

Bethany Presbyterian, Johnstown, PA  
MORNING WORSHIP

November 27, 2022 1st Sunday of Advent– Hope  
Hanging of the Greens and Chrismon Service

CHURCH NEWS

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill my promise to my people.

**P: Justice and righteousness will fill the land and all will live in peace and safety.**

L: This morning we come together to prepare for the birthday of our Savior.

**P: This morning we make ready our welcome for God's only Son, Jesus**

L: We have begun the holy season of Advent, the season of preparing for the birth of Christ.

**P: As we renew the special meaning of the Advent, a season of reflection and anticipation,**

L: Let us clear our minds and open our hearts to the coming of the Christ.

**P: Let us honor Christ's birth by adorning our church for the coming of our Savior.**

L: Let our songs and symbols represent our personal rededication to God's glory and the incarnation of God's love in the world.

**ALL: For God loved us so much that God sent us the Prince of Peace. Now more than ever, we need to follow Christ's peaceful ways, so that the world may live with justice and in peace.**

**INTROIT "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" verse #1 #123**

**FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 p. 593**

**PRESENTATION OF THE ADVENT WREATH and  
ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING - HOPE**

**BLESSING OF THE TREE, LIGHTS**

**SECOND READING Isaiah 61:1-3 p.641**

**THIRD READING John 1:1-5, 9-14a**

**BLESSING OF THE WREATHS**

**FOURTH READING Mark 15:6-20 p.884**

**FIFTH READING Luke 2:8-14 p.889**

**BLESSING OF THE NATIVITY  
(UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION)**

**Almighty God, we confess that our hearts have not been open to all that you have revealed to us in the nativity of your Son. You sent Christ to be born as a helpless Child, and yet we have not attended to suffering of children. You chose humble Mary to be mother of our Lord Jesus, and yet we have not attended to the struggles of women. The holy family could find no room in Bethlehem but a stable, and yet we have not attended to the cries of the homeless. You announced your birth to lowly shepherds, yet we ignore those who tend our farms and fields. Forgive our lack of attention, and free us for joyful compassion, that we may know Christ in serving others. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

**SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON\*\***

L: Reach out and touch the kingdom, for it is right next to you. Breathe in, and feel the Spirit of peace and hope. Trust and believe this good news: God is nearer than you might ever imagine.

**P: Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! We can set aside our differences and embrace everyone, we can seek peace for all in our lives, our neighborhoods, our world.**

