

CALVARY

United Methodist Church



Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

DEC

24TH

2023

You are God's beloved. *You* are welcome here.



WELCOME TO CALVARY



OUR WELCOME STATEMENT

Calvary United Methodist Church believes that all means all. We open our hearts, our minds, and our doors to all our neighbors. We gladly invite into our shared life all persons who seek a community of support where they can grow in God's grace. Regardless of your race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, relationship status, or background — **you are God's beloved, and you are welcome here.**

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

If you are a first time guest, thank you for visiting Calvary! We would invite you to check out our Welcome Tables for more information about who we are. We would also ask you to fill out a GET CONNECTED card in the back of the pews so we can get to know you better. If you are in need of a large print bible or hymnal, please see any greeter for help.

FAMILIES WITH BABIES OR YOUNG CHILDREN

We welcome all of God's children into our worship services, including infants and toddlers. If you would like to use it, we have a Family Area in the rear left of the Sanctuary with rocking chairs and toys.

LOCATION OF BATHROOMS

From the front exits of the sanctuary outside the right doorway, an accessible restroom and baby changing table are available on this level. From the front exits of the sanctuary outside the left side, restrooms are located down the stairs. An elevator is located thru the sanctuary outside the right and to the back.

A BRIEF HISTORY



Christ Methodist Episcopal Church was one of Pittsburgh's largest churches during the late 1800's. The church was located on Penn Avenue and Hancock Street (now 8th Street) in downtown Pittsburgh.

On May 5, 1891, tragedy struck when fire destroyed Christ Methodist Church and the adjacent Pittsburgh Female College were destroyed by fire. Following the disaster, the congregation used the Bijou Theater for Sunday services.

On May 28, 1891, three weeks after the fire, the Trustees decided to rebuild the church... but where? This quote from the minutes of that meeting set the wheels in motion, "We refuse to rebuild in the midst of dirty, filthy Pittsburgh." The congregation decided to split and move to the "suburbias". A fourth of the congregation built Calvary in Allegheny City, now Pittsburgh's North Side). The other members built our sister church, First United Methodist Church in Shadyside. The remaining, only 154 people, pulled together their resources and raised over \$245,000 (almost \$6.2 million in today's dollars) to build a church of their own. In 1891 they bought a duck pond and a skating rink in Allegheny City which is the very land that Calvary United Methodist Church is sitting on today.

Calvary's organizers were prominent in commercial and professional activities of Pittsburgh. The first Board of Trustees included Joseph Horne, CB Shea, the Jones family, and the Scaife family. Joseph Horne, founder of Horne's department stores, was the chair of the Trustees for Calvary. Sadly he passed away a year and a half before the sanctuary was opened. CB Shea, Horne's financial partner, gave a personal note in the amount of \$62,000 for Calvary's construction. The Jones family, of Jones & Laughlin Steel, was responsible for the building of the Hot Metal Bridge. The Scaife Family were heirs to the Mellon banking, oil, and aluminum fortune.

The Trustees hired architect Thomas B. Wolfe. Born and raised in nearby Sewickley, Wolfe had worked for the Heinz family. He was sent to France for inspiration and returned with drawings that contained designs of the 13th Century Gothic Cathedral at Chartres, France. He designed Calvary as a "Parlor" Cathedral. A "Parlor" Cathedral is patterned after European cathedrals but only 1/10th the size. In spring 1892, the Trustees also hired Louis Comfort Tiffany, a young, up-and-coming artist. They contracted him to create 189 windows for \$15,770 (almost \$400,000 in today's dollars.) This was Tiffany's largest and most expensive commission at the time. When the windows were installed in 1895, Calvary had three of the largest Tiffany windows in the world.

Bishop Fowler laid the cornerstones for both Calvary and its sister church in Shadyside on May 18, 1893. Although the first service at Calvary United Methodist Church was held on Christmas Eve 1893 in the chapel, the sanctuary would not be finished for another two years. The building was completed in June of 1895.





Poinsettia Dedications

Margee Bilyak

Brittany Bova-Mickens and Megan Bova

In honor of Joan Brady and Linda McDonald for all they do for the Children's Ministry Program

Megan Bova and Dan Funk

In memory of Monica Alexander Gandy and our Grandparents Peggi Funk, Joe Vacek, Sam and Theresa Bova, and Rev. Jim and Betty DuBois

In honor of Bronson Joseph Funk

Burns-Elliott Family

In memory of Lucy Mae Elliott, Kenneth and Joan Elliott, and William "Keen" Miller

