

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 14, 2025



MELLINGERS LUTHERAN CHURCH
80 GOCKLEY ROAD
STEVENS, PA 17578
717-336-8800

Pastor's Contact Information

Rev. Timothy L. Craven

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Director of Music

Vickie Kissinger (717) 354-6575

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Director of Christian Education

Diane Adair (717) 715-3124

PRAYER CORNER**Please pray for the following people:**

Linda Netzley, Shannon Brown, Johan Spotts, Ruth Hollinger, Shirley Sweigart, Mike Leed, Betty Cordes, Amy Weik, Molly Brown, Carl Mohler Jr., Jay Weaver, Dave Haldeman, Vivian Gehr, Tom Parrish Sr, Elaine Haldeman, Clair Miller, Skip Hutchinson, Jane Goshert (Home Hospice), Jay Stoltzfus, Theda Raffauf, Mary Weidman, Roy Latshaw, Marty Leed & Family and Fay Weitzel.

Artman Lutheran Home, Ambler: Sally Wealand Brethren Village: Beverly Sweigart
Ephrata Manor: Iris Weaver, Dorothy Hutchinson, Shirl Tobias and Pauline Sawyer
Gardens at Stevens: Pat & Nevin McQuate
Keystone Villa: Betty Firestine & Janet Hirneisen
Luther Acres Personal Care: Judy Meckley
Neffsville Rehab & Nursing: Pauline Martin Phoebe Berks: Nick Rampolla
Penn State Hospital; Lancaster: Sharlene Miller
Johns Hopkins Hospital: Bob Farr

Mary Thorn, Cheryl Nixon, Cocalico Builders of Hope (finding a house for housing program), Steven Fassnacht, Vickie Kissinger, Barb Mertz, Elsie May Sensenig, Cory Sensenig, Rachel Landis, Carol Schaeffer, Lorna Buohl, Richard Sockriter, Liz Roman-Reich, Mike Messner, John Rachal, David Taimuty, Keith Freeman, Helen Blank, William Sockriter, Doug Cody, Karen Velez, Ron Neidigh, Kara Trowbridge, Mary Morton, Brenda Sweigart, Nancy Bolotine, Bea Hassler, Karen Leonhard, Mary Sanger, Andy & Brenda Gabig, Brian Fetter, Pastor Karen Larson, Brian Kerns, Mary Lou Crum, Bob Bos, Curtis Townsley, Robyn Redcay, Margaret Weller and Cynthia Peters.

Pray also for the grieving families of:

Maggie Kiralfy, Dale Firestone, Yvonne Walters, Larry Rabold, Zach Caflin, Bob Weaver, Pastor Conrad Youse, Karen Krater, Vesta Reber, Jean Shober, Joyce Boyer, Joan Wentzel, Jeff Moyer, Anna Weinhold, and Kenton Shaffer.

† WE PREPARE TO WORSHIP †

*Please stand if you are able

Welcome / Announcements

Prelude: “*Veni, Veni Emmanuel*”

- Richard Purvis

†GATHERING†

Pastor: This is the day the Lord has made.

Congregation: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

***GATHERING HYMN: #248 “People Look East”**

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS**

P: In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

(a brief silence is observed)

P: Most merciful God,

C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

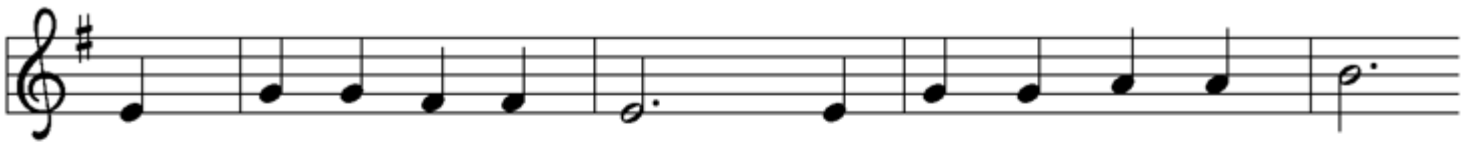
C: Amen

***GREETING**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

***THE KYRIE**



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

***THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

ADVENT READING

Bonnie Stafford: Today is the third Sunday of Advent. Advent is a time of waiting. We wait for God to send Divine love and light into our dark world. We continue to wait for Jesus.

