

Angels Among Us

December 15, 2024



Do Not Be Afraid #morejoy

PRELUDE *Prelude for the Christ Child* Bell

WELCOME

CHORAL INTROIT

Angels Among Us Chuck Bell
Chancel Choir

OPENING HYMN no. 213

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

CALL TO WORSHIP

Holy Living God, Blessed Jesus, Guiding Spirit,
alight within us your flame of joy this day.

Grant us openness to hear your message.

**Grant us courage to be your messengers
in the world, creating more joy in the
midst of fear.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Today we light the third candle of Advent,
the candle of Joy.

Our scripture reading comes from Matthew
1:18-25. We hear the story of Joseph, who was
troubled when he found out Mary was pregnant.
An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream
and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid
to take Mary home as your wife, because what is
conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:20).

**As we light this candle, may it remind us
of the joy we find in Christ, a joy that
transcends our circumstances and fills
our hearts.**

Three candles are lit

(Sung Response No. 246, vs. 1)

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her King;

let every heart prepare him room,

and heaven and nature sing,

and heaven and nature sing,

and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Let us pray. God of Joy, fill our hearts with
gladness as we anticipate the coming of Your Son.
Help us to share this joy with others and to be a
source of encouragement and happiness in their
lives. Amen.

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Profession of Faith (New Members)

Response of the Congregation

Now I ask this congregation, do you as Christ's
body, the Church, reaffirm both your rejection
of sin and your commitment to Christ?

We do.

Will you nurture one another in the Christian
faith and life and include these persons now
before you in your care?

**With God's help we will proclaim the good
news and live according to the example of
Christ. We will surround these persons with a
community of love and forgiveness, that they
may grow in their trust of God, and be found
faithful in their service to others. We will pray
for them, that they may be true disciples
who walk in the way that leads to life.**

Reception Into the Church

Response of the Congregation

Members of the household of God, I commend
these persons to your love and care. Do all in
your power to increase their faith, confirm their
hope and perfect them in love.

**We give thanks for all that God has
already given you and we welcome you
in Christian love. As members together
with you in the body of Christ and in this
congregation of The United Methodist
Church of West Chester, we renew our
covenant faithfully to participate in the
ministries of the Church, by our prayers,
our presence, our gifts, our service and
our witness, that in everything God may
be glorified through Jesus Christ.**

SIGNS OF PEACE AND UNITY IN CHRIST

PASSING OF THE FRIENDSHIP FOLDERS

MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

SUNG RESPONSE *Jesus Loves Me* no. 191, vs 1
**Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so,
Little ones to him belong;
they are weak, but he is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.**

SCRIPTURE Matthew 1:18-25
Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

ANTHEM *Christmastime* arr. Lloyd Larson
Chancel Choir and Junior Choir

MESSAGE *Be Not Afraid #morejoy*

PRAYER HYMN no. 204
Emmanuel, Emmanuel

TIME OF 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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

OFFERING
You may give your offering by text- Text UMCWC \$50 to 73256, by using the QR code on your screen, at umcwc.org, through the mail, by automated giving through Realm, or by dropping it off at our office. Thank you for your generosity.

OFFERTORY *Old French Carol*
Tchaikovsky/Warriner

OFFERING RESPONSE no. 221, vs. 4
**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 my heart.**

OFFERING PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN *Joy to the World* no. 246

BENEDICTION

As you go forth from this place, may you carry with you the message of the angels: "Do not be afraid." Go with the peace of knowing Emmanuel, God with us, whose presence shines in our doubts, guides us in our dreams, and calls us to be bearers of love. May the Spirit strengthen your heart, to be an angel of hope to a weary world, a voice of comfort to those in fear, and a living light pointing to the Christ who is to come. Go now in peace, for God is with you, and the love of Christ surrounds you, this day and always.
Amen.

POSTLUDE *Behold, the Morning Star*
Ellacombe/Ellson

Bold text indicates congregational response

Please welcome the new members into our church family:

Daniel Davis and Cori Snyder
(Sponsored by Destin and Rachel Toop)

Steve Stouffer
(Sponsored by Scott Holland)

The flowers on the Lord's Table are presented to the glory of God in loving memory of Kenneth "Buzz" Reid by Marion Reid.