L: Friends, Believe the Good News

**ALL: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen**

**GLORIA PATRI #623**

**THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

*(Please greet your neighbor by saying, "The Peace of Christ be With You.")*

**PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

**DOXOLOGY #625**

**BLESSING OF OFFERING**

**PRESENTATION OF CHRISMON ORNAMENTS**

**SIXTH READING** Matthew 28:16-20 p.866

**CHRISMON PRAYER**

**BLESSING OF THE POINSETTIA**

**MESSAGE** Denise Ann Todero, CP

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** The Apostles' Creed

**HYMN** "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" #124

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and the PASTORAL PRAYER**

L: Hear our prayers, O Lord. **P: And let our cry come unto Thee.**

L: Let us bless the Lord! **P: Thanks be to God.**

**CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

*(All who believe are welcome to join in the celebration of Holy Communion)*

**BLESSING OF THE SEASON**

**BENEDICTION**

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" verses 2-4 #123

**ORGANISTS:** John Griffin and Elaine Bilger

**COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER:** Denise Ann Todero

**WORSHIP LEADER:** Brenda Molnar

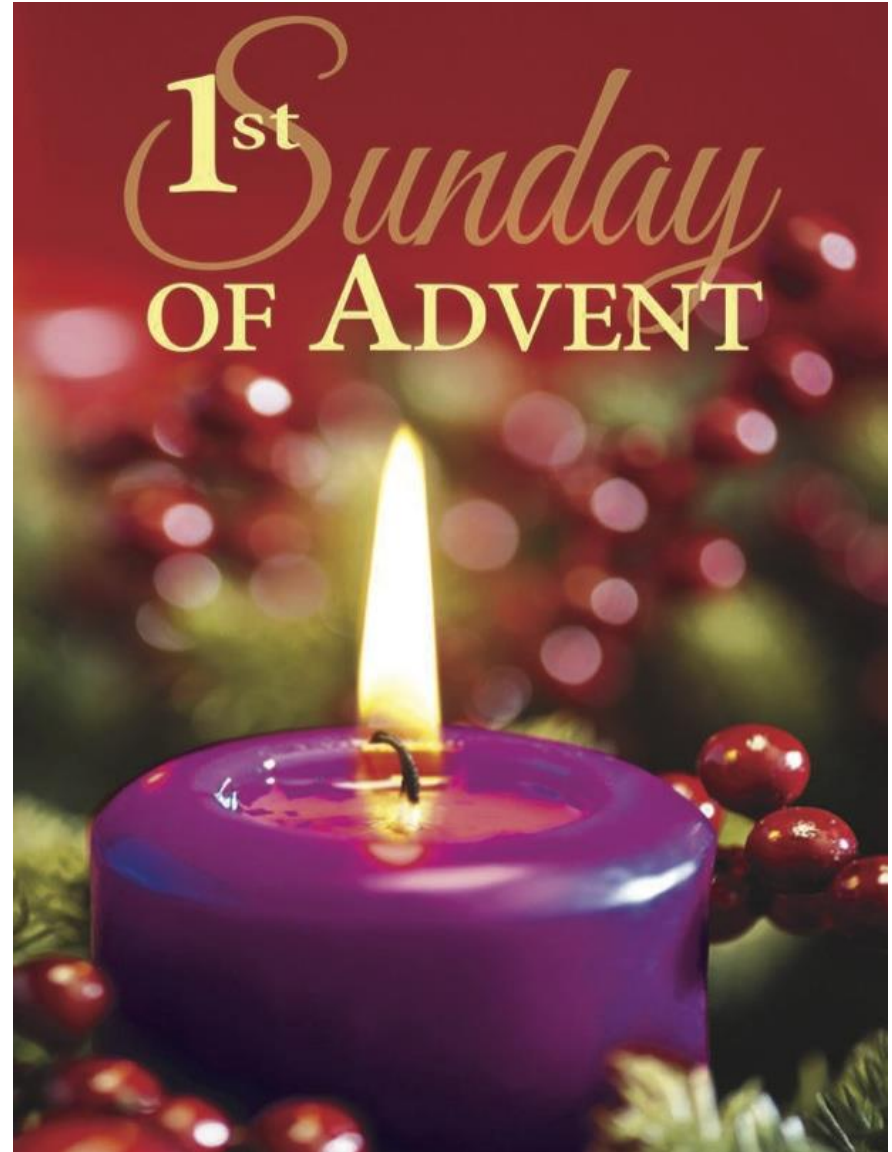
*\*\*© Rev. Thom Shuman*

*Credit for this service The Hanging of the Greens and Chrismon Service*

*Central Presbyterian Church original by Dr. Norman G. Johnson, modified by*

*Kathi Thomas and First Presbyterian, Thomasville*

**\*\*\*\*Special Thanks to Jeanne Lehman for her generous donation to purchase materials for the Chrismons and supplies for this special service.\*\*\*\*\***



**Offering: 11/20**  
**Local 328.85**  
**Benev. 20.40**  
**Improv. 17.25**  
**Total 332.00**

**Sunday November 27th**  
 Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.  
**Hanging of The Greens Service**  
  
**Sunday December 4th**  
 Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.

**Orders are Now Being Accepted** for Christmas Poinsettias. The cost is \$10 each and orders are due by December 11<sup>th</sup>. Orders can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church.

**We Have Once Again Adopted A Family** to help during the Christmas season. Items the family needs have been placed on tags in the back of the sanctuary. If you would like to assist, simply take the tag(s) you wish to help with, purchase the items on the tag(s), and bring the wrapped gifts back (with the tag(s) attached) to the church by December 18<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Ray Sheets with any questions.

**Thank You** to everyone who helped out this morning in preparation for today's service.

**The Church Christmas Party** will be held on Sunday December 11<sup>th</sup> after Morning Worship. Those attending are asked to bring a covered dish to share. If you plan on attending, we ask that you sign up on the back bulletin board so we know how many to prepare for. All are welcome so feel free to invite your friends, family, and neighbors!

**Donations** for the West End Food Pantry can be placed in the bins by the Blaine St. entrance. All non-perishable food items are appreciated, especially as we approach the holiday season.