Each candle that we light reminds us that the Light of the World will soon come to us in the Person of Jesus Christ, the Messiah who will show us the way back to God. Today we light the third candle of Love...
(the candle is lit and the song is sung)
(the reading continues....)

Let us be at peace as we have confidence that God Almighty opens the eyes of the blind, brings courage to those who are afraid and brings a harvest of faith in the desert of unbelief. Let us pray: Merciful God, give us Grace to heed the warnings of the prophets and forsake our sins, so that we may welcome the coming of Jesus Christ Our Redeemer. In Jesus' Name, Amen

† GOD'S WORD †

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 35:1-10

Lay Reader (Diane Adair): A reading from Isaiah the 35th chapter.
The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.]]

³ Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.
⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;
⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

⁹ No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

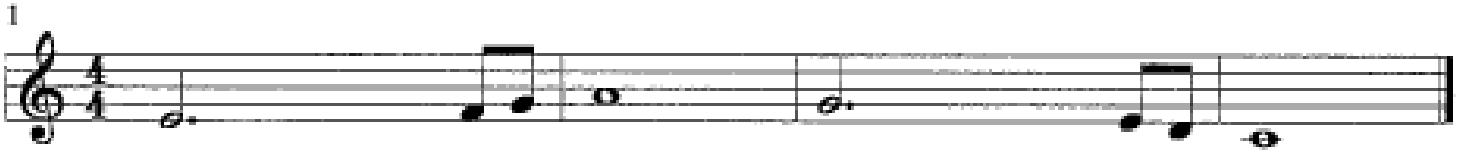
¹⁰ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

THE PSALMODY

Psalm 146:5-10



The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down. (Ps. 146:8)

⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob | for their help,
whose hope is in the | Lord their God;

⁶ **who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that | is in
them;**

who keeps promis- | es forever;

⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to | those
who hunger.

The Lord sets the | captive free.

⁸ **The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up
those who | are bowed down;**

the Lord | loves the righteous. R

⁹ The Lord cares | for the stranger;

the Lord sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way | of
the wicked.

¹⁰ **The Lord shall | reign forever,**

**your God, O Zion, throughout all
generations. | Hallelujah! R**

CHILDRENS SERMON

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**

Rejoice, Rejoice Emmanuel shall come to you O Israel.

***THE HOLY GOSPEL**

MATTHEW 11:2-11

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 11th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

MESSAGE: *"Broken Shells"*

-Pastor Tim Craven

CHOIR ANTHEM: *"The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came"*

- Basque Carol

***THE NICENE CREED**

C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*

who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one Holy Christian Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen

† Prayers of Intercession †

***P: In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.**

A brief silence.

P: God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. (*We pray especially for...*) In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the immigrant (*especially we pray for Global Refuge and Lutheran Social Services*). God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P: As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith (*especially Mary, mother of Jesus, John of the Cross and...*). May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

C: Amen

*THE PEACE

P: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

*OFFERING HYMN: “Emmanuel”

Words and Music by
Bob McGee

$\text{♩} = 80$

C/E F F/E Dm7 G7 C Gm6/B \flat A7 A7/C \sharp

Em - man - u - el, His name is

6 Dm Dm/C G7/B G C E7 F F/E Dm7 G7

called Em - man - u - el: God with us, re - vealed in

12 C Gm6/B \flat A7 A7/C \sharp Dm Dm/C G7/B G C

us! His name is called Em - man - u - el.

*OFFERING PRAYER

P: Merciful Father,

C: Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts towards those who hunger in any way, that all may know you care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

