

***No matter who you are,  
or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.***



**GRACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
128 East Baltimore Street  
Greencastle, PA 17225**

Pastor: Rev. Mark Ruzicka  
Choir Director: Patty Stepler  
Organist: Susan Alsip-Lawson  
Ministers: All Those Present

**Order of Worship for Sunday, December 7, 2025  
The Second Sunday of Advent and Holy Communion**

**WE WELCOME GOD'S PRESENCE**

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Leader: Welcome to Grace Church where we are God's people.  
**All: United through Jesus Christ on a journey to grow, to share our faith and  
serve others in the Greencastle area and the world.**

**PRELUDE MUSIC**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel  
-traditional plainsong/Hayes and Wagner

**CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Isaiah 40:3)**

Leader: A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
**All: make straight in the desert a highway for our God."**

Leader: As we worship today, let us prepare to welcome God's dramatic work  
**All: in our midst, in our hearts, in our community, and in all of creation.  
Let us worship God.**



**UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Big-hearted God, who calls men and women to live out the courage of their convictions with abandon,  
I confess my hardheartedness.  
I am not brave like John, nor do I want to be.

I am sullen when I could be joyful.  
I give in to social pressures instead of speaking the truth with love.  
You lead me paths of righteousness, but I choose the hamster wheel instead.

This Christmas, create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit in me.  
I pray in Christ's name.

*(a time of silent prayer)*

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Leader: Behold, Christ is the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, including your own.  
In Christ, we are forgiven.  
All: Thanks be to God.

**Advent Candlelighting & Readings - Week 2: Peace**

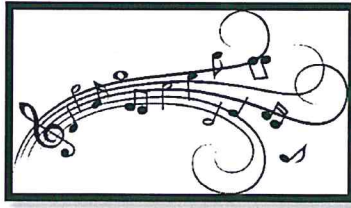
Reader: My fellow disciples, poet June Jordan asks,  
"When will we seize the world around us with our freedom?"  
All: Let us cry out, "Now!"

Reader: And poet Audre Lorde heartens us, "I make my now."  
All: And power is spoken—peace.

Reader: As we gather around to light the second Advent candle, let us first bless and embody this present moment with the sounds of our imagination. Friends, let us be in the fire of the Spirit here and now together! Spirit of Peace, we feel you, we hear you, we see you, we trust you!

*(We now light the Candle of Peace)*

Reader: Bless this ceremony of naming our longings.  
All: Of our everlasting desire for peace, for justice, for you, Emmanuel. Amen



**CHRISTMAS CANTATA**  
Performed by Chancel Choir

***COME TO THE MANGER***  
***By Joe E. Parks***

***Narrators:***  
***Tim Bryan, Steve Miller & Pastor Mark Ruzicka***

*Come to the Manger*  
*Wonderful the Story*  
*Son of God incarnate Mystery*

*In the Little Town of Nazareth*  
*Solo: Steve Miller*

*The Time was Long Ago*  
*Lo, the Days Were Accomplished*

*No Room, There was No Room for Him*  
*Solo: Patty Stepler*

*Glory to God!*

*A Child Is Born in Bethlehem*  
*Duet: Darlene Bitner & Margaret Stouffer*

*Wise Men from the East They Are*  
*Something Wonderful*  
*Come to the Manager*

OPEN SHARING OF PRAYERS, CONCERNS, JOYS AND CELEBRATIONS

MOMENT OF SILENCE AND REFLECTION

PASTORAL PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER (Please Pray Together)

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.

WE GIVE BACK TO GOD

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Leader: 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 him my heart.  
Let us give our offerings to Christ's Church this morning.

*(Please sign the attendance pads found in the pews,  
and pass the top sheet to be collected during offering.)*

OFFERTORY MUSIC

What Child Is This *with* Away in a Manger *and* Lullay, Lullay  
-English melodies/Brinkley

**\*WE SING A SONG OF THANKSGIVING TO GOD**

(Please Sing Together)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ, all people here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore.  
Amen.**

**\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING**

**O Mighty One, You have done and are doing great things for us,  
and holy is Your name.**

**Bless all we offer you—ourselves, our time, and our possessions—  
that through us Your grace and favor may be made known to all the world,  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.**

***Holy Communion Liturgy***

**Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Leader: Jesus said, “I am the bread of life. You who come to me shall not hunger;  
you who believe in me shall never thirst.”

