

WELCOME TO SHILOH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
EPIPHANY WORSHIP SERVICE
DECEMBER 31, 2023
8:30 AND 11:00 AM

MEDITATION

“At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”

– Albert Schweitzer

PRELUDE

8:30AM *“Rise Up, Shepherd and Follow”* Leatherman
11:00AM *“Have You Any Room for Jesus”* Arr. Auld

WELCOME AND CONCERNS

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Arise! Shine! Your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you!

Women: We have seen the star in the east, and we are following.

Men: We have remembered God’s wonder and promise, and we are worshiping.

All: We have come not to get presents, but to give them!

One: Lift up your eyes and look around; God’s people now gather together to open our hearts and sing out our praise.

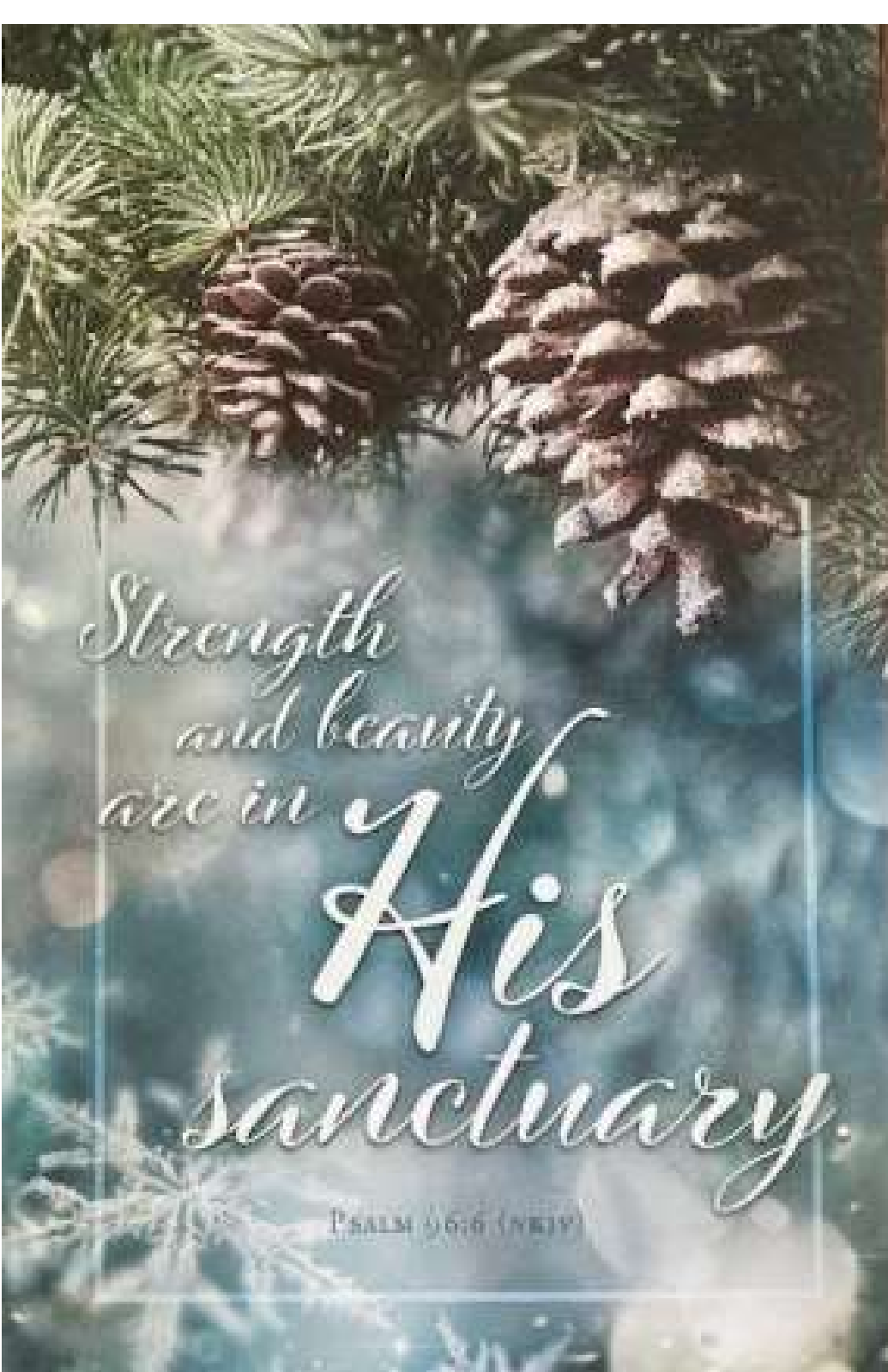
All: The mystery of God’s wonder and grace is here: Come, let us adore! Let us worship Christ!

