

FIRST DEAF  
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WITMER HEIGHTS  
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**December 10, 2023**

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**FIRST DEAF / WITMER HEIGHTS COMBINED FELLOWSHIP & WORSHIP**

**8:30 Christmas Breakfast**

We are thankful for the delicious breakfast served by Witmer Heights this morning.  
Thanks to all who provided the food and helped with set up and clean up.

**10:00 Worship Service/Christmas Program**

First Deaf is in charge of the Christmas program today.  
We welcome you to worship with us.

*"How Silently, How Silently,  
the Wondrous Gift Is Given"*

Hearing people live in a noisy and visually impoverished world, but Scripture invites us into holy silence. "For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him" (Psalm 62:5). "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him" (Habakkuk 2:20).

Because of a partnership with a Deaf church in eSwatini, the members of First Deaf Church have been exploring ways to communicate across language barriers through mime and gesture. That work was the inspiration for this program.

First Deaf Church would like to share glimpses of our visually rich world with our hearing brothers and sisters. As you watch people miming Bible verses, you are invited to guess which verse is being communicated. At the end of each mimed verse, a slide will give the verse in English, then you will see the miming again. In each of the Christmas songs we sing today, hearing people are invited to sing the one verse of the song that is in the program, while watching the gestures and visual cues that communicate the song's meaning. Then, the piano and singing will fall silent, as the verse is repeated a second time with only gestures and visual cues that reverberate with meaning.

Those who desire to do so may put offerings in either of two boxes, labeled Witmer Heights and First Deaf, which are on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

We pray that your eyes will be opened anew to behold the wondrous gift of Christ.

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Prayer: Henry Deller  
Introduction: Chuck Snyder  
Scriptural Prophecies: Jan Hoffer, Deb Hoffer, Jeff Hoffer, Henry Deller, Bobbi Caley  
Song: Do You See What I See? Henry Deller and Mike Hurst  
Said the night wind to the little lamb. Do you see what I see? (Repeat)  
Way up in the sky, little lamb. Do you see what I see? (Repeat)  
A star, a star, dancing in the night,  
With a tail as big as a kite (Repeat).  
Mime: Mike Hurst, Bradley Martin; Brian Hilton, Deb Hoffer; Bobbi Caley, Jan Hoffer, Nancy Marshall  
Song: O Little Town of Bethlehem Jeff Hoffer  
How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given.  
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.  
Mime: First Deaf Mennonite Church  
Song: Silent Night Jeff and Jan Hoffer  
Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing, "Alleluia."  
Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!  
Scripture: Nancy Marshall and Gwen Hurst  
Song: Joy to the World Jan Hoffer  
Joy to the world, the Lord is come, Let Earth receive her King  
Let every heart prepare Him room, And Heaven and nature sing,  
And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing  
Prayer: Henry Deller

~Special thanks to Jan Mast, song leader, and Tricia Stoltzfus, pianist, for blessing our program with their musical gifts.

~Bulletin information continued on insert

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### FIRST DEAF NEWS

~NOTE: Sunday sermons are uploaded to YouTube weekly. Go to the church website <https://firstdeafmc.wordpress.com/> for the link.

#### First Deaf Church Life Activities Calendar

- Dec. 10 – Christmas breakfast by WH – 8:30 am.Christmas program by FD – 10 am.
- Dec. 13, 20, 31 – Bible study on Zoom – 7 pm (open at 6:30 pm.)
- Dec. 17, 24, 31 – Chuck Snyder will share/preach to First Deaf congregation.
- Dec. 17, 24, 31 – S.S.in Room 12 at 10:45 am.

#### First Deaf – December 17

Worship Leader: Jeff Hoffer  
 Song Leader: Henry Deller  
 Message: Chuck Snyder  
 Greeter: Bradley Martin

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### WITMER HEIGHTS NEWS

~On Friday, December 15 at 7pm, Witmer Heights is hosting a Blue Christmas Service providing God's comfort and hope to those hurting during the holiday season due to grief or struggles of many kinds. Be ready to invite someone who may benefit from this worship service of reflective songs, readings, and prayers. Invitations are available to pick up.

~Here's a reminder that we need volunteer teachers for the adult Sunday school class for the winter quarter. You can sign up at [this link](#)

#### Witmer Heights Church Life Activities Calendar

- December 10 – Christmas Breakfast – 8:30 am Christmas Program. - 10:00 am.
- December 12 – Prayer meeting at church in room next to the office. – 8:30-9:30
- December 15 – Blue Christmas program – Friday at 7:00 pm.

#### Witmer Heights – December 17

Worship Leader: Chris Kennel  
 Song Leaders: Tricia Stoltzfus, Sophia & Dan Zook  
 Message: Steve Musselman  
 Greeters: Velma Magill and Gladys Landis

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### OFFERING AND ATTENDANCE – December 3

#### Offerings/General Fund

First Deaf \$ 951.00  
 Witmer Heights \$2,107.00

#### Attendance/Worship

First Deaf – 18  
 Witmer Heights – 51

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~Advent is a season observed in most Christian denominations as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ at Christmas and the return of Christ at the Second Coming. Advent is the beginning of the liturgical year in Western Christianity. The name was adopted from Latin adventus "coming; arrival", translating Greek parousia from the New Testament, originally referring to the Second Coming.

This year Witmer Heights is following the advent theme “How will we know?” which began December 3 Following are the themes for the next two Sundays.

#### **Advent Theme Dec. 10: How will we know...what now?**

**Summary statement** – While we may sometimes feel discouraged or uncertain about when or how God will act, like those in our Scriptures, we are called to live and move in the world as God’s people. Even as we wonder “How long?,” we begin to ask “What shall we do while we wait?”

#### **~Advent Theme Dec. 17: How will we know...what next?**

**Summary statement** - One of the markers of a maturing faith is the willingness to sit with questions, often for a long time, sometimes for a lifetime. Even without answers, living with our questions is part of what shapes us as people of God. How do we find hope and joy in the questions of faith that may lead not to answers, but to more questions?