

Grace Devotion

Week of December 14, 2025

*...and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
50 indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
53 he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
54 He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.” (Luke 1:47-55 NRSVUE)*

Joy: “A Thrill of Hope”

Greetings of Joy,

There is just something about being around people who are filled with joy—it is contagious. No matter your own mood, their joy spreads around you and through you. It has a way of breaking through even when we least expect it or even least welcome it! Mary’s song bursts forth from her awe and gratitude. She sings because she dares to believe that God is at work, even in the uncertainty that she lives. This week, joy invites us to lift our eyes beyond what is right in front of us. Joy calls us to trust in what is being born among us. This joy is not shallow happiness, forced cheer, or a box to check off. This joy is deep. This joy is a steady assurance that God’s promises are true. Joy meets us in simple and ordinary ways. Maybe it is a shared laugh that brings you closer together. It may be in the swirl of snowflakes. Maybe joy is found in a note from a friend. This joy is the Spirit’s gentle reminder that God is not done yet. The candle lit on this third week of Advent is a reminder that its glow may rekindle a sense of wonder and awaken the hope that still sings in us.

Prayer:

God of Joy, When our hearts grow heavy, remind us of Your presence. Let joy rise up in us—not because life is perfect, but because we do not walk this journey alone. May our spirits, like Mary's, find reason to sing with joy and praise Amen

With Grace and Love,

Pastor Amy



December 14, 2025

Third Sunday of Advent

Welcome/Announcements

Westminster Chimes and Prelude: O Little Town of Bethlehem arr. Richard Ellsasser

**+“Christmas Hallelujah”

#26

** Call to Worship

Lector: Our days are filled with the hustle and bustle of the season.

Congregation: Our calendars are filled with events, meetings, and deadlines.

Lector: But in the quiet spaces, there is joy that breaks forth in unexpected places.

Congregation: In hearing a long-forgotten Christmas song that floods you with warm memories

Lector: Standing in the long lines at the store, striking up a conversation with a perfect stranger that feels like a friend.

Congregation: May we each find joy in surprising places that remind us of what this season is truly about.

** Opening Prayer: (pray silently or aloud)

God of Joy, the closer we get to Christmas Day, the busier our days get. We confess that at times we lose sight of the real meaning of this season. Slow us down so that we can notice the joy we find in ordinary moments. Let that joy draw us closer to You, and shine through us like a candle in the darkness, bringing warmth and light to all we meet.
Amen

Lighting of the Advent Candle (Joy)

** Sharing the Peace of Christ

**° Hymn: “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

#128

Joys and Concerns/Praying for Others/Lord’s Prayer

Celebration of Our Gifts

** Offertory Response: “Doxology”

** Prayer of Dedication

#625

° Hymn: “Angels We Have Heard on High”

#132

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 35:1-10 Luke 1:47-55

Time for the Young at Heart

Message: “Joy” A Thrill of Hope

Prayer of Confession/Silent Reflection/Assurance of Grace

Holy Communion

** Prayer of Thanksgiving

Gracious God, We give You thanks for this meal, for the bread that strengthens us and for the cup that renews us. As we go about our daily lives, help us to carry that same spirit of communion with us—sharing gratitude, compassion, and grace in all that we do. May our lives be an offering of thanksgiving. In Christ’s name we pray.
Amen