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION

One: Let us pray!

God of wonder and mystery, today we remember how you surprise us in every age. Into the gloom of fear and want, you bring light; into emptiness, you bring abundance; into the cold, you bring warmth. Into the hardness of the world, you bring the greatest power we have known, in the seemingly powerless form of an infant. Enter now, Holy One, among us and within us, and move us to joyful adoration of your mystery and wonder. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

*HYMN *“As With Gladness Those of Old”* #159



PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Let us pray!

Everlasting God, we know how easy it is to forget your presence and power in our lives. Focused on our daily planners, we do not pay attention to the night sky and the stars that glitter. Surrounded by the sounds of anger, violence, and hate, we have trouble listening to your whispers of hope and grace. Thinking that Scripture is filled only with stories, we cannot understand your truth which can change lives.

Forgive us. There is no one who can hold a candle to you when it comes to mercy and hope. Lift us to our feet so we may walk with you; fill us with your strength so we may serve your people; touch us with your healing so we may proclaim to everyone the Good News that has come in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (*Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147*)

Haven't you been listening? The Good News is this: God never tires out, God is always with us, God heals us with mercy, God strengthens us for service.

**The One who numbers the stars knows each of us by name.
Thanks be to God, we are forgiven. Amen.**

EXCHANGING THE PEACE OF CHRIST (*Please wave to one another*)

One: Welcome the stranger. Welcome all who come. As Jesus welcomed everyone, no matter what their background, as he welcomed enemies and friends, outcasts and leaders, foreigners and neighbors, let us open our hearts and lives. Let us be Christ to everyone we meet. May the peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you.

CHILDREN'S SERMON (*All children of God who desire to come forward for the Children's Sermon are welcomed. Parent's/caregivers are encouraged to accompany their young child(ren) during the message.*)

*HYMN "What Child Is This" #148

WITNESS TO OUR SACRED STORY

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7

SPECIAL MUSIC

8:30 AM CHOIR "Follow the Star" Albrecht

11:00AM SOLO BY JESSIE SECHRIEST "A Christmas Trio"

Third Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

SERMON "Star of Wisdom"

*HYMN "We Three Kings of Orient Are" #13 Special Hymnal

PASTORAL PRAYER

SILENT PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

PRESENTING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS BEFORE GOD

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

From the prophet Isaiah, the wealth of the nations; from Paul the Apostle, the joyous news of mysterious grace; from the sages from the East, an homage of rich treasure: one after another, we hear grateful praise for the God who makes a home with humanity. We respond, as well: bringing our own treasure; singing our own joy; offering our own wonder. Let us give, richly and boldly. Let us gather our gifts together and offer them to God in gratitude and praise.

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE "Epiphany Doxology"

**What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise one, I would bring my heart.
Yet what I can I give him, give my heart. Amen.
(Tune: Cranham)**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

One: Let us pray!

God of every good gift, here we present our offerings. There is money here, fulfilling our pledges to support the ministries we do in your name. There are gifts that we give in response to your Spirit, which we remember in joyful song and holy story, in prayer and silence. And there are other gifts, not physically on this table but held in the altar of our hearts. God, we offer them all to you. We ask your blessing on all that we give, so that your loving care reaches into us and out to all the world, ever more deeply and gracefully. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** *"Go, Tell It on the Mountain"* #154

BENEDICTION

One: Go forth in the light of God's star. Go forth committed to a journey of faith and courage. Go forth to give the precious gift of your life to Christ.

All: We will go forth and let the star guide us. We will share with others the journey of life. We will praise God, for the gift beyond measure – Jesus Christ! Amen.

POSTLUDE

8:30 AM *"Then Shall Your Light Break Forth"* Harris
11:00AM *"Come On, Ring Those Bells"* Culverwell

WE ARE DELIGHTED THAT YOU JOINED US FOR WORSHIP TODAY!

In the event of inclement weather, any delays or closings will be listed on the **Church's Website and Facebook page**. We will also submit the information to **Fox 43 News and WGAL New 8**. If services are held, please use your best judgement as to whether you are able to attend.



Annual Reports for all organizations and committees of the church and Sunday School are due in the church office by **Sunday, December 31 2023**.