**All: :We come to this table to know the risen Christ in the sharing of this life-giving bread.**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Leader: O God, Architect of life, all creation declares Your Glory.  
All this beauty and wonder was offered so that we might walk in Your light,  
but we preferred the shadows of sin,  
opening our hearts to the one who comes only to steal, kill, and destroy.

Even so, You sent the prophets to us,  
urging us to lay aside our foolishness.

Finally, You came as one of us, not in power but in poverty,  
as a cute and crying baby, born to everyday people.

With the heavenly choirs and the faithful of every time and place, we sing Your praises:

SANCTUS (All please sing together)

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth  
Heaven and earth are full,  
are full of the majesty of thy glory,  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!  
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

Words of Institution

Leader: In the days to come, O God of life,  
may we be reminded of Your holiness,  
and the great blessing of Your Child, Jesus.

As we begin our journey to Bethlehem,  
as we seek to be alert and awake to You,  
we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Leader: Now, pour out your Spirit upon  
the gifts of the bread and the cup  
and on those gathered in these moments.

Feed us with the bread which is broken, so that in the days to come, we may:  
bring healing to the shattered,  
embrace the lonely,  
and welcome strangers into our hearts and tables.

Pour the grace of the cup into us, so that in the days to come, we may:  
wrap others in warm coats,  
lay aside our differences,  
walk with others in the light of justice.

And when You come when we least expect,  
to bring all history to an end,  
gather us around the Table of Joy,  
where we will join our siblings  
of every place and time will forever praise You.

Leader: The gifts of God for the people of God.  
**All: Thanks be to God.**

Leader: Come, for all things are now ready.

**The Distribution of Elements**

*(We all partake together at the cue of the pastor)*

## Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving for Communion

Bountiful God, we give You thanks that You have refreshed us  
at Your table by granting us the presence of Christ.

Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world  
and courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*WE GO OUT CARRYING GOD'S LOVE*

## BENEDICTION

Leader: May Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness,  
who comes with healing in his wings,  
fill you with the joy and peace that passes all understanding.  
The blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always.

**All: Amen.**

## **\*PRAISE SONG**

O Come, All Ye Faithful #133



## **POSTLUDE MUSIC**

(Please remain seated to listen to the postlude)

Good Christian Friends Rejoice

-German carol/Page



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#### Contributions Received Week of 11/30

Regular Offering: \$1328 / Loose Change Offering: \$65

Advent Offering: \$10 / Building Fund Donation: \$10

Tithes for the Month of November: \$6990

#### Sunday Worship Attendance on 11/30

In-House: 32 / Online: 6



**THE REVEREND RALPH S. GEIMAN, PASTOR, 1967-1995**



## **GRACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

128 E. Baltimore Street – PO Box 448 – Greencastle, PA 17225

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YouTube Channel: Greencastle Grace UCC

Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/GraceChurchGreencastle/](http://www.facebook.com/GraceChurchGreencastle/)

### **WEEK OF DECEMBER 7, 2025**

**Greeters/Ushers & Communion Servers:** Ron Shafer & Nancy Myers

**Advent Reader:** Nancy Myers

**Advent Candlelighter:** Carolyn Shoemaker

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**Chancel Choir** is performing our **Christmas Cantata** today. "Come to the Manger" by Joe E. Parks. We thank all our choir members plus Patty, the director, and Susan, our organist. They all do such wonderful presentations for everyone to enjoy! Thank you.

**Loose Change Offering** received today will be donated to the choir.

**We invite you to join The Penn State Mont Alto Chorale** - They are presenting their **Holiday Concert**, under the direction of Patricia Stepler, tonight, Sunday, December 7th, 7pm at the Greencastle Presbyterian Church, followed by a complimentary treat from Penn State Berkey Creamery Ice Cream. The same concert will also be presented on Tuesday, December 9th, 7pm, at Emmanuel Chapel at Penn State Mont Alto campus. They will be performing a variety of holiday music for all to enjoy! It's a great way to begin the Advent season!

**Grace Snyder Circle** is meeting on Monday, December 8th, at 1pm. Everyone is welcome to join them.

**Chancel Choir** rehearsals are held on Wednesday Evenings, at 7:15pm in the sanctuary. Please contact Patty with any questions.

**Church Bulletin Board** – Please check the bulletin board weekly for updated information about upcoming events, fundraisers, community news and more! Also check out our Welcome Board with pictures of our members during various events.