**+“What a Glorious Night”

** Final Blessing

** “A Choral Benediction”

#25

Postlude: Toccata on “Veni Emmanuel” by James Denton

** Please stand, if you are able.

+ Black contemporary folder

° Blue hymnal

Announcements

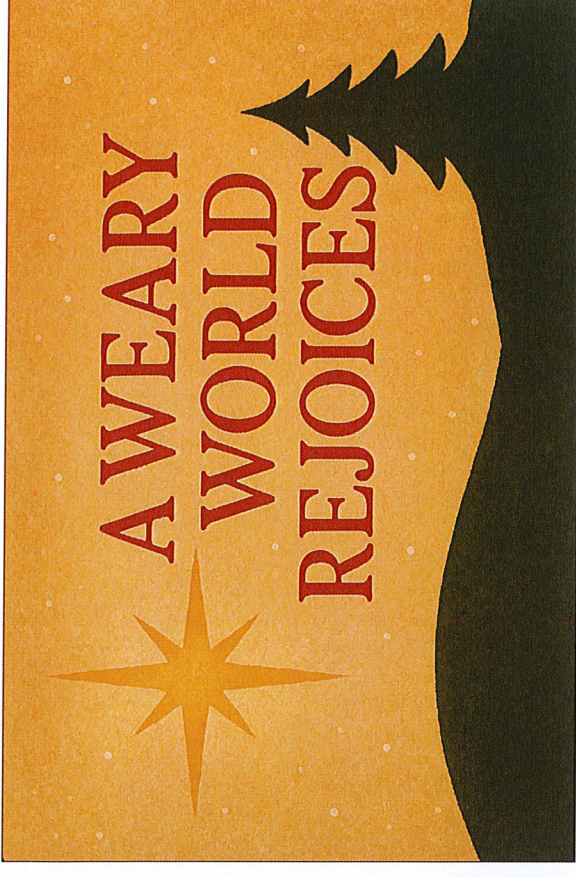
- The church will be open on Wednesdays from 11am-12pm if you would like to stop by for a quiet opportunity for prayer or stillness in the sanctuary. Pastor Amy will be available for a word of prayer or just someone to sit with in the silence.
- We will be having two Christmas Eve Services, 1st one is at 1:00 PM and the 2nd one is at 7:00 PM
- We are selling poinsettias at cost to add to the Christmas Eve decorations. The cost is \$13 for red flowers and can be In Memory or Honor of someone or for yourself or friend. The flowers may be picked up on 3 different days: December 23 at 10:00 in the Gathering Place, December 24 after the 1:00 or 7:00 Christmas Eve services, and December 28 after Sunday service. Thank you!
- Mitten & Hat tree in the Gathering Place. Place new gloves and hats on the tree.
- Longest Night service, Saturday Dec 20th at 7pm (For those grieving and struggling with this holiday season)
- Christmas Fund Offering on December 21, 2025

Upcoming Events

- Women's Ministry – December 17th @ 7:00 PM in person

Upcoming Meetings

- Staff Meeting – December 15th @ 4:30 PM



Grace United Church of Christ
100 Fourth Street

Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331

717-632-1146

Prayer Line: 717-632-1146 LINE 3

Thank you for today's Worship Leaders:

Pastor - Amy Fawks

Lector – Jenn Weaver

Organist and Music Director - Christian Keller

Head Usher – Craig Bixler & Victoria Arnold

ISAIAH 35



L	F	X	E	Q	V	U	C	R	G	S	Q	L	C
E	J	D	O	C	S	H	A	R	O	N	H	U	O
U	K	M	T	O	N	G	U	E	U	H	O	K	O
B	T	B	F	E	E	B	L	E	D	P	L	E	J
O	R	Q	T	M	G	J	V	B	W	F	I	Z	G
Z	U	E	O	D	Z	L	Z	C	G	B	N	Q	O
C	O	C	J	K	T	F	A	F	V	N	E	E	M
G	F	Q	W	O	H	Z	V	D	M	Q	S	H	H
Z	C	R	L	E	I	X	K	I	N	R	S	T	V
O	W	O	I	U	R	C	G	A	Y	E	S	A	T
W	S	G	O	G	S	H	E	X	I	B	S	F	J
L	A	V	N	Y	T	S	H	A	L	L	P	S	E
I	F	N	P	Y	Y	L	U	R	G	K	O	T	T
X	S	I	P	V	M	F	S	O	H	Y	S	N	V

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| • REJOICE | • TONGUE |
| • SHARON | • THIRSTY |
| • FEEBLE | • HOLINESS |
| • COME | • LION |
| • SHALL | • GLADNESS |

- The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall _____, and blossom as the rose.
- It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and _____, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.
- Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the _____ knees.
- Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will _____ and save you.
- Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf _____ be unstopped.
- Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the _____ of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.
- And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the _____ land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.
- And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of _____; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.
- No _____ shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:
- And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and _____, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Advent Word Search

W	E	G	T	H	M	K	I	C	X	J	Q
R	W	R	E	A	T	H	S	A	Z	O	C
M	P	E	K	D	J	E	S	N	B	Y	A
A	Y	A	D	V	I	M	P	D	H	O	P
R	J	O	S	E	P	H	E	L	O	V	E
Y	E	B	A	N	C	O	A	E	O	G	A
P	S	X	G	T	H	P	C	S	P	K	C
Z	U	G	M	L	O	E	Z	E	A	Y	E
Y	S	Q	P	U	R	P	L	E	X	R	A

Words to Find

Words can be found left to right and up and down

- Advent
- Wreath
- Candles
- Purple
- Hope
- Peace
- Joy
- Love
- Mary
- Joseph
- Jesus