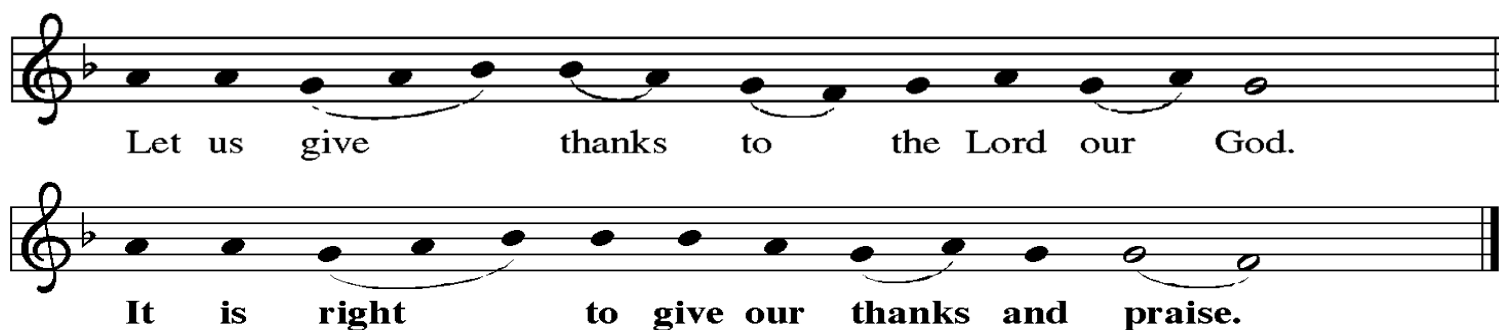
Amen

† WE CELEBRATE THE LORD’S SUPPER †

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

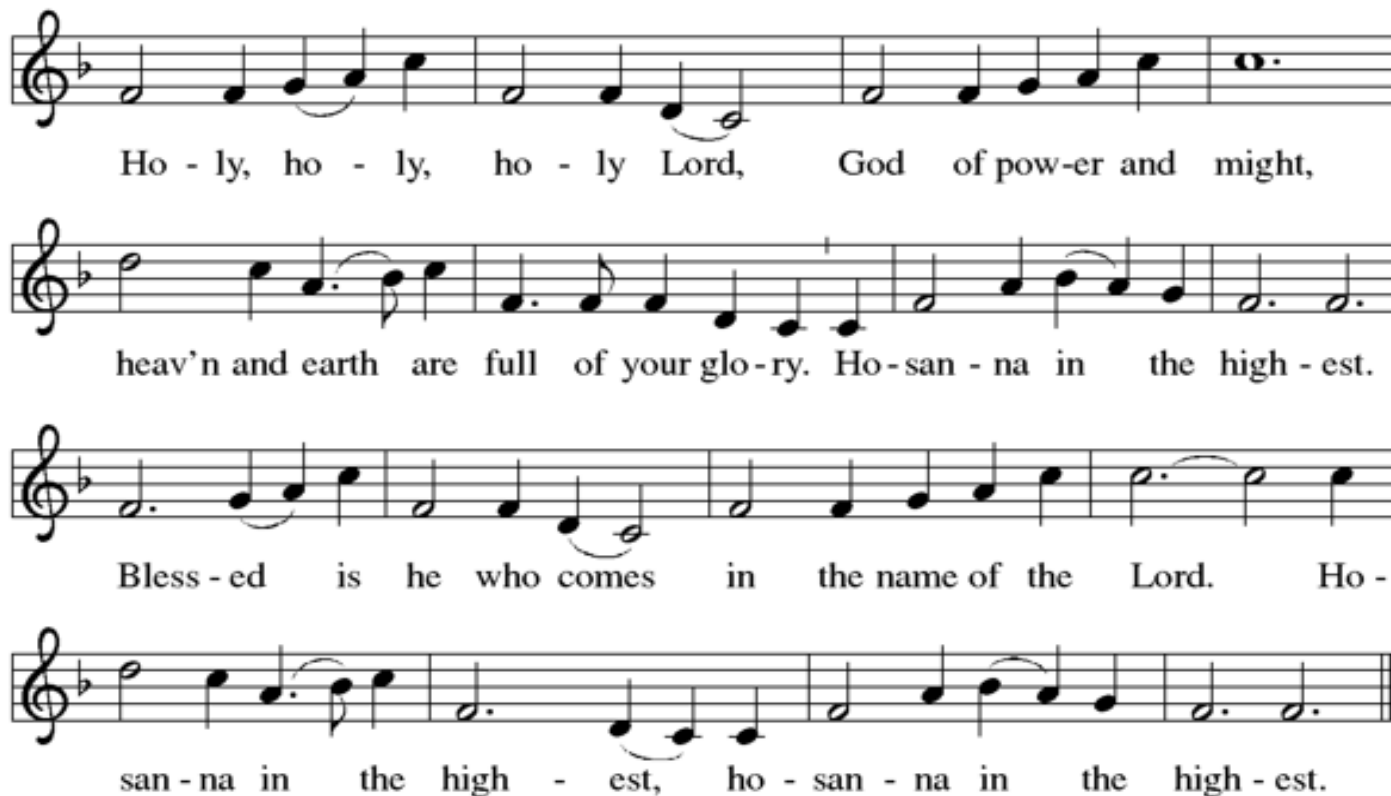
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.



