hope amid the deepest tragedies of life?

## PRAYER

God of mercy, a tragedy followed Jesus' birth. Hold the prayers of everyone who cries to you in your compassionate heart. Sow the seeds of mercy in us so that we will weep with the grieving and advocate for the innocent. **Amen.**

MUSICAL OFFERING      The Coventry Carol (16<sup>th</sup> century English)

## OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING      Of the Father's Love Begotten - Lani Smith

## OFFERTORY

What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him—give my heart.

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God of all creation, the universe praises you for everything you have done. As we offer these simple gifts, transform them beyond anything we expect. Let them become hope for the hopeless, care for the forgotten, and peace for all who need safety. Send us with this bounty to care for a world in need. **Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*Each petition will end with the phrase:*

Love incarnate,  
**Be born among us.**

*The prayers conclude:*

God, you came down that we might know love, and we do. Thank you. **Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

+ SENDING +

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## SENDING AND BLESSING

Go into the world  
bearing Love incarnate with you.  
Accompany the lonely,  
celebrate with the joyful,  
comfort the mournful,  
confront the oppressor  
and lift up the oppressed,  
join heaven nature in songs of praise.

God bless you with the delight  
of all creation's praise.  
Christ bless you with the courage  
of God's servants saying *yes*.  
Spirit bless you with the surprise  
of an old promise finally fulfilled.  
Go with the blessing of God,  
who is both Giver and Gift. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN ELW 289 Angels We Have Heard on High

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Carry God's love.  
**Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE In dulci jubilo - J.S. Bach

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PRAYER LIST

Please continue to keep the following people connected to our congregation in your prayers: Bob Moran, Leonard Gibeon, David Mounts, Ed & Billie Schanely, Steve Keyser, Andrew Breuninger, Renee Fels, Rebecca Jellen, Richard Ditzler, Joy Miller, Alyson Harvey, Audrey Sell, Marie Wolfe, Erik Ockenlaender, Mary Eberle, Tom Gracie, Brandon Blanchard, Gladys Kazalonis, Elizabeth Brossett and family, Fred Orrik, Nem Nonkovic, John Moore, Paige Seasock, Dave Nyce and Tanner Antalosky.

### Mark Your Calendar

Wednesday, December 31	Church Office Closed
Thursday, January 1	Church Office Closed
Sunday, January 4	9am Sunday School 10:15 Epiphany Worship 12 Mentor Bowling 3-5 Girl Scouts 6-8 Girl Scouts

**The Church office will be closed** December 31 & January 1st.

**The Community Meal at Pennsburg UCC Monday, January 5, 2026 3-7:30pm**

We will be serving Pork, Sauerkraut, Mashed Potatoes. Green Beans, Roll, Dessert, Iced Tea, Lemonade, Coffee The sign up link will be in the weekly email or go to:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4EAEAC23A1F9C16-49971285-community#/>

**Rise Against Hunger Meal Packaging Event coming January 25, 2026**

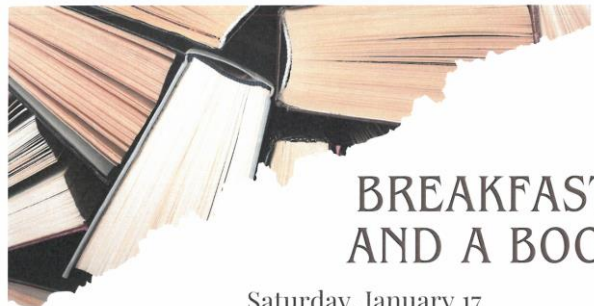
The Reformation Sister Congregations in the Upper Perkiomen Valley are hosting another meal packaging event with Rise Against Hunger. The event is scheduled for Sunday, January 25 following morning worship. The event will take place at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Red Hill.

The total number of spots for each shift have been divided equally among the seven churches, so St. John's open spots are listed below:

- one person for set up shift (12 noon -1:30 PM) - *requires heavy lifting*
- five people for first meal packaging shift (1:30-2:45 PM)
- five people for second meal packaging shift (3:15-4:30 PM)

A sign up sheet for those 11 spots is outside Pastor Becky's office and will remain there until January 1 or until all spots have been filled. If you have any questions, please reach out to Pastor Becky.

**The last Taize mid-week worship opportunity - 6-7 PM Jan 21 – Friedens UCC, Sumneytown**



## BREAKFAST AND A BOOK

Saturday, January 17  
9:30 AM  
at Friedens UCC Fellowship Hall

Breakfast will be served as we gather  
to discuss the book *Lamb: The Gospel  
According to Biff, Christ's Childhood  
Pal* by Christopher Moore

All are welcome!

