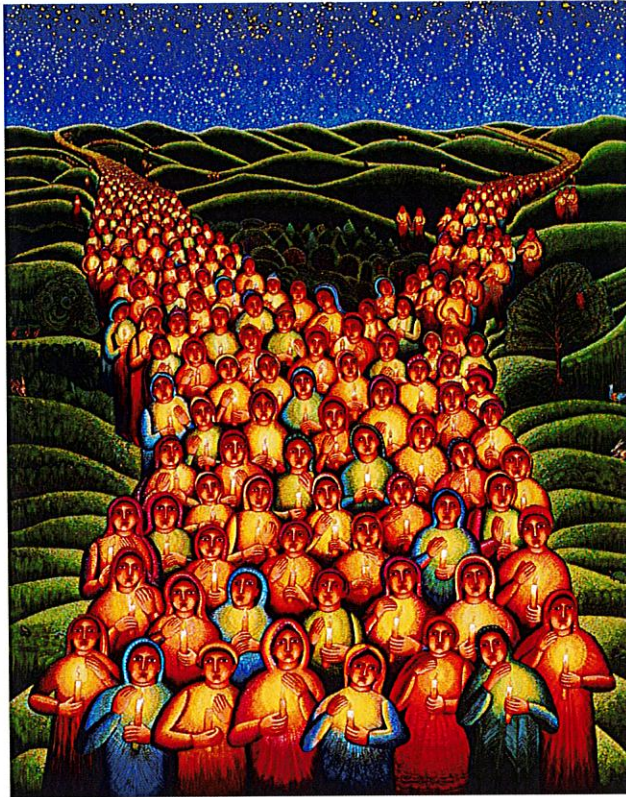




MECHANICSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
300 East Simpson Street • Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-6596
717-697-0351 • www.mechpresby.org
December 29, 2024 • First Sunday of Christmas • 11:00am



"Festival of Lights" | John August Swanson

Gathering Around the Word

We gather knowing God is with us.

"Celebrate endings – for they precede new beginnings." ~ Jonathan Huie

Prelude

Ding Dong Merrily! He is Born!

Trad. Carols, arr. Anna Laura Page

Welcome

***Introit #86**

The People Who Walks in Darkness

Isaiah 9

How vast is our God's dominion! How far truth and mercy extend.

*The zeal of the Lord will accomplish its purpose: justice shall reign without end. His name is
(2x) Wonderful, Counselor, Almighty God, Father forever, Prince of Peace. (2x)*

***Call to Worship**

Behold! God's people are coming!

Pulpit Side: We come from the west!

Font Side: We come from the east!

Front: We come from the north!

Back: We come from the south!

All: Following the star, we come to worship our Lord!

***Hymn #152**

What Star is This That Beams so Bright

Puer Nobis Nacitur

***Prayer of Confession**

Why do we confess our sin?

Because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

But why do we do this together?

Because we are a community, a covenant people.

Then, let us confess our sin.

Gracious God, we confess our failure to recognize the light of Christ in our lives and in the faces of others. We have often chosen our own self-interest over the needs of others. We cling to old hurts when you ask us to forgive. We have been slow to respond to the call of love and justice. Forgive us, O Lord, for our refusal to follow you. Open our hearts to receive the light of Christ shining in every person, in every situation. May we be instruments of your hope, peace, joy, and love to a world in need of you. Through Christ, we confess our sins and ask for forgiveness... (time of silent confession).

***Assurance of Pardon**

We pour the water into the baptismal font to symbolize the faithfulness of God and the washing away of sin.

Response #113, Refrain

*Angels We Have Heard on High
Gloria! In Excelsis Deo! (2x)*

Gloria

Proclaiming the Word

We experience the Word of God

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading	Luke 2:8-20	NT. pg. 59
Second Reading	Matthew 2:1-12	NT. pg. 2
Reflection	The Leaving	Rev. Emily D. Sutphin
Voluntary	<i>The Holly and the Ivy</i>	Trad. English, arr. Lani Smith
Third Reading	Luke 2:25-38	NT. pg. 59
Fourth Reading	John 1:6-8 & 19-27	NT. pgs. 91-93
Reflection	The Receiving	Rev. Emily D. Sutphin

Selah: A Holy Pause for Silent Reflection

A chime will sound to mark the transition to the next element of worship.

Responding to the Word

We affirm our faith and commitment to the Word of God

***Hymn #147**

The First Noel

English Carol

***Affirmation of Faith**

We believe that God has come to us as a little child, making our weakness his strength, securing our salvation by becoming one of us, blessing us with a steadfast savior, and filling our hearts with joy to be shared with one another.

We believe that God has birthed righteousness and justice into the world giving us a law that will be written upon our hearts, making the cause of the oppressed the highest priority, declaring an everlasting reign of peace, defeating the power of pain and suffering.