<b>Concerns: Keep the following people in your prayers...</b>	
Pastor Denise	Ruby Porch
Lois Henry	Christine Paratore
Dawna Sheets	David Hayduk
Buzz & Jeanne Lehman	Susie Keefer
Bob & Marie Whorl	Chloe Kern
Bev Holbay	Tyler & Julie Kalp
Wendy Manges	Linda Hayes
Mark Todero	David Varner
Diane Brewer	Loretta Davidson
The Todero Family	All Shut- Ins
Shirley Gavazoni	All in Nursing Homes
Linda & Richard Oaks	All First Responders
Dick Brewer	All Service Men & Women
Sean Rován	All Healthcare Professionals
Carl Thomas	

**To Place Announcements Or Concerns List Names** in the bulletin contact Ed Sheets at 539-3495 or email at bethanyjtown@hotmail.com or contact Pastor Denise at 479-2382 or email her at datodero@atlanticbb.net.

**Please do not leave them on the church answering machine.**

**In Case of Emergency,** please call Pastor Denise at 479-2382 or cell 248-8174. Do not depend on the hospital contacting the church or the pastor.

**Visit Our Website** ([www.bethanyjohnstown.com](http://www.bethanyjohnstown.com)) or follow us on Facebook (Bethany Presbyterian Church- Johnstown, PA) for the latest news, information and much more!

## Christmon Symbolism

**Alpha and Omega:** The first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet are used in this Chrismon to signify that Christ is the beginning and ending of all things. This is mentioned in the Bible in Revelation 1:8.

**Anchor cross:** The anchor cross originated in ancient Egypt and was adapted by the early Christians in the catacombs.

**Bell:** A bell is often used to call people to worship. This Chrismon symbolizes the sounding forth of God's word and serves as a reminder that God should have first priority in our lives.

**Budded cross:** The Budded Cross is symbolic of the young Christian who has just begun serving Christ. Like a bud, young believers are considered "immature Christians."

**Butterfly:** The butterfly is a symbol of Christ's resurrection and eternal life. Just as the butterfly emerges from its cocoon and flies upward with a new body, the followers of Jesus Christ are reborn and given a new life.

**Cup:** The cup is a symbol of the blood Jesus shed on the cross for our sins. The cup also reminds us of the sacrament of Holy Communion. Chi Rho:

**The Chi Rho Chrismon** is a monogram of the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ - Chi (X) and Rho (P).

**Circle and triangle:** This Chrismon combines a circle and a triangle to form an unique symbol of the eternity of the Trinity.

**Cross and crown:** The cross and crown symbolizes a Christian's reward in heaven for being a faithful servant while living on earth. See Revelation 2:10.

**Cross pattee:** This form of the cross resembles a Maltese cross and is often used for decorative purposes.

**Epiphany star:** This star represents the star of Jacob and the star that led the wise men to Jerusalem. See Numbers 24:17.

**Fish:** The fish is a popular symbol of Christianity today. It was a secret symbol used by the early persecuted Christians to signify their belief in Jesus.

**Fleur de lis:** This flower-like symbol represents the virgin Mary. Harp: The stringed harp is symbolic of music that praises God.

**Lamb:** In the New Testament, Jesus is often referred to as "the sacrificial lamb." Lamp: The lamp stands for the word of God. See Psalm 119:105.

**Bible:** This Chrismon is a replica of an open Bible, which represents the word of God.

**Burning torch:** This symbol reminds Christians to be witnesses for Christ.

**Christmas rose:** The Christmas rose is a white, hardy rose that blooms at Christmastime. It is symbolic of the messianic prophecy and the nativity.

**Daisy:** Toward the end of the 15th century, the daisy became a popular symbol for the innocence of the Holy Child.

**Dove:** The dove is a widely recognized symbol of purity and innocence. The dove also stands for the Holy Spirit, and is a reminder of the presence of God during the baptism of Jesus and hovering over the waters at creation.

**Manger:** The manger reminds us to be humble, and represents the simplicity of the birth and life of Jesus. Shamrock: The three leaves of the shamrock, or clover, stands for the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

**Shell with drops of water:** This Chrismon is symbolic of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan river by John the Baptist.

