

Muddy Creek Lutheran Church

11 South Muddy Creek Rd, Denver, PA 17517

3rd Sunday of Advent – December 14, 2025

10:15am Service

Online Bulletin



TODAY'S READINGS

ISAIAH 35:1-10

PSALM 146:5-10

JAMES 5:7-10

MATTHEW 11:2-11

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(<https://www.youtube.com/@muddycreeklutheranchurchde4004>)

This service is livestreamed and posted on our website and YouTube channel.

Children's activity boxes are in the rear of the sanctuary.

Welcome to Muddy Creek Lutheran Church

GATHERING

Welcome

Announcements

Passing the Peace

P: The Peace of the Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

PRELUDE “It Came Upon The Midnight Clear”arr. H. DeCou

*Confession and Forgiveness

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

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sins, in the presence of God and of one another.

A brief silence is held for reflection.

Long-expected God,

C: We confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security that only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake.

Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God’s timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised.

Amen.

P: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God’s own righteousness.

✝ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, ready to welcome the Savior.

C: **Amen.**

***GATHERING HYMN: “Joy to the World!”**.....#267

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her king;

let ev'ry heart prepare him room

and heav'n and nature sing,

and heav'n and nature sing,

and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
 Let all their songs employ,
 while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 repeat the sounding joy,
 repeat the sounding joy,
 repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3 No more let sin and sorrow grow
 nor thorns infest the ground;
 he comes to make his blessings flow
 far as the curse is found,
 far as the curse is found,
 far as, far as the curse is found.

4 He rules the world with truth and grace
 and makes the nations prove
 the glories of his righteousness
 and wonders of his love,
 and wonders of his love,
 and wonders, wonders of his love.

***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**

***KYRIE**PG. 203

Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer.

We come to hear your living word, it saves us from despair.

Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin.

Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.

Have mercy on us, Lord, make sin and shame depart.

Renew us in your saving pow'r; create in us new hearts!

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE**PG. 204

Come, let us join our cheerful songs with angels round the throne; ten thousand thousand are their tongues, but all their joys are one.

“Worthy the Lamb that died,” they cry, “to be exalted thus!”

“Worthy the Lamb”, our lips reply, “for he was slain for us!”

Jesus is worthy to receive honor and pow'r divine;
 and blessings, more than we can give, be, Lord, forever thine.
 Let all creation join in one to bless the sacred name
 of God who sits upon the throne, and to adore the Lamb.

***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.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

L: Lord God, we light the third candle of Advent.

C: **We kindle it with joy.**

L: We await your return and your reign of compassion and justice, bringing a breakthrough in hope, peace, joy, and love.

C: **Come to us, O Christ the Light!**

ADVENT HYMN: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"#257, v.1-3

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high, Embracing all things far and nigh: In strength and beauty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O come, O Lord of Might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height In ancient times you gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

Children's Message**THE WORD**

First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

¹ The 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**

Psalm 146:5-10 (sung responsively)

⁵ Happy are they who have the God of Jacob ¹ for their help,
whose hope is in the ¹ LORD their God;

⁶ **who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that ¹ is in them;
who keeps promis- ¹ es forever;**

⁷ who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to ¹ those who hunger.
The LORD sets the ¹ captive free.

⁸ **The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who ¹ are
bowed down; the LORD ¹ loves the righteous.**

⁹ The LORD cares ¹ for the stranger; the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but
frustrates the way ¹ of the wicked.

¹⁰ **The LORD shall ¹ reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. ¹ Hallelujah!**

Second Reading: James 5:7-10

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION PG. 205**

Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.

Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred. Alleluia! Lord,
we sing for the good news that you bring.

***Gospel Reading: Matthew: 11:2-11**

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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 Holy Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

***HYMN OF THE DAY: “In the Bleak Midwinter”**#294

1 In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

2 Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.

3 What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him - give my heart.

***The Apostles' Creed**

P: Together, let us confess our faith through the words of the Apostle's Creed,

C: **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

***Thanksgiving for Offering**

We give thee but thine own, whate'er the gift may be; All that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.



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Offering Boxes on the entry tables.
Thank you for your support of Muddy Creek!

***OFFERING**

**Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.**

***Prayers of Intercession**

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 is held for reflection.

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.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. (As community celebrating Advent, together, let us say aloud the names of additional loved ones we lift to the Lord.). **We pray strength and healing for Roger Noll, Clarence Rutt, all people facing inclement weather, and those we name silently or aloud before you now...** In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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 outsider. Provide strength and continued resolve to those who work for and support Global Refuge and Lutheran Social Services. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith. May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

***The Lord's Prayer**

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

C: 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.

THE SENDING

***Blessing**

P: May God who comes among us,
Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.

C: **Amen** (sung)

***SENDING HYMN: "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"#282**

1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come
 with peaceful wings unfurled,
 and still their heav'nly music floats
 o'er all the weary world.
 Above its sad and lowly plains
 they bend on hov'ring wing,
 and ever o'er its babel sounds
 the blessed angels sing.

3 And you, beneath life's crushing load,
 whose forms are bending low,
 who toil along the climbing way
 with painful steps and slow;
 look now, for glad and golden hours
 come swiftly on the wing;
 oh, rest beside the weary road
 and hear the angels sing!

4 For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
 by prophets seen of old,
 when with the ever-circling years
 shall come the time foretold,
 when peace shall over all the earth
 its ancient splendors fling,
 and all the world give back the song
 which now the angels sing.

***Dismissal**

P: Go in Peace. Serve God and one another in Faith.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: "Prepare the Royal Highway" Swedish Tune

Today's Service

Rev. Stacy Chavis	Interim Pastor
Acolyte	Sophia Dimitris
Cantor	Dave Sensenig
Counters	Julie & Dave Emhrein, Kim Eshleman
Lector	Doris Rauch

The altar flowers are donated by Peggy Leid in memory of Charles and Lucille Hartranft

Announcements

Congregational Meeting – There will be a congregational meeting immediately following today’s service. During this time, we will discuss the budget and elect new members to the Congregational Council. Looking forward to seeing everyone there!

Lessons And Carols – Today is the Day! – Please plan to join us at 2:30 today to celebrate the Season with Readings, Songs, and Carols.

Grant Award! Muddy Creek Lutheran Church was again selected to receive a 2025 Grant from the Anne Brossman Sweigart Charitable Foundation of Ephrata, Pennsylvania in the amount of \$5,000.00. This was awarded in support of our “good work in [our] promotion of charitable efforts within the community.” We send our thanks and gratitude to the Foundation.

Wreath Laying for Muddy Creek Cemetery – Many thanks to individuals from Peace and Muddy Creek churches who helped make the Veteran’s Wreath project a success. This includes financial contributions, hands-on volunteering, providing equipment, and cleaning up. Fourteen people tied red bows on 247 wreaths! With many hands, the task of wiring the bows on the wreaths was completed in half an hour! Afterward, Adamstown Troop 61 Boy Scouts and Cub Pack boys and participating parents took the wreaths to Muddy Creek Cemetery. There was a brief ceremony to retire the old flag and raise a new one, and a ceremony commemorating the wreaths was held before the scouts and others placed them on veterans’ graves.

Christmas Eve Services Lawn Signs – Help spread the word about Muddy Creek’s Christmas Eve services! The Evangelism Committee will hand out yard signs listing the 4:30 and 10:30pm Christmas Eve services. Please take one for your lawn. If you have any questions, contact Brenda Berger at 717-336-6886 or bergerb@dejazzd.com.

Caring Tree: Please take a tag from the Caring Tree and bring in an item or two to make someone’s Holiday brighter. This year, we are again collecting for the Good Samaritan Shelter and for New Vision Home in Jamaica.

PARTNER MINISTRY OFFERINGS

Brenda and Friends Bus Trips

For more information, contact Brenda Berger (717) 336-6886 or bergerb@dejazzd.com

Dec. 27, 2025 (Saturday) “The Christmas Candy Caper” at Bird-in-Hand

Dec. 30, 2025 (Tuesday) - “Magic & Wonder: Winter Wonderland” at Magic Wonder Dinner Theatre

Next Week’s Worship Assistants (December 21st):

Acolyte	SEEKING A VOLUNTEER
Cantor	Gail Bare
Counters	Linda and Tim Fritz
Lector	Brenda Berger

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES

Attendance – December 7th

8:00am 26

10:15am 56

Giving

Received Dec. 7th \$ 3,535

Month to date: \$ 3,535

November Year-to-date

Received: \$ 139,957

Expenses: \$ 165,9907

Giving Statements – If you would like a 2025 giving statement and have not received one in the past, contact Joe Sanchez at 717-917-2490 before January 1st. 2026.

We appreciate your generosity!

Thrivent Members – We are grateful to all who direct their Thrivent Choice Dollars[®] to Muddy Creek Lutheran Church. Each year, the money we receive from Thrivent helps fund many programs. Please consider directing your Choice Dollars[®] to Muddy Creek through your online account or by calling Thrivent at 800-847-4836. Thank you for your continued support!