



THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSVILLE

*“a community of believers, called by God, led by the Holy Spirit
to know Christ and to make Christ known”*

Rev. Timothy R. Monroe

137 N. Walnut Street ~ Blairsville, PA 15717-1349

Church office 724-459-7991

e-mail: upchurch@r-church.com; website: www.r-church.com

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSVILLE

December 10, 2023 ~ 11:00 a.m.

Second Sunday of Advent

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Words of Greeting Barb Brown, Liturgist

Leader: The Lord be with you. **People: And also with you.**

Sharing of Opportunities, Joys and Concerns

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Prelude "May Jesus Christ Be Praised" Arr. Bennett/Berry

Introit "Glorify Thy Name" # 146

**Father, we love you, we worship and adore you,
Glorify thy name in all the earth;
Glorify thy name, glorify thy name,
Glorify thy name in all the earth.**

Call to Worship

L: In the midst of darkness, God brings a new light.

P: Thanks be to the God of light.

L: In the midst of confusion and fear,
God brings hope and peace.

P: Thanks be to the God of peace.

L: In the midst of strife and stress,
God comforts and soothes us.

**P: Let us praise God who truly loves us
and brings us new life. Amen.**

*Hymn # 176 "Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates"

*Prayer of Confession

**Gracious God, how often we settle for a 'glittery greeting card'
kind of peace, or the worn-out kind of peace that lingers when
all the wrapping paper has been recycled and the good-byes
have been said. But in our hearts, we long for something more, a**

strong and lasting peace: when families are reconciled, when the world's divisions are healed, and human dignity is restored to all. We dream of a peace to come when all people will love mercy, seek justice, and walk humbly with you each day. Heavenly One, forgive our tendency to make this season about shopping for gifts rather than the priceless gift of grace, peace, and reconciliation you have already provided.

*Assurance of Forgiveness

*Gloria Patri

***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 thee, O Israel.***

Lighting of the Advent Candle
Zack and Lindsay Barto

***A candle is burning, a candle of peace,
a candle to signal that conflict must cease:
for Jesus is coming to show us the way;
a message of peace humbly laid in the hay.***

*Sharing of the Peace

DECLARATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

New Testament Lesson Philippians 4:6

Anthem "Every Valley" Arr. Hayes

Chancel Choir – Cindy Borbonus, Director

Old Testament Lesson Proverbs 3:5-6

Message "Terra Incognita" Mr. Randy Degenkolb

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

*Affirmation of Faith *(The Nicene Creed)*

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 catholic and apostolic 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.

*Hymn # 178 “Emmanuel, Emmanuel”

Prayers of the People & the Lord’s Prayer (*debt...and debtors...*)

Ministry of Giving in Response to the Word

Offertory

*Doxology

*Prayer of Dedication

*Hymn # 152 “Prepare the Way, O Zion”

*Benediction

*Postlude

*(*All who are able, please stand)*

PLEASE JOIN us in the ritual of friendship by signing the attendance pads that are at one end of each of the pews. If you are here for the first time, we would appreciate it if you would give us your local telephone number. Please help yourself to a copy of our newsletter, *Uplift* available at the back of the church. We thank you for joining your voice to ours in sacred worship.

THE WORSHIP ASSISTANTS for this morning's service are Guest Speaker, Randy Degenkolb; Liturgist, Barb Brown; Director of Music, Cindy Borbonus; Organist, Pam Irwin; Usher, Alan Lowman; and Property Manager, Bob Cosharek.

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS are available for you at the back of the sanctuary. This year's devotional is entitled, "The Light of Grace, Welcoming God's Amazing Gift of Christ" by Michael Hoy. These guides are meant to help you as you move through the season to the coming of the Christ Child. Please help yourself.

SOMETHING NEW! Our Congregational Fellowship Committee is offering coffee and cookies before worship each Sunday during Advent. We hope you will join us at 10:15 a.m. as we gather in Fellowship Hall and enjoy some cookies, coffee or tea and fellowship before worship. All are welcome!

THE GRANNIES will gather in Fellowship Hall Monday at 9:00 a.m. and will work until 12:00 noon. There are a variety of tasks for everyone. All are welcome.

THE BLAIRSVILLE AREA MINISTERIUM will meet Monday at 11:00 a.m. at SS Simon & Jude Church.

A COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT will be held Monday, December 11th at 7:00 p.m. in our sanctuary. The concert is being sponsored by the Blairsville Monday Music Club and will include area church choirs and music groups. You are invited to attend an evening of festive Christmas music!

THE FOOD BANK will distribute groceries from Fellowship Hall Tuesday from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon. Those signing up for the first time should bring proof of residence in the borough.