**Trumpet:** The trumpet signifies a call to worship, the day of resurrection and the day of judgment

### **BLESSING OF THE TREE, LIGHTS**

In Ancient times, the cedar was known as the tree of royalty. Today we often use cedar, along with other greens – pine, fir, spruce, juniper and rosemary – which we prize for their fragrance as well as their symbolism of our expectation and hope of the coming of the Christ Child again. The evergreen reminds us of the everlasting life given to us through the grace of God through the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

### **BLESSING OF THE WREATHS**

Like the never-dying evergreens, God's love for us will last forever. The wreaths are shaped into a circle to signify the never-ending love and reign of the Messiah. The wreath also signifies the crown – both a sign of the Kingship of Jesus and a reminder that for love of us, he wore a crown of thorns.

### **BLESSING OF OFFERING**

At Christmas, not only does the star lead us to Bethlehem, but also Nazareth, Galilee, Capernaum, Jerusalem, Calvary, and heaven. For as part of Jesus' birth, we also celebrate his life and ministry, his death and resurrection, and his ultimate victory over the powers of sin and death. Like the three kings, we present our gifts to Jesus and to one another. Today many churches use Chrismons as an offering of Jesus' life and ministry. Chrismon is a combination of two words: Christ and MONogram. A Chrismon is a symbol of Christ. Christian symbols date back to the early church. They are found on the walls of Roman catacombs, on jewelry and utensils from excavations in Palestine and elsewhere. Early Christians used them to identify themselves to one another, to designate meeting places, and sometimes, to show nonbelievers where they stood. These symbols of the early church served to transmit the faith and beliefs of the followers of Jesus Christ. Chrismons were first used in 1957 to decorate a Christmas tree in the Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Danville, VA. They were made of white and gold materials. WHITE is symbolic of promised healing. The little white lights on the tree point to the Christ as the light of the world. Gold represents the precious love of God given to all Creation in the form of the child - Christ who comes to us.

### **CHRISMON PRAYER**

Almighty God, whose glory and majesty glows through the symbols of Christ, may these Chrismons ever remind us of your love entering our lives. May these gifts we hang upon the tree become the gifts of your comfort and joy for us to share with others. As we sing of redemption's happy dawn, as Jesus Christ is born in Bethlehem, may we remember the heaven-born Prince of Peace, in whose name we pray. Amen.

### **BLESSING OF THE POINSETTIA**

We see flowers blooming in the summer but in the chill and ice of winter there are very few flowers that bloom. However, the Legend of the Poinsettia helps us to see why this flower is placed near the manger as a reminder of the love of Christ for each of us. The legend goes like this: The story is told of Pepita, a poor Mexican girl who had no gift to present the Christ Child at Christmas Eve Services. As Pepita walked slowly to the chapel with her cousin Pedro, her heart was filled with sadness rather than joy. "I am sure, Pepita, that even the most humble gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes," said Pedro consolingly. Not knowing what else to do, Pepita knelt by the roadside and gathered a handful of common weeds, fashioning them into a small bouquet. Looking at the scraggly bunch of weeds, she felt more saddened and embarrassed than ever by the humbleness of her offering. She fought back a tear as she entered the small village chapel. As she approached the altar, she remembered Pedro's kind words: "Even the most humble gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes." She felt her spirit lift as she knelt to lay the bouquet at the foot of the nativity scene. Suddenly, the bouquet of weeds burst into blooms of brilliant red, and all that saw them were certain that they had witnessed a Christmas miracle right before their eyes. From that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the Flores de Noche Buena, or Flowers of the Holy Night, for they bloomed each year during the Christmas season. Today, the common name for this plant is the poinsettia!

### **BLESSING OF THE SEASON**

O God, whose love blesses and unites us in this place and time, we come before you with hearts gladdened by this holy season, its lights, its colors, and, most especially, its message of peace and good will to all. Create in us, O God, hearts devoted to seeking out the lost, the lame, the hungry, and the homeless. AS we minister to the poor and imprisoned, the ill and lonely, let your light shine through us that they may see your glory. Open our hearts, Spirit of Life, to the news of angels and the wonder of shepherds that these days may renew us as we await your coming to earth again. We ask these things trusting in your care for us today and always. Amen.

# Christmas Poinsettias

Orders are now being accepted for Christmas Poinsettias. The cost is \$10 each and orders are due by December 11<sup>th</sup>. Orders and money can be put in the offering plate or mailed to the church.

Name:

# of Poinsettias \_\_\_\_\_ x \$10 Each = \$\_\_\_\_\_

In Memory Of:

In Honor Of:

Other:

Given By:

Pick Up Options:

\_\_\_\_\_ Pick Up At Christmas Eve Service

\_\_\_\_\_ Pick Up At Christmas Day Service