



# MECHANICSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## *Baptism of the Lord*

January 7, 2024 | 8:15 & 11am | mechpresby.org | 717-697-0351

### *We Trust our Belovedness*

BELOVED by Lauren Wright Pittman | Sanctified Art LLC, Sanctifiedart.org |  
Inspired by Luke 3:21-22 | Digital painting and collage.



Luke's account of Jesus' baptism is brief and vague. He was baptized among "all the people" (Luke 3:21) by an unnamed baptizer, and until he prays, the scene is rather unremarkable. During his prayer, however, an iconic scene unfolds with the heavens opening, the Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove, and a voice booming from heaven. As I considered how I might visually respond to this text, it was difficult to

imagine this event with a beginner's mind. I've seen lots of imagery of Jesus in the water with clouds breaking open and a dove descending, or Jesus bursting out of water into a beam of light. These images are powerful, but I wasn't sure if creating a similar image would be helpful, or if I'd be offering insight into the text that hadn't already been visually explored. I began to meditate on what was unspoken and implied in Luke's account, and one moment that stuck out in my imagination was the moment Jesus was underwater. How did Jesus feel when he held his breath and descended into the river? This image offers a snapshot of Jesus right before he steps into his calling, on the threshold of spectacular affirmation. He is completely suspended, embraced, and upheld by the waters of baptism. The water's surface is choppy. The future is unknown and precarious. His path is a lonely and formidable one, eventually leading to his suffering and death. Despite what is to come, Jesus reaches toward the surface. Two fish are drawn to the light of his halo, foreshadowing his companionship with fishers and his miraculous feeding of the five thousand. All of creation is leaning into his call. This is what trusting your belovedness feels like – muscles and bones relieved of gravity's burden, serenity, weightlessness, oneness with creation, and the warmth of God's love permeating every cell of your body and every corner of your soul.

– Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

## Welcome

## \*Introit #133, v. 1

*O Come All Ye Faithful*

Adeste Fideles

*O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;**O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem! Come and adore him, born the King of angels!**O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord.*

## \*Call to Worship

There are some days when I need the reminder that I belong to God.

**The world can be a harsh place; we often need that reminder.**

Let us care for one another. Let us speak the truth we each need to hear.

Church, you belong to God, you are God's beloved.

**Friend, you belong to God. You are God's beloved.**

Let us worship the God who knows our names.

**Let us worship the God who calls us beloved.**

## \*Hymn #144

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

Cranham

## \*Prayer of Confession

Trusting in the good news, trusting that we are beloved, let us go to God in prayer:

**Loving God, from the very beginning, you breathed life into us and called us good. However, somewhere along the way we replaced "good" with "not enough." Somewhere along the way we turned the volume up on that phrase and began to doubt our own self-worth. Forgive us, for this is not what you have taught us. For when the world tells us we are not enough, you call us beloved. Show us how to return to that truth. Show us how to let go of our weariness and rest in that good news... (time of silent confession)**

## \*Assurance of Pardon

## \*Response #159, v. 1

*O Sing a Song of Bethlehem*

Kingsfold

*O sing a song of Bethlehem, of shepherds watching there,  
and of the news that came to them from angels in the air.  
The light that shone on Bethlehem fills all the world today.  
Of Jesus' birth and peace on earth the angels sing away.*

## Beloved Child of God Moment

*We invite children to remain in worship. There is a nursery available with parental supervision at both services.*

## \*Response #159, v. 2

*O Sing a Song of Bethlehem*

Kingsfold

*O sing a song of Nazareth, of sunny days of joy;  
O sing of fragrant flowers' breath, and of the sinless boy.  
For now the flowers of Nazareth in every heart may grow.  
Now spread the name of his dear name on all the winds that blow.*

## Prayer for Illumination

**First Lesson** 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 27 NT pg. 174  
The story of God for the people of God... **thanks be to God.**

**Second Lesson** Luke 3:21-22 NT pg. 60  
The story of God for the people of God... **thanks be to God.**

**Communion Meditation** *We Trust Our Belovedness* Rev. Kathryn Z. Johnston

## Selah: A Holy Pause for Silent Reflection

**Ordination & Installation of Ruling Elders & Deacons** (11am only – please see insert)

\***Hymn #488** *I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry* Waterlife