**Special Music** will be performed by Cumberland Valley School of Music on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. This music is in honor of Ethel Fisher sponsored by Jean Oliver & Earl Bodes.

**Grace's Free Closet** is open during the week on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30am to 12:30pm. For those who are unable to visit during the week, they are now open twice a month on Saturdays. They will be open on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday each month from 11:30am to 2:30pm. They accept clean, smoke-free clothing during their open hours. Contact Nancy Myers with any questions or if you would like to volunteer with them.

**Year End Committee Reports** need submitted to the church office by December 15th.

**Lunch Bunch** is meeting on Tuesday, December 30th, 11:30am, at Vinnies on 11, 5210 Molly Pitcher Hwy., Chambersburg.

**Men's Breakfast & Fellowship** is being held on Saturday, January 3rd, at 9am, at the Velvet Café in Waynesboro.

**First Saturday Free Meal** will be held on Saturday, January 3rd, from 11-1pm, in our social hall. They plan on having grilled cheese, tomato soup, dessert & bottled water. Everyone is invited for a hot meal!

**New Member Sunday** – New members will be joining on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, with **Refreshments & Fellowship** in the social hall after service.

**Our Angel Tree** is located in the central hallway. There are just a couple of Angels still available if you would like to assist a family in need by helping to provide Christmas gifts for the children. When you select an Angel, be sure to record your name next to the corresponding Angel number on the list provided on the cart just across from the tree; this allows us to keep track of the Angels. Gifts may be either wrapped or presented in decorate gift bags, kindly ensure the Angel is securely attached to the gift package. Please return all gifts by next Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. You may bring them to worship, or drop them off at the church this week. We thank everyone for helping the children in this community to have a brighter Christmas. If you have any further questions, please contact Nancy Myers.

**Blessing Baskets** have been placed on the front steps of the church for those in need. Those wishing to help support this ministry are invited to contribute to the collection tubs. We are accepting donations of non-perishable food items (such as dried goods and canned goods) as well as personal care products. For those who prefer to make a monetary donation, please see Marg Stouffer or drop off at the church office during week, and we will purchase items for the baskets. The sign outside provides the following instructions: "Please take what you need..... Give what you can." We appreciate your support of this community outreach program!

**Social Seniors** is being held on Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, at 2pm, at Trinity UCC in Waynesboro with a Christmas party.

**Consistory & Committee Reports** for the month of November need submitted to the church office by Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Board Meeting** is scheduled for Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, at 8am, in the small meeting room.

**Poinsettia Dedications** – The poinsettias that were ordered will be displayed in the sanctuary during our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on December 24<sup>th</sup>. You can bring home your flowers following this service or reach out to the church office if you need to arrange a different pickup time.

**December Birthday Celebrants:** We extend our best wishes for a happy birthday to Melissa King, Tina Thomas, Onnie Shoemaker, Ron Shafer & Tim Bryan.

**Sunday Volunteers** – The January sign-up sheet for greeters/ushers, readers and communion servers is now available on the front welcome table. Please start helping to fill up the spots. If anyone new would like to volunteer, please contact church office for further information.

**Heritage Christmas** will be held around the square in Greencastle on Friday, December 12th, in the evening. Extra event brochures are available on the welcome table and elevator area.

**Event at Heritage Hills Retirement Community in Greencastle** – Pastor Mark will be leading the worship service at Heritage Hills for the residents on Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, at 2pm. We will be providing a cookie table for everyone to enjoy along with a small bag of cookies and/or a snack for each resident. As you bake and prepare for your Holiday gatherings, we ask you to please make some extras to share with the folks at Heritage Hills. Sign-up sheets are located by the elevator area and in the front vestibule. Please drop off your donations in the Social Hall by Monday, December 15th. Thank you for your support.

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** will be held on Wednesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm. Invite friends & family to join us! The poinsettias displayed during this worship are dedicated to our loved ones. If you ordered poinsettias, you may pick them up after service to bring home. If you need to make other pick-up arrangements, please contact Elaine in the church office.

**Condolences** to the family and friends of Curtis Barnes. Curtis is Joann Snider's nephew and the late Ron Barnes' son.

**Worship Volunteers for the Third Sunday of Advent**  
**Sunday, December 14, 9:30am service:**

**Greeters/Ushers:** Darlene Bitner & Lu Miller

**Scripture Reader:** Steve Miller

**Advent Reader:** Cathy Keefer

**Advent Candlelighter:** Lu Miller