In honor of Ethan and Peyton Rihn

Callie Buzard

In memory of Joanne Richards

Rev. Ellen Carter

In memory of Mary Callison

Renny and Linda Clark

In honor of Rev. Beth Nelson

Larry and Linda Ehrlich

In memory of Family Angels in Heaven

In honor of Hardy and Ehrlich grandchildren

Karen Ferguson

In memory of Elizabeth and Ronald Ferguson, and Ron and Mary Frank

In honor of my niece, Johanna Mae McCrea

Judy and Tom Flaherty

In memory of Mary Flaherty, Jean Kraft, and Mary Callison

In honor of The Kaffee Klatsch

David Grinnell

In memory of Ken and Betty Grinnell, and David and Iva Jahson

*It came, a floweret bright, to show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior.*

Megan and Linda McDonald

In honor of McDonald Family and Barr Family

Brittany and Aaron Mickens

In memory of Aaron's father, Richard Mickens

In honor of our children Courtney, Chauncie, James , and Haley

Charles Moore

In memory of Walter Coleman

Rev. Beth L. Nelson

In honor of Calvary United Methodist Church

Dennis W. Panek

In memory of Genevieve Panek and Walter Panek

Nancy Richards

In memory of the Rev. Bob Richards and my parents and sister, Barbette

In honor of our grand-girls, Audrey Wynne and Tatum, Margaret, and Lee Arbuckle, and in gratitude for the Rev. Myles Bradley and Rev. Beth Nelson

Fred Ruddock

In memory of Charles E. Thomas and Kathren R. Ruddock

Shelley Rohrer

In memory of Celine Kahn and Mary Smith

Chris Siewers

In memory of Dennis Bergevin

Jane Skerl

In memory of William & Phyllis Lauster

Linda Trautman

In memory of Janet Trautman

Aleata and Wayne Weis

In memory of our loved ones

In honor of Aidan, Aimee, and Adrianna

Venus Whisenhunt

In memory of Lorraine F. McDonoreen

Kathy Winne

In memory of my parents, Steve and Helen, and my in-laws, Agnes and Frank

ORDER OF WORSHIP



PRELUDE 4 PM Service — Brian Burns & David Bridge

7 PM Service — Jennifer Steele, flute
David Bennett, cello
David Bridge, piano

WORDS OF THE PROPHET * Isaiah 9:2-7 NRSV

- 2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.
- 3 You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.
- 4 For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- 5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
- 6 For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 7 Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Leader: The word of God, written by the people of God, for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

CALL TO WORSHIP *

Leader: There is room for you here. If you're weary and worn, or hopeful and patient.

All: If you're tired and lost, or wrapped up in hope.

Leader: If you're new to this place, or have been here before.

All: Come in, come in.

Leader: There is room for you here.

All: The angels are singing, "Be not afraid." The angels are singing, "Good news and great joy!"

Leader: So come in, come in!

All: There is room for us here.

PROCESSIONAL CAROL * "O Come, All Ye Faithful" — #234 UMH

UNISON PRAYER *

All: Loving God, We have heard this story before—the story of a star in the sky and a baby who was laid in a manger. We have heard this story before—passed down in hopeful whispers through the generations. So this night, as we lean our hearts and our ears closer to you, we ask that you would make room in our souls to hear this story again. Make room in us for awe. Make room in us for wonder. Make room for heartache and compassion. Make room in our hearts for you. Pull us into the narrative, that we might hear the truths in this ancient Word as if it were the first time. For we know that you are still speaking. So, speak to us again this night. We are listening. We are already making room. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

Leader: How does a weary world hold onto hope, practice peace, spread joy, or know love?

All: How does a weary world combat cruelty?

Leader: How does a weary world shine a light into our bleakest night?

All: We do all these things with God’s help.

Leader: For tonight, a child is born in Bethlehem.

All: Tonight, Christ draws near.

Leader: Tonight, we light the Christ Candle.

All: Tonight, we are not alone.

Leader: God is near. Love has drawn close.

All: Rejoice! For God loves this weary world. Amen.

ANTHEM "Shine For You" — Calvary Renewal Choir

SPECIAL TIME FOR OUR CHILDREN

CAROL "Away in the Manger " — #217 UMH

GOSPEL LESSON * Luke 2:1-20 NRSV

- 1 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.
- 2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.
- 3 All went to their own towns to be registered.
- 4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.
- 5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.
- 6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

8 Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger.

17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child,

18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them,

19 and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Leader: The word of God, written by the people of God, for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON "Making Room for Joy!" — Rev. Beth L. Nelson

CAROL "O Little Town of Bethlehem" — #230 UMH

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Leader: Jesus was born into a world that told him right away, "There's no room for you here." Mary and Joseph were turned away from every door, so Jesus was born in a stable instead of a house. He was laid in a manger instead of a crib. Friends, today you will not be turned away, because Jesus spent the rest of his life making room. He made room for tax collectors and children. He made room for five thousand people to sit down and eat together. He made room for Samaritan women, Jews and Gentiles. He made room for the sick, for the outcast, for the unclean.