## Offering of Tithes & Gifts

**Offertory** *Away in a Manger* Wilbur Held

\***Response #159, v. 3** *O Sing a Song of Bethlehem* Kingsfold  
*O sing a song of Galilee, of lake and woods and hill, of him who walked upon the sea and bade its waves be still. For though, like waves of Galilee, dark seas of trouble roll, when faith has heard the Master's word, falls peace upon the soul.*

## The Lord's Supper - Please see insert

*After the Words of Institution, you are invited to come forward using the center aisle to receive the gluten-free bread, then to the table on the side to receive the cup. There are also gluten-free individual packets in the back.*

\***Hymn #753** *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace* Prayer of S. Francis

## \*Charge & Benediction

\***Response #136, Refrain** *Go Tell it On the Mountain* Go Tell It  
*Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!*

**Postlude** *In Thee is Joy* JSB, BWV 625

### Welcome to worship this morning!

**Bold print** indicates congregational reading or response.

**An asterisk \*** indicates when to stand in body or spirit.

**Offerings are welcome!** Place in the plates at each of the entrances or give online.

**New?** Check out our website: [mechpresby.org](http://mechpresby.org).

The **yellow rose** symbolizes the Spirit's presence among us.



*Pastor Emily will be out of the office January 2-9 and will return on January 10<sup>th</sup>.*

## JOIN US IN THE THOUGHTFUL CHRISTIAN CLASS

**1/14** – With the New Year comes New Year's resolutions, often around family finance. Come join Pastor Kathryn in a conversation about how to be faithful stewards of all God has first given us.

**1/21** - Malpezzi Funeral Home will be our guest this Sunday. They will walk us through the how-to's of preplanning a funeral. By planning ahead of time, you can make sure you are covering all of the important details so that your family can focus on healing and remembrance.

**1/28** – Rev. Ellie Johns-Kelley, our Ministry Relations Officer at the Presbyterian Foundation, will “Continue Our Story,” a workshop discussing how to discern your legacy, share that message with our church and those you love, and make a planned gift to continue your ministry here.

### Courageous Conversations – Today, January 21<sup>st</sup>

Join us on January 21<sup>st</sup> from 6:30-8:00pm for our new, inter-congregational education series where we will explore topics related to our Christian faith, especially our commitment to Matthew 25. These conversations will happen monthly and be hosted by a different congregation in our area each month. MPC will host the first conversation on the topic of food insecurity in Central PA. Light refreshments will be provided. You are encouraged to bring a non-perishable food donation for the Central Pennsylvania food bank (no glass or home-canned items), and a friend! Future gatherings can be found on the website.

### Valentine's Dance with Lessons!

Come out and dance with us on February 10, 2024, 7:00pm-8:30 hosted by the Fellowship, Mission, and Welcoming committees. We will learn easy square dances, line dances, and choreographed ballroom dances. All are welcome; singles, couples, and families of all ages! There is no charge to attend, but a free will offering will be taken. Suggested donation is \$5 a person or \$10 per family. No experience necessary! Refreshments provided!

#### Our Worship Leaders

Rev. Kathryn Z. Johnston – Pastor | Rev. Emily D. Sutphin – Associate Pastor  
Cathay L. Snyder – Christian Education Director | Mark G. McKeever – Director of Music  
Debby Williams (8:15), Kellen Lichty (11) – Readers  
Prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

#### **Ministers**

#### **All members of the congregation**

Senior Pastor/Head of Staff.....Rev. Kathryn Z. Johnston (she/her)..... kjohnston@mechpresby.org  
Associate Pastor.....Rev. Emily D. Sutphin (she/her)..... esutphin@mechpresby.org  
Christian Education Director ..... Cathay L. Snyder (she/her) ..... csnyder@mechpresby.org  
Director of Music ..... Mark G. McKeever (he/him) ..... mmckeever@mechpresby.org  
Church Administrator..... Angela J. Weir (she/her) ..... aweir@mechpresby.org  
Playful Beginnings Director.....Karen P. Taylor (she/her)..... playfulbeginnings.mpc@gmail.com

#### **Session:**

Class of 2024 – Dan Alex, Bob Bell, Katie Chase, Becky Giovagnoli, Lori Heenan  
Class of 2025 – Amy Berry, Ted Foor, Sue Karakantas, Larry Stoner, Rick Whitcomb  
Class of 2026 – Nils Hagen-Frederiksen, Kelli Scurfield, Ran Singiser, Jenn Thomson, Tim Wonder

#### **Deacons:**

Class of 2024 – Marybeth Hummel, Ken Kleinert, Rich Marlin, Cathy Petko, Kim Savidge, Jan Whitcomb  
Class of 2025 – Martie Bricker, Shannon Hammel, Grace House, Bill Klebe, Judy Klebe, Keni Melphis  
Class of 2026 – Heather Barto, Jan Burrows, Dave Donat, Lara Frymark, Debi Gross, Patti Hinkson

**MECHANICSBURG  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**  
mechpresby.org



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Playful Beginnings Director  
playfulbeginnings.mpc@gmail.com

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**Church Office Hours**  
**9-4:30 Monday-Thursday**  
**Closed Fridays**  
**The office will be closed**  
**Monday, January 15.**

1/07/2024

**WELCOME TO MPC**

**More People Caring**

Whether you're a first time visitor, a long time member, or anywhere in between—

We're glad you're here!



**SUBSCRIBE**

Send an email to  
aweir@mechpresby.org to  
sign up for the weekly email.



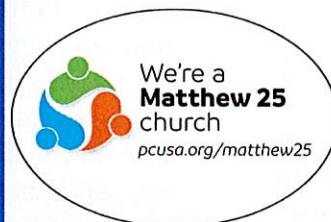
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"GIVE" tab at mechpresby.org



**WEEKLY SERVICES & THINGS TO KNOW**

**Sundays: 8:15 & 11am Worship; 9:35 Sunday School**

**February 4: 9:30 Sunday School; 10:30am Worship**

**Children are welcome** in worship and are invited to participate in Communion. Activity packets can be found in the back and there are children's tables in the front and back of the Sanctuary.

**Restrooms** with baby changing stations can be found through the middle Sanctuary door, to the left of the kitchen. All gender restrooms are located through the front right Sanctuary door, down the hallway and to the right.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES (9:35am)

Age 2—K | Center Room (Nursery Wing)  
**1st-5th grades** | Lower Fellowship Hall  
**6th-8th** | Confirmation Class | Mission & Student Center  
**9th-12th** | Chat & Chew | Mission & Student Center  
**Joyful Hearts** | P.W. Conference Room  
 Women's class studying *Ephesians*  
**Dave Petko Class** | Library  
 Bible study currently looking at the Apocrypha  
**Thoughtful Christian** | Upper Fellowship Hall  
 Short-term studies focused on current events & issues.

## CONNECT

**Tuesday Nights @ MPC | UFH | 1st & 3rd Tuesdays**  
**Next one: January 16 | 5:30pm Dinner**  
 Held on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month from 5:30 - 7, ALL ages are invited for dinner, fellowship, and activities. We gather in Upper Fellowship Hall and go from there. **CHILDREN'S CHOIR REHEARSAL AT 6PM.**  
 Our guest on 1/16 will be Nancy Flint sharing about the work being done at Mission at the Eastward (M.A.T.E.) and our upcoming trip there with Camp Hill Presbyterian Church, July 20-26.

## STUDY

**Race & the Church | PWCR | 2nd Tuesdays 7 PM**  
**Continues on Tuesday, January 9th**  
 We will be discussing Chapters 2-3 of Jemar Tisby's, *The Color of Compromise* covering the colonial era and the American Revolution. If you would like a copy of Tisby's book or are interested in joining this class, contact Cathay Snyder.

**Pastor's Bible Study | Thursdays at noon | PWCR**  
 Bring your lunch and a Bible!

**6th—12th Grade Events**  
*Friends Are Always Welcome!*

**1/12-14 | Serving and Learning Trip | Washington D.C.**  
**1/28 | 4th @ 304 | 6pm-7:30 | M&S Center**  
**2/4 | Baked Potato Brunch Fundraiser | 9:30am | UFH**  
**2/9 | Learn! Crat! Eat! | 5pm-8 | UFH**  
**2/25 | 4th @ 304 | 6pm-7:30 | M&S Center**

January 7 – January 14, 2024		
Sunday	8:15 AM	Sunday Worship Service
	9:35 AM	Sunday School
	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship Service
	3:45 PM	Boy Scouts, LFH
Monday	7:00 PM	Committee Night
	8:30 PM	Alcoholics Anon, LFH
Tuesday	6:00 PM	Girl Scouts, LFH
	7:00 PM	Race & The Church, PWCR
Wednesday	3:30 PM	B.O.W., M&S Center
	5:30 PM	Bells, Sanctuary
	7:00 PM	Choir, Choir Room
Thursday	12:00 PM	Pastor Kathryn's Bible Study
Friday	6:15 AM	Men's Fellowship, PWCR
Saturday		
Sunday	8:15 AM	Sunday Worship Service
	9:35 AM	Sunday School
	11:00 AM	Sunday Worship Service

## DISCOVER

**Soul Journey | Library | 2 PM**  
**Begins: January 17, 2024**

Soul Journey is an opportunity to expand our understanding of the spiritual paths we follow. There will be five sessions: 1/17, 1/31, 2/7, 2/21, 3/6. Each session will build upon the previous one. To register, send your name and contact information to [esutphin@mechpresby.org](mailto:esutphin@mechpresby.org)

**Dinner & a Movie | UFH | January 19 @ 5:30pm**  
 As part of our Matthew 25 focus of dismantling racism, we will be watching *Do the Right Thing*. Viewer discretion is advised. Please see the newsletter for more details.

 **MECHANICSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

# 3 WAYS TO GIVE



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## Ordination & Installation of Officers

### **Statement on Ordination and Installation**

We are called into the church of Jesus Christ by baptism, and marked as Christ's own by the Holy Spirit. This is our common calling, to be disciples and servants of our servant Lord. Within the community of the church, some are called to particular service as Deacons, as Ruling Elders, and as Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Ordination is Christ's gift to the church, assuring that his ministry continues among us, providing for ministries of caring and compassion in the world, ordering the governance of the church and preaching the Word and administering the sacraments.

Representing the one, holy, universal, and apostolic church, the session of Mechanicsburg Presbyterian Church now ordains and/or installs to active service:

Dave Donat, Lara Frymark, Debi Gross, and Patti Hinkson to the office of Deacon, and Nils Hagen-Frederiksen, Ran Singiser, and Tim Wonder to the office of Ruling Elder.

### **Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant & Renunciations**

#### **Profession of Faith**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith. Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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

### **Constitutional Questions**

#### **Prayer of Ordination**

*With thanksgiving for their completed active service, the Class of 2023 Ruling Elders and Deacons are invited to please come forward for the laying on of hands: Jan Daft, Mike Daft, Patti Hinkson, Nat League, Scott Rogers, Phil Van Zile, and Amy Zullo*

### **Declaration and Welcome**

#### **Communion Liturgy**

**One:** Friends, this is the joyful feast of the people of God! They will come from east and west, and from south and north, and sit at table in the kingdom of God. This is not a Presbyterian table. This is not a table only for adults. This is a table for all beloved children of God... that means you. Come to the table of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The Lord be with You

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give our thanks and praise!

**It is right to give our thanks and praise!**

**One:** God of baptismal waters, there are a million other places we could be right now, but we chose to be here. We needed to be here. We needed to hear, once more, that we are created in your image—fiercely loved and uniquely called.

Remembering that we are not alone at this table, we join our voices with all the saints whom you have called, from all times and all places, who forever sing your praise:

**All:**                    *Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.*

We are grateful to take respite at this table because the world is an exhausting place. Over and over again we are surrounded with reminders that we should be doing more, we should be doing better, we should be working harder.

But then we come to your sanctuary and we hear you say that you delight in us. And all of the sudden, things fall into place once again. Loving and claiming God, help us to see ourselves the way you see us. Give us the grace and the tenderness to love ourselves as you love us. Remind us that we are worthy of Sabbath, worthy of grace, worthy of love and belonging.

Gracious God, we are not the only ones who need your care and affirmation. So today we also ask for the wisdom to give compassion to our neighbors—friends and strangers alike. Teach us how to be advocates for others so that all might know that they are a beloved child of God. In particular, today we pray for those on our hearts and on our minds...

Be with them. Renew their spirits. Remind them, just as you remind us, that they all are loved by you. And until your promised day when joy outweighs weariness, we will return to the water's edge. We will continue to look for you in our midst, and we will continue to affirm belovedness in one another. Now with united voices, we lift our hearts to you in prayer, using the words your son taught us to pray, saying:

**All:**                    **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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

#### Words of Institution

*You are invited to come forward using the center aisle. After receiving the **gluten-free** bread, move to the table on the side, drink from a cup, and place it in the receptacle.*

*There are also individual gluten-free Communion packets available in the back.*

#### Prayer after Communion

**All:** As we leave this place, and go into a weary world, may we speak tenderly. Guide us to do the good that is ours to do, to choose connection, and to hold onto hope. We are thankful to be God's beloved. May we go out rejoicing. The world needs it. Amen.