

Bethany Presbyterian, Johnstown, PA

**MORNING WORSHIP**

**November 23, 2025**

**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: 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.**

**HYMN "We Gather Together" #561**

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

**BLESSING OF THE TREE, LIGHTS**

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

**THIRD READING John 1:1-5, 9-14a p. 922**

**BLESSING OF THE WREATHS**

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

**FIFTH READING Luke 2:814**

**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 Ray Sheets**

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH The Apostles' Creed**

**HYMN "Count Your Blessings" #563**

**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.**

**BLESSING OF THE SEASON**

**BENEDICTION**

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

**"Now Thank We All Our God" #556**

**ORGANISTS: John Griffin and Elaine Bilger**

*\*\*© Rev. Thom Shuman*

"The season of Advent means there is something on the horizon the likes of which we have never seen before... .What is possible is to not see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past you. And you begin to grasp what it was you missed, like Moses in the cleft of the rock, watching God's [back] fade in the distance. So stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder. There will be time enough for running. For rushing. For worrying. For pushing. For now, stay. Wait. Something is on the horizon."

– Jan L. Richardson



## Chrismon Symbolism

**Alpha and Omega:** The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet and 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 the 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 the Holy Communion.

**The Chi Rho Chrismon:** The Chi Rho 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 a 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:** This 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.

**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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 by John the Baptist.

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

**Offering: 11/16**  
**Attendance: 11**  
**Local 195.00**  
**Benev. 13.55**  
**Improv. 11.45**  
**Roof 35.00**  
**Total 255.00**

**Sunday November 23rd**  
 Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.  
**Christmon Service/**  
**Decorating for Christmas**

**Sunday November 30th**  
 Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.  
**First Sunday In Advent**

**Orders** for Christmas Poinsettias are now being accepted. The cost is \$10 each and orders are due by Sunday December 7<sup>th</sup>. Please use the order form found in your bulletin. You can also place an order on the church website.

**The West End Food Pantry** is in need of non-perishable food items to keep their shelves full. Donations can be placed in the boxes by the Blaine St. entrance. Monetary Donations can be placed in the offering plate. The pantry will likely see increased need over the coming weeks, so all donations are appreciated.

**Celebrate** the first Sunday in Advent with us next Sunday (November 30<sup>th</sup>). Communion will be served during Worship.

**Ed Sheets** is collecting small shipping boxes. If you have any you no longer need, you can place them on the table in the back of the chapel. Thanks in advance for your assistance.

**Come Join In Food, Fun, and Fellowship!** The annual Church Christmas Party will be held on Sunday December 14<sup>th</sup> after Worship. Those attending are asked to bring a covered dish to share. Feel free to bring your family and friends.



| Concerns: Keep the following people in your prayers... |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Dawna Sheets   | Bobbie Johnson               |
| Jeanne Lehman  | Barry Ross                   |
| Marie Whorl  | Dave & Karen Vivis           |
| Bev Holbay   | Joshua Holbay Family         |
| Mark Toderio   | Dominic Serratore            |
| Carl Newfield  | Jim Kuntz                    |
| Beverly Rager  | Jimmy Stormant               |
| Frank Cassat   | Bruce Torrence               |
| Nancy Kahl   | All Shut- Ins                |
| Linda Hayes  | All in Nursing Homes         |
| Jessie Rager   | All First Responders         |
| Bill & Patty Gramling                                  | All Service Men & Women      |
| Mike & Charlotte Jean                                  | All Healthcare Professionals |

**To Place Announcements Or Concerns List Names** in the bulletin please email bethanyjtown@hotmail.com.

**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!

**Sign Ups** for 2025 Lay Leaders are still being accepted. If you are interested in helping out, please sign up on the back bulletin board.

**Orders** are still being taken for 2025 Flower and Bulletin Sponsorships. Order forms and more information can be found on the back bulletin board and can be placed in the offering plate. Orders can also be placed on the church website.

## **Military Christmas Care Packages**

We are collecting items to send to our local service men and women who were recently deployed to the southern boarder. The following are some of the items we are collecting. If you are interested in donating, you can bring items to the church. Thank you in advance for your support!

- Small Hand Sanitizers
- Individual Wet Wipes
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Powdered Gatorade and Propel Packets
- Bath Poofs
- Small Shampoo
- Small Body Wash
- Deodorant
- Disposable Rubber Gloves
- Chapstick
- Toothbrushes & Toothpaste
- Disposable Razors
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Hand Lotion

## **Christmas Poinsettia Order Form**

Orders are now being accepted for Christmas Poinsettias. The cost is \$10 each and orders are due by Sunday December 7<sup>th</sup>. Orders and payment can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church.

Name:

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

In Memory Of:

In Honor Of:

Other:

Given By: