

Muddy Creek Lutheran Church

11 South Muddy Creek Rd, Denver, PA 17517

*4th Sunday of Advent - December 21, 2025
10:15am*

Online Bulletin



TODAY'S READINGS

ISAIAH 7:10-16

PSALM 80:1-7,17-19

ROMANS 1:1-7

MATTHEW 1:18-25

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Follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/mclchurch>) and YouTube

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

The second 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

* = Please stand as you are able; Congregational responses are **bold**

GATHERING

Welcome

Announcements

Passing the Peace

P: The Peace of the Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

PRELUDE “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing/Angels from the Realms of Glory”.....A. Whitworth

*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:** “Angels We Have Heard on High” #289

1 Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o’er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song? [Refrain]

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. [Refrain]

***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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Special Music “Every Valley Shall Be Exalted” J. N. Beck**Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

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

C: **We kindle it for Peace.**

L: We long for you to come to our world to break through and reign with compassion, justice and peace.

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

ADVENT HYMN: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” #257, v.1-4

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.

O come, O Branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny;
 from depths of hell your people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

Children's Message

THE WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰ The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." ¹³ Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (sung responsively)

- ¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph [|] like a flock;
 shine forth, you that are enthroned up- [|] on the cherubim.
- ² **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, [|] and Manasseh,
 stir up your strength and [|] come to help us.**
- ³ Restore [|] us, O God;
 let your face shine upon us, and we [|] shall be saved.
- ⁴ **O Lord [|] God of hosts,
 how long will your anger fume when your [|] people pray?**
- ⁵ You have fed them with the [|] bread of tears;
 you have given them bowls of [|] tears to drink.
- ⁶ **You have made us the derision [|] of our neighbors,
 and our enemies laugh [|] us to scorn.**
- ⁷ Restore us, O [|] God of hosts;
 let your face shine upon us, and we [|] shall be saved.
- ¹⁷ **Let your hand be upon the one at [|] your right hand,
 the one you have made so strong [|] for yourself.**
- ¹⁸ And so will we never turn a- [|] way from you;
 give us life, that we may call up- [|] on your name.
- ¹⁹ **Restore us, O Lord [|] God of hosts;
 let your face shine upon us, and we [|] shall be saved.**

Second Reading: Romans:1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all God’s beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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 1:18-25

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

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

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Sermon

***HYMN OF THE DAY:** “The First Noel”#300

1 The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain:

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.

2 They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. [Refrain]

3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. [Refrain]

4 This star drew near to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay. [Refrain]

5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full rev'rently upon the knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh, and frankincense. [Refrain]

***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.



Feel free to scan this QR code or place an Offering in the wooden boxes on the entry tables. Thank you for your support of the ministries 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.

In the anticipation of these days, prepare our hearts for your arrival. Stir our spirits through the gifts of artists, musicians, poets, and preachers, as together we proclaim your advent among us. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The earth breaks forth in singing as it heralds the Messiah's coming. Fill our hearts with wonder as we join heaven and nature in announcing this holy birth. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You send your saving grace and peace to the nations. Lead us in work for justice and care for the common good. May we meet the Christ-child we seek in the faces of our neighbors. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

When tears of grief, exhaustion, or loneliness come, or physical or emotional hurt overwhelms us, come to our aid. Uphold all who are anxious, who know the challenges of depression, or who are ill. (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 Brad Rauch, Clarence Rutt, and the family of Roger Noll.** Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Surround expectant parents and those suffering from infant loss with communities of support. Bless young children and new parents. Guide us in ways that provide safety for all children and those who care for them. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for all who have treasured the gospel and lived in faithful service. Strengthen our earthly journeys until, at the last, your face shines upon us and we are held in your love. 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: "Go Tell It on the Mountain"#289

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

1 While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. [Refrain]

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when, lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. [Refrain]

3 Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]

***Dismissal**

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

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: "Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts" A. Whitworth

Today's Service

Rev. Stacy Chavis	Interim Pastor
Cantor	Gail Bare
Counters	Linda & Tim Fritz
Lector	Brenda Berger

Today's altar flowers are donated by Marie Buohl in Memory of Walt Buohl.

Brenda, Darlene, Audrey provided refreshments for fellowship.

Announcements

Welcome: Visitors and guests - thank you for being with us today. We'd love to know more about you. Using the yellow card in your pew, let us know how we can pray for you and other information you would like us to know about you. We are glad you are here!

