THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
January 11, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
First Sunday of Epiphany

WELCOME — Pat Holloway, Deacon

PRELUDE

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

You and I enter this place of worship in search of light to guide our way.
We seek to exchange the ashes of mourning for the garland of joy.
We come because we have seen the light afar off and desire to come closer.
We want to join with others in walking in the light so we may enjoy true human communion.
We worship that our light may shine and draw others to God's light.
In Christ, the light has come into the world, the bright expression of God among us - let us worship God!

*HYMN — *In The Bleak Midwinter* — 154

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.

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

Angels and archangels may have gathered there, cherubim and seraphim thronged the midnight air; but his mother only, in her maiden bliss, worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

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.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

We thank you, O God, for calling us into your church to be your people. We have gathered,

God of grace and wisdom, because we have heard your call. You have reached out to us in Jesus Christ, you have touched us with your Spirit; and we have turned toward you, seeking to love as we have been loved. We call upon your holy name: empower us to worship and serve you, walking gently on this earth, through the grace of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Isaiah 49.1-6

Listen to me, O coastlands, pay attention, you peoples from far away! The Lord called me before I was born, and named me while I was in my mother's womb. The Lord made my mouth like a sharp sword, and hid me in the hand's shadow; made me a polished arrow, in whose quiver I was hidden away. The Lord said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the Lord, and my reward with my God." And now the Lord says, who formed me in the womb to be a servant, to bring Jacob back, and that Israel might be gathered together, for I am honored in the sight of the Lord, and my God has become my strength— who says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

ANTHEM

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Luke 2.25-35

SERMON *"A Life Fully Lived"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation."
(Luke 2.29-30)

HYMN *God, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace* 166

God, bid your servant go in peace, your word is now fulfilled. These eyes have seen salvation's dawn, this child so long foretold.

This is the Savior of the world, the Gentiles' promised light, God's glory dwelling in our midst, the joy of Israel.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY
Praise God from whom all blessings flow / Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God for all that love has done / Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER *("trespasses")*

POEM *A Song for Simeon* (1928) T.S. Eliot (1888-1965)
(from *Ariel Poems*)

*HYMN *I Sing a Song of The Saints of God* 494

I sing a song of the saints of God patient and brave and true, who toiled and fought and lived and died for the Lord they loved and knew. And one was a doctor, and one was a queen, and one was shepherdess on the green: they were all of them saints of God, and I mean, God helping to be one too.

They loved their Lord so dear, so dear, and his love made them strong; and they followed the right, for Jesus' sake, the whole of their good lives long. And one was a soldier, and one was a priest, and one was slain by a fierce wild beast: and there's not any reason, no, not the least, why I shouldn't be one too.

They lived not only in ages past, there are hundreds of thousands still; the world is bright with the joyous saints who love to do Jesus' will. You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea, in church or in trains, or in shops, or at tea; for the saints of God are just folk like me, and I mean to be one too.

*BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

(* those who are able may stand)

LOOKING AHEAD

January 11	**10:00 am**	**Worship Deacon's Meeting**	January 15	8:30 am	Yoga **Choir Rehearsal**

	11:00 am 5:00 pm	Soup Kitchen		**7:00 pm**	
January 12	5:30 pm 6:00 pm	Irish Dance Yoga	January 16	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at Simon's Marketplace**
January 13	8:30 am **7:00 pm**	Yoga **Choir Rehearsal**	January 18	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Pastoral Relations Mtg.** Soup Kitchen

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome! No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at the United Church of Chester, an Open and Affirming Church and a member of the United Church of Christ. **The United Church of Chester is centered in Christ's love, embracing, nurturing, serving all, and committed to justice and peace**.

The Deacon for the month of January is **Pat Holloway. .** You were greeted this morning by **Deb Calamari**. Flowers in the chancel are provided by **Deb Calamari**.

Offering envelopes for 2026 are available in the Narthex. If you do not find your name on a box, please see Diane Lindsay, Financial Secretary.

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday – Friday 8:30 am – 12:30 pm or by appointment

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday - Friday 9am-1pm.

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United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Church

January 11, 2026

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