

First Sunday in Christmas - Eve of the New Year Sunday, December 31, 2023
Including Lighting of the Christ Candle

Theme: Watchnight - Our Spirit Waits



“The one seated on the throne said, "Behold I make all things new. Write these words for they are trustworthy and true." Revelation 21:5

GATHERING

Prelude: “Carol of the Bells” Lyndell Leatherman

Greeting and Welcome to Worship

*Call to Worship

Leader: We have welcomed the Christ child and declared that the glory of God’s salvation has come near.

People: Indeed, God’s salvation came to live among us and yet, still, we wait and watch and work for the power of that salvation to become more real, more widely known.

Leader: As we prepare to welcome a new year, we are thankful for how God has brought us through the past year—a salvation of its own. Is that not good enough?

People: We are eager to discover what the new year might bring. And so we continue to watch and work for God’s kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven.

Leader: We join generations of Simeons and Annas who learned and taught us how to listen, notice, and discern divine love at work in the world.

People: We watch and work for God’s kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven.

Leader: Come, let us worship God, whose love endures from generation to generation, guiding us from one year to the next.

People: Come, let us worship as we live in anticipation of God’s kingdom on earth as it is heaven.

*Prayer From the Past for a New Day

(Written by John Wesley (1703 - 1791): Cleric, theologian, and evangelist)

I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee or brought low for thee.

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. AMEN

* Hymn: #119 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

*Prayer of Confession for the New Year

INVITATION

Leader: Friends, let us prepare to enter the new year with hearts that have been unburdened, and let us make our confession before God and one another, first in silent prayer.

SILENT PRAYER

COMMUNAL PRAYER *(Please join me as we pray, saying,)*

God of stars and angels, God of sheep and lambs, of magi and shepherds: You know us well, better than we know ourselves. You hear us cry “Gloria!” and “Praise!” Yet you watch the human community tear things apart with our words and deeds, our cruelty and hate . You hear us say “Thy will be done” and “Use me, O God” and you watch so much of our world do nothing in response to cries for help.

You know us, and you love us, and you forgive. Hear us now say, “Help us to change; turn us around, give us courage. Provide us with what is needed to bring a glimmer of hope in the new year. This we pray in Jesus’ name. AMEN

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Scripture: Isaiah 61:10-62:3 and Luke 2:22-40

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Response: Gloria Patri - #581

Sermon: **"Listening"**

*Hymn: #151 "We Three Kings of Orient Are"

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Offering of Tithes and Offerings including Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of hope and joy, the gifts we offer to you pale when our minds try to grasp all we have been given in this season: wholeness in our woundedness, hope in our despair, peace in our turmoil, forgiveness in our rebellion. Like Simeon, we have listened with our ears that we might not miss you, and our eyes have seen your salvation! You gave us light in our darkness and hope in our discouragement. Help us embrace your extravagant generosity as we give ourselves to others. In our Savior's holy name, we pray. AMEN (Luke 2:22-40)

Announcements and Sharing Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People

* Hymn: #134 "Joy to the World"

*Charge and Benediction

Postlude: "Once in Royal David's City" Victor Johnson

The End of Worship
The Beginning of Service

*Those who wish may stand

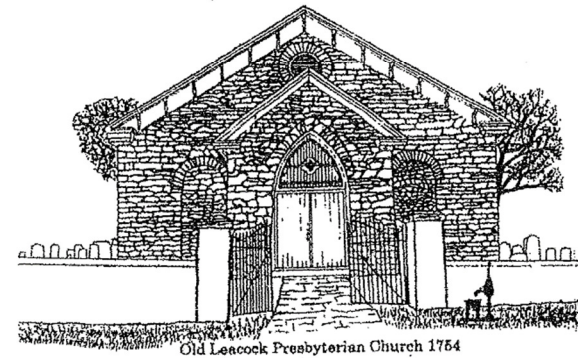
Rev. James Shuler, Interim Pastor
Mrs. Dianne Yuninger, Organist/Choir Director

Prayers of the Congregation

Prayer Person this week: Darwin & Lois Eshleman

Leacock Presbyterian Church

*First met in Leacock Township in 1724, recognized by the Synod in
1740, moved to Paradise in 1840.*



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