

Messiah Lutheran Church

3 South Third Street
Mifflintown, PA 17059
Church Office / 436-6213 Dial-A-Prayer / 436-2100

The Reverend William N. Esborn
Andrea Cameron
Robert St. Clair
Carole Nace
Barbara S. Geedey
Barbara S. Geedey

Pastor
Choir Director
Organist
Organist
Lector
Altar Guild

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT HANGING OF THE GREENS December 12, 2010 – 10:30 a.m.

*Please Stand as **YOU** Are Able

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER IN PRAYER TODAY

Helen C., Marian G., Reba S., Sue C., Flo B., Ethel B., Virginia F., Cathryn R., Arlene M., Goldie K., Jean M., Cassie S., Ruth C., Ray B., Anna Mary Z., Kevin R., Mary Martha G., Avonel and Rick W., Sam Z., Paul W., Bob C., JoAnna C., Larry J., Chuck M., Jesse K., Fay M., Norman G., and Pastor E.

PREPARATION

CHIMES: CALL TO WORSHIP

MEDITATION AND PRAYER

PRELUDE

"The King Shall Come"

E. Broughton

[A Time for Meditation and Prayer]

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom. Jesus points to signs of God's reign: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who does great things in every generation, who lifts up the lowly, who keeps promises forever.

C Amen

P Let us come to the river of life, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection

P Righteous and merciful God,

C we confess that we have strayed from your ways and walked our own paths. We fall asleep to the needs around us, yet our anxieties jar us awake. We are bound up in systems of unrighteousness and injustice. Restore your people, O God; renew your creation; and have mercy on us, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

P Listen to what God is saying, speaking peace to those who turn their hearts: The night is far gone, the day is near. All who have a fearful heart, be strong, do not be afraid! God comes in + Jesus Christ and forgives your sin. The Spirit of holiness fill you with wisdom and might, that you may delight in God's ways.

C Amen

GATHERING

* ENTRANCE HYMN "Comfort, Comfort, Now My People" #29 (LBW)

* GREETING

P Beloved of God, who are called to be saints: grace and peace be with you all.

C And also with you.

* KYRIE

P Lord, have mercy upon us. **C Lord, have mercy upon us.**

P Christ, have mercy upon us. **C Christ, have mercy upon us.**

P Lord, have mercy upon us. **C Lord, have mercy upon us.**

"It Came upon the Midnight Clear" (vs. 3)

And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow;
look now, for glad and gold – en hours come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!

P Lord, have mercy upon us. **C Lord, have mercy upon us.**

P Christ, have mercy upon us. **C Christ, have mercy upon us.**

P Lord, have mercy upon us. **C Lord, have mercy upon us.**

* SALUTATION AND RESPONSE (**spoken**)

P The Lord be with you

C And al-so with you.

* PRAYER OF THE DAY (**spoken in unison**)

P Let us pray...

C Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

THE ADVENT WREATH

Jeremiah 23: 5-6

⁵"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. ⁶In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Savior.

Isaiah 60:2-3

²See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. ³Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH
PLACING THE CRECHE FIGURES

The Smith Family

HYMN

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vss. 1 & 5)

#34 (LBW)

THE CHURCH GREENS

Isaiah 9:2

²The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

HYMN

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" (vss. 1 & 3)

#60 (LBW)

THE CHRISTMAS TREES

John 1:1-5, 9-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. ¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

HYMN

"Lo, How a Rose Is Growing" (vss. 1 & 4)

#58 (LBW)

THE POINSETTIA

Matthew 2:1-12

¹After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'" ⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." ⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

HYMN

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" (vss. 1 & 2)

#198 (LBW)

BLESSING OF THE MANGER

P God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made known your love: when our need for a Savior was great you sent Your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. To our lives He brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love. Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, who is God-with-us and Savior of all, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

C Amen

* HYMN OF THE DAY

"Away in a Manger"

#67 (LBW)

* APOSTLES' CREED (all)

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 the life everlasting. Amen

* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P Waiting for the fulfillment of our hope in Christ's promised coming, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

P Holy and righteous God, be present now in the gifts you have given through Christ. Lead us to proclaim the glory of all we hear, see, smell, taste, and touch in our gathering . Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Reveal to all people the glory evident in your creation. Open our eyes to see the wonder of your works in every blooming plant and in each vibrant animal. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Raise up leaders in the church and beyond who will boldly point people toward your justice. Make them instruments of your work, and bring an end to inequality, poverty, and prejudice. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Send your blessing to people who are broken in body, mind or spirit (especially all of our shut-ins [both at home and in nursing homes], Kevin Reynolds, Mary Martha Gilbert, Avonel and Rick Waller, Sam Zeiders, Paul Woltman, Bob Cameron, JoAnna Cameron, Larry Jones, Chuck McNaight, Jesse Kint, Norman Gloss, Jr., Fay McCormick, and Pastor Esborn). Give them wholeness in their communities through Christ's ongoing work of reconciliation. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Bless all caregivers and others in helping professions. Ease their burdens, and let them receive compassion, even as they give it freely to people who are in need. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P Remembering the lives of the saints, grant us patience as we await Christ's coming. Show us signs of your reign until the day when our rejoicing will be endless. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C Amen

*** SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

Congregational sharing: **"Peace be with you."**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"Elegy"

R. Lau

[Please pass the Friendship Pad down your pew for all to sign and then back to the center aisle so everyone has the opportunity to read the names. We request that our guests also give us their home address. Thank you].

ANTHEM

Choir

*** SUNG OFFERTORY "Let All Together Praise Our God" (revised wording)**

Let all to – geth – er praise our God Be – fore his glo – rious throne;

For he will o-pen heav'n a – bove To give us his own Son, To give us his own Son.

* OFFERING PRAYER

P God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen

MEAL

* ADVENT DIALOG

P We have come with great expectation to meet the coming Messiah.

C All creation waits with longing for the Son of God.

P As John the Baptist cried in the wilderness, "Prepare the way for the Lord."

C We prepare a place in our hearts and in the world for his coming.

P O come to us, Emmanuel!

C God, be with us and save us from our sins.

* EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

C Come, Lord Jesus.

P Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C Come, Holy Spirit.

P All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

* THE LORD'S PRAYER ['trespasses'] **(all)**

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

* INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P God fills the hungry with good things. Come with joy to the feast.

DISTRIBUTION

["INTINCTION" – dip your wafer in the wine. Come forward by the center aisle and return by the side aisle. All who wish to stand at the chancel rail after partaking for a time of silent meditation are invited to do so].

* COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen

* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P In this meal of goodness and mercy, O God, our mouths have been filled with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy. Now send us to gather the harvest of righteousness, that all those who sow in tears may come again to you in joy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen

SENDING

* BLESSING

P The holy Three, holy One increase your hope, strengthen your faith, deepen your love, and + grant you peace.

C A-men, A-men, A-men (sung)

* CLOSING HYMN

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

#70 (LBW)

* DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

"Draw Thou My Soul, O Christ"

F. Ritter

NEXT WEEK'S LECTOR – Ed Beaver

NEXT WEEK'S ALTAR GUILD – Barbara S. Geedey

WELCOME

IF YOU WISH TO USE OR FOLLOW THE LITURGY MUSIC as we proceed through the service today, please use the blue portfolios placed on top of the sound control system. In addition, headsets are available in the narthex for our sound enhancement system for the hearing impaired.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME to worship at Messiah. We invite you to register your visit not only in the Friendship Pads, but also in the guest book provided in the narthex. If you are seeking a church home, please speak to the pastor. Our fellowship in Jesus Christ is open and extended to all persons who confess His Lordship over all life. Thank you for worshiping with us. We invite you to return. Visitors are invited to commune with us if they are baptized and, if with us in our faith, they trust Jesus' promise of the presence of the Body and Blood of Christ.

WE INVITE EVERYONE (members and visitors) worshiping with us today to sign the Friendship Pads during the Organ Offertory. If you are a visitor, please be sure to include your address when signing. Please also place a check mark in the box (beside your name) if you are communing today and have not as yet given us a record of your participation in the sacrament during this quarter. (A new quarter begins in January, April, July, and October). The pads are found on the aisle seat of each pew in the nave, and in each section of the Adult Sunday School Room.

THIS MORNING WE ARE LED IN WORSHIP by Andrea Cameron, an Authorized Lay Worship Leader of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Authorized Lay Worship Leader persons have received extensive training so as to provide worship leadership and preaching, and also have been authorized by the Bishop of the Synod to preside at the Lord's Table in specific situations. This is a ministry of the ELCA recognizing the mission need of the church for today and the future. We welcome Andrea as our worship leader today and pray God's blessing on her as she ministers to us today.

ALTAR FLOWERS are presented to the Glory of God and in memory of loved ones by Don and Barb Geedey and family.

PRAYER REQUESTS will be placed in the weekly bulletin for one month. If you wish to have someone included in the prayer list for more than one month, please call the church office.

THE DEADLINE FOR ALL ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE SUNDAY BULLETIN IS THURSDAY NOON. DIAL-A-PRAYER (436-2100) IS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS DAILY!