BELL CHOIR rehearsal will begin at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday. We are in need of ringers to complete our choir. If you have ever thought of giving handbells a try, please contact Vicky Westley.

OUR CHANCEL CHOIR rehearsal will be held Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. We would love to have new voices join us in song! If you are interested in singing with the choir, please see Cindy Borbonus. All are welcome!

CHRISTMAS CANTATA rehearsals will be held Wednesdays from 8:00-8:30 p.m. Christmas is a beautiful time of year and music is part of that beauty. If you would like to participate with the special music for the holidays, we invite you to attend rehearsal. The Christmas Cantata will be presented during worship Sunday, December 17th at 11:00 a.m. Please see Cindy Borbonus for additional information.

CALLING ALL CHILDREN, this year's Christmas cantata has a part for children. Any children ages 4 – 12 who would like to sing in the cantata are welcome. There will be two practices for the kids, today and next Sunday, December 17 before worship. For more information, see Cindy.

THE GRANNIES are accepting silent auction bids for the full size, hand appliqued Dresden Plate pattern quilt at the back of the sanctuary. A recommended starting bid is \$200. Proceeds from the auction will benefit their ministry.

CUSTOM KEEPSAKE ORNAMENTS of the church from Wendall August Forge are available to purchase at a cost of \$12.00 each. Checks can be made payable to the church. Please see Linda George or contact the church office for an ornament or for more information.

THE PRAYER CHAIN is coordinated by the Adult Sunday School Class. If you have a prayer request or know of someone's need for prayer, please contact Linda George or the church office. All requests are kept confidential.

THE GRANNIES appreciate all the donations that were received for a sewing machine. One has been acquired and we received enough funding to cover another if or when the need arises. Thank you to all who supported our need.

AN USHER SIGN-UP SHEET is located on the table in the back of the sanctuary. If you would like to participate in worship as an usher/greeter, please sign-up. There are dates available. Our deacons thank you.

OFFERING ENVELOPES for the New Year are available for you to pick up at the back of the sanctuary. Please look for your name as we have condensed the number of boxes and your box number may have changed. If you do not have church offering envelopes and would like a box set, please drop a note in the offering plate or contact the church office at 724-459-7991.

THE 2024 FLOWER CHART is hanging in the hallway outside the church office. If you would like to order flowers for Sunday worship, please use the chart to sign-up for your choice of date. Flowers are \$20/Sunday and checks can be made payable to the Board of Deacons. We hope that those ordering flowers through the deacons would take the arrangement following worship or pick them up at the church by the following Tuesday. Flowers that remain at the church after Tuesday will be shared with homebound members of the congregation. Please contact the church office with any questions or concerns.

VOLUNTEERS are needed to run the audio/visual equipment in the balcony each Sunday morning. Those interested will be trained. Please see Doug Clayton if interested.

THE MINISTERIUM has decided to continue the tradition of publishing a Community Lenten Devotional in 2024. Those who volunteer will list the biblical reference from one of the listed lectionary texts, share a devotion of about 450 words, followed by a two-sentence prayer. Giving your name is optional but appreciated. All submissions will be gathered and compiled into booklet form, duplicated, then distributed to area churches for use during the Lenten Season. Our congregation has been assigned 3 days. If you feel led to share with your brothers and sisters in Blairsville, please contact the church office and let us know of your willingness and which day you choose. Send devotions to the church office email, upchurch@r-church.com or drop off a hard copy by Sunday, January 21st. Lent begins Wednesday, February 14, 2024 and Easter is March 31, 2024.

Thursday, March 7—Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9; Jeremiah 7:23-28; Luke 11:14-23

Friday, March 8—Psalm 81:6-11, 14, 17; Hosea 14:2-10; Mark 12:28-34

Saturday, March 9—Psalm 51:3-4, 18-21; Hosea 6:1-6; Luke 18:9-14

REGULAR SCHEDULE:

Sunday	10:15 a.m.	Cookies and Coffee in Fellowship Hall
	11:00 a.m.	Worship with Randy Degenkolb
Monday	9:00 a.m.	Grannies meet in Fellowship Hall
	6:30 p.m.	Boy Scout Troop Meeting
	11:00 a.m.	Ministerium Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Community Christmas Concert
Tuesday	10:30 a.m.	Food Bank Distribution
Wednesday	5:00 p.m.	Daisy Troop Meeting
	6:00 p.m.	Handbell Choir Rehearsal
	7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
	8:00 p.m.	Cantata Rehearsal
Thursday	2:00 p.m.	Stitching Group
	6:30 p.m.	Girl Scout Leader Meeting
Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Cantata Rehearsal
Sunday	10:15 a.m.	Cookies and Coffee in Fellowship Hall
	11:00 a.m.	Christmas Cantata
	1:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall & Kitchen reserved