*THE PREFACE:

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy.....
 We praise Your name and join their unending hymn:

*THE SANCTUS



*THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper he took the cup and gave thanks and gave it for all to drink saying: this cup is the new covenant in my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

***TRADITIONAL 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 and ever. Amen

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE AGNUS DEI



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

We ask parents to bring their non-communing children with them for a blessing. Pick up an empty cup. A grape juice option and gluten free communion wafers provided. If you cannot come to the Chancel, Communion will be taken to you. Please notify an Usher.

Those in the parking lot partake of Communion at this time.

During Communion

Hymn #254: *“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”*

Hymn #259: *“Fling Wided the Door”*

Hymn #260: *“The King Shall Come”*

Hymn #616: *“Jesus Remember Me”*

***POST COMMUNION BLESSING**

***Post Communion Canticle: Hymn #210:** *“Blessed Be God”*

Blessed be God, the source of all life, the word of salvation,
The spirit of mercy.

***POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord

C: Amen

† WE LEAVE TO SERVE †

***BENEDICTION AND BLESSING**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.

C: Amen Amen Amen (sung responsively)

***SENDING HYMN: #249** *“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”*

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord with joy.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *“Masters in the Hall”*

-English Carol

Participants in the Service:

Pastor: Timothy Craven

Church Secretary: Ashley Weinhold

Organist: Vickie Kissinger

Lay Reader: Diane Adair

Communion Assistant: Pat Haller

Psalmist: Choir

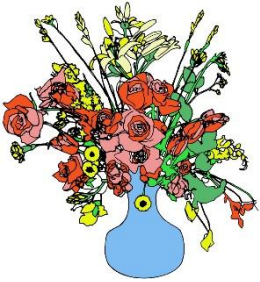
Advent Reader: Bonnie Stafford

Candle Lighter: Kimberley Craven

Videographer: Hayden Leonhard

Soundboard: Troy Adair

Ushers: Vic Richard, Dave Weidman & Alternate Nancy Eberly

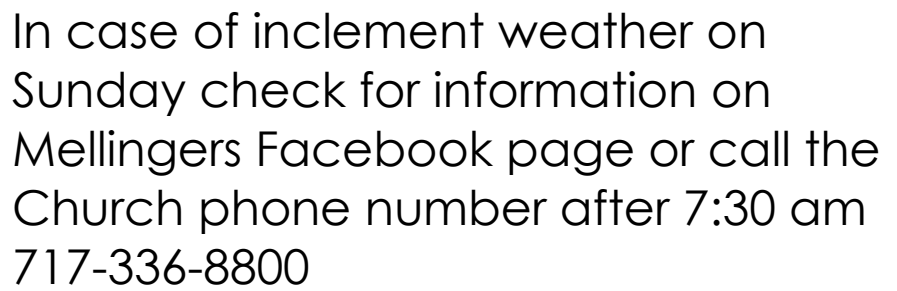


The Altar Flowers and Bulletins are
dedicated to the Glory of God
by Jerry & Lowell Yost
in Memory of our Parents



*Immediately following worship, we will have
the annual Congregational Meeting to elect
Council members and discuss the 2026
Resource Allocation.*

Weekly Receipts Report as of 12/11/25	
Attendance (Inside / Parking Lot)	77/1
Online Attendance	136
General Receipts	\$4,431.00



Choir: 6:00 pm Wednesday December 17
6:30 pm Wednesday December 24

Bell Choir: 7:00 pm Wednesday December 17
6:15 pm Wednesday December 24