PRAYERS FOR OUR COMMUNITY OF FAITH

Sandy Baboian, Julene Bechtel, Jim Sr. and Rosemary Bentzel, Rosabel Bentzel, Marvel Burg, Helen Byers, Gerry Funkhouser, Joe Jordan, Bev Kirk, Donna Krone, Elaine Krout, Dottie Limbert, Catherine Lochman, Arlene Myers, Joanne Overmiller, Randy Reisinger, Donna Robertson, Charlotte Rohrbaugh, Cedric Simpson, Stewart Wagner, Romaine Walton, Elva Winter

THOSE WHO GRIEVE FOR THEIR LOVED ONES

The Bechtel Family; The Geesey Family; The Shaffer Family

Morning Prayer

As a child of yours, Lord, I know that I am your masterpiece though I feel so far from it. Help me to remember my worth in you when I'm faced with challenging situations. When I feel depressed, help me to remember that I'm fearfully and wonderfully made in your image – a replica of you and that you loved me so much you thought that I was worth dying for. I don't know too many people that would die for me, but you did, and I'm eternally grateful and humbled. I submit all to you today. Amen.

Evening Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,
I can't sleep.
I'm tossing and turning. Again.
I'm so thankful You never grow weary
And You never sleep.
I'm thankful that You are here with me right now,
Even when my mind won't stop churning
And my head won't stop spinning.
Even when I know that worrying gets me nowhere
And my heart needs to rely on You.
I need You — the Good Shepherd —
Because counting sheep just doesn't work.
Would you comfort my heart as only You can?
Will you rescue me from my own spiral of thoughts?
For I know that when I rest in You,
peace like a river overflows my soul and
I can praise You in advance for sweet rest. Amen.

- **THE POINSETTIAS** are presented to the glory of God and in appreciation for our flower sponsors this past year.
- **THE BULLETINS** are dedicated to the glory of God and in celebration of Natalie's birthday with love, from your mom and family.
- **VIDEO TEAM:** Lew Wallace, Sallie Hagerman, Dani Bentzel, Matt Hildebrecht, & Nathan Limbert.
- **LITURGIST:** **8:30** Katie Bentzel **11:00** Mary Reiber
- **GREETERS:** **8:30** Jeff & Cheryl Hershey **11:00** Shirley Lohmann & Joyce Mummert
- **NURSERY:** **8:30** John Reiber **11:00** Volunteer
- **MUSIC:** Choir, Jessie Sechriest, Sandy Bamberger

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OF THE VOLUNTEERS AND MUSICIANS!

The next **Shiloh UCC Men's Breakfast** will be held on **Tuesday, January 9th at 8:30 am** at Dover Valley Restaurant. Contact Brad Jacobs for more information.



It's that time of year to warm up with a nice cup of **coffee** from **Costa Rica!** A new shipment has come in and it includes decaffeinated coffee as well as whole coffee beans for a fresh grind! Please contact Linda Little if interested at 717-309-4523

Please contact the office if you're interested in **sponsoring bulletins**. The cost is \$20 and may be placed in your regular offering envelope. Please call the church office **2 weeks' prior** your desired date to have your "Special" wording placed in the bulletin.



GROCERY GIFT CARDS = CONTRIBUTION TO CHURCH. Weis and Giant grocery gift cards are available for purchase in the gallery. For every dollar of gift cards purchased, \$.05 is donated to the church by the grocery store. This contribution is used to support our

Missionaries, Sally Jane and Crosby Johnson in Costa Rica.

"No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at Shiloh UCC, where God is still speaking"

THIS WEEK

SUN	8:30 & 11:00	Epiphany/New Year's Eve
MON		OFFICE CLOSED
WED	9:30	Bible Study (202)
	5:00	TOPS (117)
	7:00	Consistory Retreat (202)
THUR	6:30	NA Group (100)
SUN	8:30 & 11	Worship/Communion/Installation of Consistory



ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:

CHRISTMAS EVE AM- 90, CHRISTMAS EVE PM - 127



OFFERING is continually being collected for our missionaries, **Sally Jane and Crosby Johnson.**

THE CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	Rev. Melinda LaMontagne, Ph.D. pastormelinda@shilohucc.com 717-764-3609
Pastor Melinda office hours:	Wed 9AM-12PM & 5-8PM Thurs & Fri 9AM-12PM
Director of Music	Stephanie Limbert
Organist	Sandra Bamberger
Missionaries in Costa Rica	Sally Jane and Crosby Johnson
Early Learning Center Director	Allison Hartnett
Administrative Assistant	Maira Rivera office@shilohucc.com
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