We believe that God calls us to participate in this reality of love, inviting us to proclaim Christ's resurrection at the Table, transforming us as disciples to go out into the world, sending us forth to announce God's kin-dom of peace and comfort, challenging us to see everyone as nothing less than beloved children of God. This we believe. This we preach. This we seek to embody in word and deed. Amen.

Community Pastoral Prayer

Adapted from Isaiah 60:1-6

People of God, arise, shine for your light has come!

The light of Christ has come into the world!

His name is Jesus, Messiah, the Prince of Peace.

His name is Immanuel, God with us.

People of God, arise, shine, for your light has come!

And we will follow the light of Christ.

While nations rage from age to age,

We will follow the light.

Through joy and sorrow, peace and restlessness,

We will follow the light.

Whether it leads down familiar paths or takes unexpected turns,

We will follow the light.

When we leave the past to embrace the future,

We will follow the light.

Along life's journey when we see our neighbors,

We will share the light.

Where there is injustice, enmity, and hate,

We will share the light.

Where people are in need of hope,

We will be the light.

Wherever we are called to go,

We will be the light.

The light of Christ is our guiding star illuminating the way ahead.

The light of Christ is love. We will follow, share, and be the light.

When our journey brings us, finally, to the heart of God,

We pray we will be welcomed into your eternal light.

We pray with the prayer that Jesus taught us:

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Offering of Tithes & Gifts

You are invited to come forward during the offering to receive your star word.

Offertory

Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella 17th Cent. Provincial, arr. Bill Holcombe

*Doxology #134, v. 2

Joy to the World

Antioch

*Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*Prayer of Dedication

Bearing & Following the Word

We declare the Word of God throughout the week

*Hymn #151, v. 1-4

We Three Kings

Kings of Orient

*Charge & Benediction

*Hymn #151, v. 5

We Three Kings

Kings of Orient

*Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:
Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!*

Postlude

A Child is Born to Us

Martha Sobaje

Welcome to worship this morning!

Bold print indicates congregational reading or response.

An asterisk * indicates when to stand in body or in spirit.

Offerings are welcome! Place in the boxes located at each of the Sanctuary entrances or give online.

New here? Check out our website: mechpresby.org

The yellow rose symbolizes the presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

Today's Worship Leaders

Rev. Emily D. Sutphin – Associate Pastor

Cathay L. Snyder – Christian Education Director | Mark G. McKeever – Director of Music and Organist

Lorri Yawney – Piano, Susan Miller – Flute

Affirmation of Faith written by Rev. Stephen M. Fearing, liturgylink.net

Ministers

All members of the congregation

Senior Pastor/Head of Staff Rev. Kathryn Z. Johnston (she/her) kjohnston@mechpresby.org
Associate Pastor Rev. Emily D. Sutphin (she/her) esutphin@mechpresby.org
Christian Education Director Cathay L. Snyder (she/her) csnyder@mechpresby.org
Director of Music Mark G. McKeever (he/him) mmckeever@mechpresby.org
Church Administrator Angela J. Weir (she/her) aweir@mechpresby.org
Playful Beginnings Director Karen P. Taylor (she/her) playfulbeginnings.mpc@gmail.com

MECHANICSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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300 E. Simpson St.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
717-697-0351

SESSION

Class of 2024

Dan Alex, Bob Bell, Katie Chase,
Becky Giovagnoli, Lori Heenan

Class of 2025

Amy Berry, Ted Foor, Sue Karakantas,
Larry Stoner, Rick Whitcomb

Class of 2026

Nils Hagen-Frederiksen, Kelli
Scurfield, Ran Singiser, Jenn
Thomson, Tim Wonder

DEACONS

Class of 2024

Marybeth Hummel, Ken Kleinert, Rich
Marlin, Cathy Petko, Kim Savidge,
Jan Whitcomb

Class of 2025

Martie Bricker, Shannon Hammel,
Grace House, Bill Klebe, Judy Klebe,
Keni Melphis

Class of 2026

Heather Barto, Jan Burrows, Dave
Donat, Lara Frymark, Debi Gross,
Patti Hinkson

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**Church Office Hours**  
**9-4:30 Monday-Thursday**  
**Closed Fridays**

*The Church Office will be closed  
December 25 through January 1.*

12/29/2024

# WELCOME TO MPC

## More People Caring

Whether you're a first time visitor, a long time member, or  
anywhere in between—

**We're glad you're here!**

## 3 WAYS TO GIVE



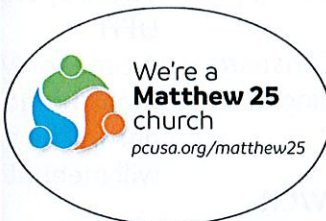
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Offering stands  
by doors



**TEXT**  
Text "MechPresby"  
to 73256



**ONLINE**  
MechPresby.org  
Click "Give"



## WEEKLY SERVICES & THINGS TO KNOW

**Sundays: 8:15 & 11am Worship; 9:35 Sunday School**

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**Children** are welcome in worship and are invited to participate in Communion. Activity packets can be found in the back and there are children's tables in the front and back of the Sanctuary.