Jesus was always pulling up a seat, saving space, making room for people, and he has made room for you. So come to this Table. Come with your faith and your doubt. Come with your questions and your hopes. Come with your grief and your love. Just come, because there is room for you here... This is Christ's table. All are welcome.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: Did you know that a version of the phrase, "Be not afraid" is written in scripture as many as 365 times? That's one for every day. God says, "Be not afraid." The angels say, "Be not afraid." Over and over again, we are told to not be afraid. Friends, that sentiment carries us into this moment of prayer. During the prayer of confession we are honest with God about the mess of our lives and we are met with God's grace. God does not meet us with anger. God does not hold a grudge. God does not keep score. Instead, God wraps us in mercy and holds us in love. So be not afraid, and join me in the prayer of confession.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: **Loving Christ, scripture tells us that you were born in a stable because there was no room in the inn. There was no room in the inn for a woman in need, no room in the inn for an innocent baby. Forgive us. .. We should have learned our lesson by now, but just as others turned their backs on you, we continue to turn our backs on one another. Teach us how to make room for one another. ... Teach us how to make room for you. Carve out space in our hearts to love as you love, for we do not want to build hostility here. We want to build your promised day. Guide us forward. With hope and honesty, we pray, Amen.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: Friends, the angels say, "Be not afraid," but they also say, "Unto you a child is born." Christ is born for you. Christ walked this earth for you. Christ forgives you. That's what love does. It makes room. It offers grace. It learns your name.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Leader: Holy God, we have been waiting a long time for this night—for the joy and the quiet of Christmas Eve, for the sound of the angel chorus, for the old familiar songs. We have carried weary hearts through the last four weeks of Advent, longing for the peace and hope of this night, and now we're finally here.

All: **So as we bow our heads, we offer you our most earnest and honest prayers, trusting that once again, you meet us where we are. So tonight God, we say thank you for the things in our lives that spark joy: Thank you for the gift of family recipes and crowded tables. Thank you for a slower schedule, as many approach vacation. Thank you for infusing this season with practices of generosity. Thank you for the bells, and the songs, and the candles in the windows. Thank you for the children who squeal with joy, and the neighbors who drop off cookies. Thank you for every ounce of beauty that marks this season; it has made it possible for us to join our voices with the angel chorus.**

Leader: However, God, even in the face of remarkable joy, we still bring weary and worried hearts to you this night. Because we know that many have an empty seat at the table this year. We know that many will celebrate Christmas from a hospital room. We know that many have crunched numbers over and over again to see if they could afford a gift. We know that for far too many, the holidays are a reminder that the world is still not as it should be.

All: So in between our joy and our weariness, God, we ask that you would make room. Pour yourself into the cracks of our hearts. Bind yourself to our good days and our bad days. Carve out space for your love in the center of our beings so that no matter where we go we might trust the angels' song when they say, "Be not afraid," and, "Joy to the world!"

Leader: Until then, until the day when joy overpowers weariness, until the day when there is room for all at every table, until your promised day, we will continue to pray as your son taught us to pray, saying:

THE LORD'S PRAYER #895 UMH

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.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

THE SHARING OF THE CUP

All are welcome at the table of our Lord. The bread that we share is gluten free, that all may participate. You may come forward to receive communion at the direction of our ushers. Please dip your bread into the cup and eat, immediately.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

All: God of angel choruses and teenage mothers, there are a million other places we could be, but tonight we wanted to be here. Tonight, we needed to be here—online and in person, worshiping together on this joy-filled Christmas Eve. For when we gather around this Table we remember the ways that you always make room for us. You are always pulling up chairs, welcoming the children, the tax collectors, and the outcast. At your dinner party, no one gets turned away. Help us to carry that inclusive spirit into the rest of our lives, for we know that love like that is what turns weariness into joy. With grateful hearts we pray, Amen.

CALL TO GIVE

OFFERING OUR GIFTS AND TITHES

OFFERTORY ANTHEM "Living Light" — Calvary Renewal Choir

DOXOLOGY * Tune of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below. Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *

LIGHTING OUR CANDLES *

CAROL * "Silent Night" — #239 UMH

PASTORAL PRAYER *

CAROL * "Joy to the World" — #246 UMH

BENEDICTION *

POSTLUDE *

* Please stand as you are able | Bold text is unison



Merry Christmas

PLEASE JOIN US

**Please join us in the chapel
behind the sanctuary for a
cookie reception following
each service.**

You ARE GOD'S BELOVED.
You ARE WELCOME HERE.



CONTACT US

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