

Welcome to Schuylerville UMC

Christmas Eve

A Service of Word, Music, Prayer, Story and Light

December 24, 2024

*On this Holy night, let us gather to reclaim a promise born
in a manger, Jesus the Savior, born to us all!*

***Please rise as you are able**

Gathering Music

Welcome

Lighting of Altar Candles & Candles on Wreath (4) Acolyte

Introit - "Christ Be Our Light" (As candles are lit)

***Call to Worship (Response in bold print)**

For you who are filled to the brim with happiness,

Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is born.

For you who are mourning the loss of family and friends,

Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is born.

For you who feel like you are tripping about in darkness,

Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is born.

For you who rest in gratitude and contentment,

Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is born.

For you who feel the ache of loneliness,

Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is born.

For you who are surrounded by unlikely yet beautiful companionship,

Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is born.

Come, let us worship the birth of our Savior!

Come, let us worship God who came to dwell among us!

~Written by: Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, Adapted

***Carol #234 UMH "O Come, All Ye Faithful" Verses 1 – 4 & 6**

***Evening Prayer (unison)**

Almighty God, you have favored us with the greatest gift ever given--your only begotten Son, light of true light, God of true God. May we never take this your gift for granted; may our songs

of praise never fade, and may we treasure it in our hearts always and forever. Bless all of us here gathered in worship as well as our loved ones at home. May peace and joy ring in our hearts and reverberate through our communities tonight in the name of Jesus the new-born King. In the name of our Savior, we pray. (1) **And as he taught: "Our Father..." Amen. (LORD'S PRAYER)**

(1) Rev. F. Schaefer

Advent Wreath Ceremony/Reading & Lighting of Christ Candle

***Carol #230 UMH "O Little Town of Bethlehem"**

***Affirmation of Faith #881 UMH Apostles Creed**

Gloria Patri #71 UMH

Pastoral Prayer

Children's Story

***Carol #227 UMH "The Friendly Beasts"**

Prayer for Illumination: O Lord, as we celebrate the arrival of your messenger of peace – the One who not only *brings* the good news but *is* the good news – open our hearts and minds, eyes and ears, to hear your announcement of salvation.

Old Testament Isaiah 9: 2-7 *Reader*

Gospel Lesson Luke 2: 1- 20 *Pastor*

Christmas Message

"NO ROOM" A Reflection of the Poor Innkeeper" Pastor Nancy

Moment of Silent Reflection

***Special Song "O Holy Night" (On Enclosure)**

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Christmas Offerings are brought forth and placed in offering plates at the front pews with sincere thanks.

Christmas Eve Communion

On this not so silent night.....

Moment of Silence

Invitation

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts to the Lord.

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

Pastor: Let us proclaim our faith in God and in his Son, Jesus the Christ, our Lord, our brother, our Savior.

All: We come before him, thankful for all his love, grace and mercy.

Liturgy for the Bread

Pastor: Most Holy, merciful and loving God, as we gather around this table to celebrate the birth and life of Jesus, prepare us to take this bread, remembering Jesus, who in sacrificial love laid down his life for our sake.

People: With the shepherds in Bethlehem, we will eat this bread. May it fill us with renewed faith in God and our salvation through Christ.

Pastor: For to us a Child is Born. To us a Son is given. His name is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

People: The mystery of this table, the awesome mystery of cradle and cross, fills our hearts, and hope for the salvation of God's creation is awakened.

Pastor: Even at the moment of His miraculous birth, the seed of His betrayal and death was sown, so that in the Upper Room of His betrayal, Jesus' Christmas legacy was fulfilled. It was there that Jesus took bread, gave thanks, blessed it and gave it to His disciples saying; *"Take and eat, this is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

People: Amen.

Liturgy for the Cup

Pastor: God of everlasting love and grace, as we draw near to the lowly manger where Mary placed the child Jesus, the awesome reality of your love still elusive, yet miraculous, we bow to worship the Christ Child, bathed in the light of the star and the shadow of the cross.

People: Here, at this communion table may we breathe in the awesome majesty of the story---the story of surprised shepherds, innkeepers, and singing angels, and a baby's birth---all bringing to mind how you, Glorious God, are born into our lives.

Pastor: This cup reminds us of the One whose life teaches us the truth about ourselves and our salvation; Whose blood is poured out for our sake; Whose resurrection gives us hope for all eternity.

People: In this season of giving, we remember how much we have been given. Accept our offering of ourselves, O God, as we come with grateful hearts.

Pastor: Again we move from the stable of Christmas to the Upper Room of Good Friday. There, as he had done with the bread, Jesus took the Cup, blessed it, and said: *"This is the Cup of the New Covenant, poured out in my blood for the forgiveness of sins. Drink this Cup in remembrance of me."* On this most Holy Night we remember, that apart from the sacrifice of Good Friday and the Miracle of Easter—Christmas has no meaning.

People: Lord, pour your blessing upon these gifts and upon us. AMEN!

Receiving of the bread and cup

Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

Thank you, most gracious God, for allowing us to share in this feast as your family, and to be fed with the bread of heaven; give us grace that we may all grow in love, glorifying You in all things, through Jesus our Savior. Amen.

Candlelight Vigil (*The ushers will light their candles from the Christ candle, light Pastor's candle and proceed to light the candle of the worshipers closest to the aisle. Then those persons pass the light to the person next to them. Please dip the unlit candle into the lit candle.*)

***Carol "Silent Night"**

Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child
Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace / Sleep in heavenly peace

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior is born / Christ, the Savior is born

Silent night, holy night
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth / Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth

***Moment of Silence in Candlelight**

***Blessing:** "May Christ be your light tonight and forevermore."

A Christmas Card for YOU



Beloved of God!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year blessings!

Parish of Schuylerville & Quaker Springs UMC'S

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