Prayers: Our Prayer Ministry is in continual prayer for many members, their families, and loved ones. We also pray for Brad Rauch, Clarence Rutt, and the family of Roger Noll.

Celebration of Life: Services for Roger Noll will be held on Tuesday (12/23/25). The viewing will be from 11am to 1pm, and the service will start at 1. He will be interred at Mellingers Lutheran Church; this will be followed by a meal at Cocalico Area Fire House – Reamstown Station.

NEXT SUNDAY: There will be one service (10:15am) on 12/28/25; the Congregational meeting will be held immediately afterward. In this important meeting, we will share 2026 updates and vote on the budget. Your vote counts; please plan to attend.

Christmas Decorations Down - We sure could use your help if you are available on Saturday, December 27 at 8:30 am, taking down the two Christmas trees in the Church and also the candles at the pews!

THANKS

Lessons and Carols – We want to give a special thanks to the Pine Grove Brass Band! They, our Music Director Greg Gehman, and the Muddy Creek Choir helped us all make a joyful noise to the Lord! Thanks also to all who attended this service of worship and reflection.

Thank you, Ace Hardware of Ephrata! Ace Hardware joined forces with Muddy Creek to bless Good Samaritan Services with a brand-new lawn mower. Good Samaritan noted that the mower will “help us keep our properties looking beautiful and welcoming for everyone who calls them home.” Muddy Creek is grateful to Ace for their willingness to partnership on this gift.

Wreath Laying – Many thanks to individuals from Peace and Muddy Creek churches who helped make the Veteran’s Wreath project a success. Fourteen people tied red bows on 247 wreaths! Afterward, Adamstown Troop 61 Boy Scouts and Cub Pack boys and participating parents took the wreaths to Muddy Creek Cemetery for a ceremony to retire the old flag and raise a new one, and a ceremony commemorating the wreaths.

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.

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!

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

CHURCH NOTES

Next Week’s Worship Assistants (December 28th):

Acolyte	Russel Beck
Cantor	Greg Gehman
Counters	Gail & Ted Bare
Lector	Nancy Beck

Attendance – December 14th

10:15am 43

Online 47

Giving

Received Dec. 14th \$ 6,580

Month to date: \$10,114

November Year-to-date General Fund plus Mission Support

Received: \$ 139,956.00

Expenses: \$ 165,990.00



Christmas Poinsettias donated in memory or honor of loved ones:

Gail and Ted Bare	In Memory of Mildred and Galen Shimp
Nedra Bearinger	In Memory of Ralph S. Bearinger
Connie Becker	In Memory of Family and Friends
Linda and Brenda Berger	In Memory of Nathaniel and Kathryn Berger George and Katie Yeager Mickey Jones Susan Bland John and Cora Berger Leroy Berger Sandra Stinson Gladys Stauffer
Pat Brendle	In Honor of My Children, Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren In Memory of Nancy and John Brendle and Grandparents
Marie Buohl	In Honor of My Children and Grandchildren In Memory of Walter Buohl
Pastor Chavis	In Honor of Mom In Memory of Family
The Emrhein Family	In Honor of Mary Zerbe In Memory of Betty and Lester Ramsey
Traci Galen	In Memory of My Father Glenn Greenwalt and My Mother Mary Ann Seidel
Linda Gerhart	In Memory of Melvin and Dottie Burkhardt by their Grandchildren In Memory of Elmer and Ernestine Gerhart by their Grandchildren
Jeanne and George Lorah	In Memory of Mark Lorah by the Family In Memory of Chester and Cathy Kochel In Memory of Parents

Christmas Poinsettias (page 2)

David Moodhart	In Memory of Leonard and Harriet Moodhart
Judy Nichol	In Memory of Loved Ones
Audrey and Roger Noll	In Memory of Loved Ones
Brenda Peters	In Memory of Leslie Hinder by the Grandchildren
Carl H. Schenskie	In Memory of Joanne E. Schenskie
Stephanie Spangler	In Memory of Leroy and Viola Witmer In Memory of Dave and Polly Spangler
Lee Anne Ueberroth and Family	In Memory of Dale and Shelva Witmer In Memory of Richard Ueberroth II
Yvonne Weaver	In Honor of the Birth of Jesus In Memory of John Weaver by the Family
Darlene Weidman	In Honor of Sisters, Sister-in-law, and Aunt In Memory of Loved Ones
Jane Wenger	In Honor of My Grandchildren In Memory of my Parents and My Brother
Pat Yerger, Sev Yerger and Ashley Warner	In Memory of Jesus and All the Saints Before Us