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Message: Rev. Cynthia Stouffer
Liturgists: Rev. Mercedes Case, Rev. Allen Keller
Reader: Linnie Stuart
Message for Growing Christians: Kelly Lynn
Lighting the Advent Candles: Valerie Douglas
and grandchildren, Jailah and Ezra
Chancel Choir and Junior Choir Director:
Tom Sabatino
Organist: Steve Campitelli
Live Stream Team: Tim Case, CC Clark,
Jake Joslin, Heidi Krug, Brad Rush,
Jacqueline Rush, Cory Smith, Steve Stouffer



"Sounds of the Season"



Presented by:

The West Chester Band and

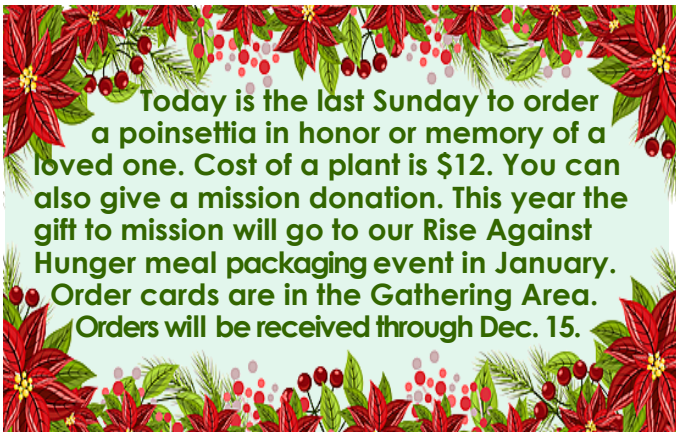
the Chancel Choir of The United Methodist Church of West Chester

Tuesday, December 17 7:30 pm

UMCWC Sanctuary

Adults \$10, Students \$7, Children under 6 free

Tickets available at the door



Today is the last Sunday to order a poinsettia in honor or memory of a loved one. Cost of a plant is \$12. You can also give a mission donation. This year the gift to mission will go to our Rise Against Hunger meal packaging event in January. Order cards are in the Gathering Area. Orders will be received through Dec. 15.



Blue Christmas

A service of remembrance and hope

SUNDAY DEC. 22
4:00 PM

For anyone who mourns a loss this year. Please let one of the pastors know if you will be attending.



Christmas Eve Worship

4:00 pm Family Candlelight Service

7:00 pm Service of Lessons and Carols

11:00 pm Candlelight Communion

Weekly Calendar

Sunday, December 15

- 8:45 AM - Worship
- 10:00 AM - Sunday School
 - 2 yrs - Grade-5 (4,5),
 - Grades 6-12 (YR),
 - Adults (Chapel, 7, 12)
- 11:00 AM - Worship Café
- 12:00 PM - Stephen Ministry Christmas Luncheon
- 6:00 PM - El Buen Worship
- 6:00 PM - Youth Group

Monday, December 16

- 6:00 PM - Finance Committee
- 7:00 PM - Disciple 4 (Zoom)
- 7:00 PM - Narcotics Anonymous
- 7:00 PM - El Buen Men/Women
- 7:30 PM - Boy Scouts

Tuesday, December 17

- 10:00 AM - Mary Jane Circle
- 1:00 PM - Sunshine Memory Cafe
- 7:30 PM - West Chester Band/Chancel Concert

Wednesday, December 18

- 7:30 AM - Men's Bible Study
- 9:30 AM - Women's Bible Study
- 5:45 PM - Wednesday Night Out
- 6:00 PM - Stephen Ministry Training
- 6:30 PM - Digital Disciple
- 6:30 PM - Advent Study
- 6:30 PM - Children's Choirs
- 7:15 PM - Praise Band

7:30 PM - Carillon Choir

8:00 PM - El Buen Bible Study

Thursday, December 19

- 4:00 PM - Children's Center Christmas Program
- 6:30 PM - Chancel Choir
- 8:00 PM - El Buen ESL Class