**Restrooms** with baby changing stations can be found through the middle Sanctuary door, to the left of the kitchen. Non-gendered restrooms are located through the front right Sanctuary door, down the hallway and on the right.



## SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES (9:35am)

Age 2— 2nd grade | Nursery Wing

3rd-5th grades | Lower Fellowship Hall

6th-8th | Confirmation Class | Mission & Student Center

9th-12th | Chat & Chew | Mission & Student Center

Joyful Hearts | P.W. Conference Room | Women's class.

Dave Petko Class | Library |

Thoughtful Christian | Upper Fellowship Hall

Short-term studies focused on current events & issues.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**First Friday Singles | January 3 | 12:30pm | PWCR**

Come join us for lunch and fellowship! Bring your bagged lunch and dessert will be provided! Contact Joyce Lackey for more information.

**MPC's Love Quilters | January 6 | 1:00pm | McVitty's**

Whether you want to learn quilting, knitting, or crocheting, or you are a beginner to advanced, please share your talent with us. Contact Gail McVitty at gmcvitty(at)verizon(dot)net for more information!

**Tuesday Nights @ MPC | January 7 | 5:30pm | UFH**

A time for MPC members and friends of all ages to break bread, learn, and fellowship together! Dinner will be served at 5:30. The Joyful Noise Choir will meet at 6pm.

**Contemporary Women Writers Group | January 9 | 7:00pm | PWCR**

The next book is *Jesus for Everyone: Not Just Christians* by Amy Jill Levine. If you are interested in joining or ordering a book, contact Cathay Snyder.

**Race & the Church | January 14 | 6:30pm | PWCR**

We will be discussing chapters 9-16 of Anthony Ray Hinton's *The Sun Does Shine*. Questions? Contact Cathay Snyder.

**Living While Grieving | January 16 | 2:00pm | PWCR**

Join us for a conversation with our guest speaker from Homeland Hospice presenting about how to develop a framework for sustaining a grief support group at MPC! Contact Ran Singiser for more information!

## 6th—12th Grade Events

*Friends Are Always Welcome!*

**1/26 | 4th @ 304 6:00pm-7:30pm | M&S Center**

Come join us for some fellowship, food, and fun!  
Bring a friend!

## December 29, 2024 -January 5, 2025

|           |                                            |                                                                             |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sunday    | 11:00 AM                                   | Christmastide Worship                                                       |
| Monday    |                                            | Church Office Closed                                                        |
| Tuesday   |                                            | Church Office Closed                                                        |
| Wednesday |                                            | Church Office Closed                                                        |
|           | Happy<br>New Year!                         |                                                                             |
| Thursday  |                                            |                                                                             |
| Friday    | 6:15 AM<br>11:30 AM                        | Men's Fellowship, PWCR<br>First Friday Singles Group                        |
| Saturday  |                                            |                                                                             |
| Sunday    | 8:15 AM<br>9:35 AM<br>11:00 AM<br>12:00 PM | Sunday Worship<br>Sunday School<br>Sunday Worship<br>Congregational Meeting |

**MPC's Joy Stitchers | January 20 | 10:00am | McVitty's**

Whether you want to learn quilting, knitting, or crocheting, or you are a beginner to advanced, please share your talent with us. Contact Gail McVitty for more information!

**Tuesday Nights @ MPC | January 21 | 5:30pm | UFH**

A time for MPC members and friends of all ages to break bread, learn, and fellowship together! Dinner will be served at 5:30. The Joyful Noise Choir will meet at 6pm.

**Untapped | January 23 | 7:00pm | Hemauer**

Join us for lively conversation, trivia, and lots of laughter! We will meet at Hemauer Brewing Company. Bring a friend! Questions? Contact Cathay Snyder.

## Choir Rehearsals:

The Chancel Choir will resume rehearsal on January 8 at 6:30pm.

The Bells of Celebration will resume rehearsal on January 15 at 5:00pm.

Please contact  
Mark McKeever for more  
information.



By entering an event or program on these premises, you are entering an area where photography, audio and video recording will occur. Your entry and presence constitute your consent to be photographed, filmed, and/or otherwise recorded and to the release, publication, exhibition, or reproduction of any and all recorded media of your appearance, voice, and name for any purpose whatsoever in connection with Mechanicsburg Presbyterian Church and its initiatives, including, by way of example only, use on websites, in social media, and advertising.