JUST A THOUGHT – The Dalai Lama (on suffering): "Right from the beginning, try to keep an optimistic attitude. If right from the beginning you lose hope and become pessimistic, that's the real source of failure."

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

CHURCH ORGANIST is needed for weekly services, beginning January 1, 2011, at Messiah Lutheran Church. Weekly choir rehearsal, except during summer months. Allen Digital Electric Organ and Kurzweil Electronic Keyboard. Candidates should contact Ed Beaver at ebeaver41@yahoo.com or at 436-9382 for information, including salary. Additional information about the church and congregation can be found at www.mlcmifflintown.org.

CAN TREE – Donations of gallon-size canned food is again being collected this year, now through December, for the “can tree” in the Adult Sunday School Room to benefit Bethesda Mission. Everyone is encouraged to donate as many cans as you are able. Cans will be delivered to Bethesda Mission later in December.

POINSETTIAS to decorate the church for Christmas may be placed in honor or in memory of someone, or to the Glory of God. The cost is \$7.50 for a 6 & ½” plant with 3 to 4 blooms. You may order by calling the church office at 436-6213. Please order no later than December 15th.

CLEANING PERSONNEL CHANGE – At the November 22 meeting of the Property Committee, it was unanimously decided to hire Dave Phelan as a cleaning/maintenance person. PPC then approved this change also. Dave has been working for Perfection Cleaners and is familiar with the cleaning routine. He will have the same cleaning duties as Perfection Cleaners, and will work the same number of hours, however he will be able to come several times a week, every week for a few hours, instead of every other week as per Perfection Cleaners’ schedule. He will begin his duties on January 1, 2011. Please make Dave feel welcome if you meet him somewhere working in the church. Questions, call Ann Beaver at 436-9382 or talk to any Property Committee or PPC member.

FOLDING CHAIRS AVAILABLE – The Property Committee has decided to make available to church members some older folding chairs that are stored downstairs **behind** the Fellowship Hall. There are about 45 green folding chairs and it would be good if members would take them home and make use of them. They have been stored for a long time and have a light dusting of mold, which wipes off easily. This storage is located at the west end of the Fellowship Hall on the left hand side inside the area with the **CHAIRS** sign on the door. Please tell a Property member if you intend to get some of the chairs. Questions, call Ann Beaver at 436-9382 or check with any Property member.

RECEIVED IN STAINED GLASS FUND on Sunday, December 5, 2010: \$1,375.00. Total received in fund to date: \$50,925.00.

BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAYS: December 11, Nathan Henry; December 19, James Telfer; December 21, Flo Beale; December 25, Judy Armstrong.

AGAIN THIS YEAR the congregation is collecting a monetary Christmas gift for the pastor. If you wish to contribute, you may do so during Advent or Christmas Eve by putting your gift in the special box in the Adult Sunday School Room, or in the offering plate (designated “Pastor’s Christmas Gift”), or to the church office any weekday. (Please make checks payable to the pastor).

THE 2011 CHURCH OFFERING ENVELOPES will be available in the Adult Sunday School Room for you to pick up later in December. Anyone who would like a statement of their contributions for 2010 for tax purposes may call the church office and your statement will be mailed to you.

THE CHRISTMAS ENVELOPE IN YOUR PACKET, plus the loose plate offering at the Christmas Eve Service goes to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund to help needy people and situations throughout the year. Please be as generous as you can.

THE 2011 FLOWER CHART has been placed in the Adult Sunday School Room. If you wish to place altar flowers in the church on a specific date, please sign-up on the chart. Flower dates are on a first-come-first-served basis.

THANK YOU to Messiah congregation for the altar flowers while I was recuperating from knee replacement surgery. Thanks to Pastor Bill for his visits both at the hospital and at home.

Sincerely,
Steve Dreibelbis

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

December 19, Children's Sunday School Christmas Program at 9:15 a.m.

December 19, Christmas Cantata at 2 p.m. at Juniata High School.

December 24, 7 p.m., Family/Youth Service; 9:30 p.m., Prelude Concert with Louis Lynch; 10 p.m., Candlelight/Communion Service.

January 8, Undecorating the church.

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

MESSIAH WOMEN OF THE ELCA continuously collect new bath-size bars of soap (4 oz. to 5 oz., preferably Ivory or unscented Dove) as an on-going project for Lutheran World Relief. Please place soap in the basket on the blue table in the Sunday School Room.

COMMUNITY

FOOD PANTRY needs for December: All non-perishable foods, first-aid supplies, over the counter pain and cold medicines, bandages, antibiotic ointment, cough drops, Q-Tips, feminine hygiene products.

COMMUNITY CHORUS REHEARSALS – The final rehearsal will be held on Tuesday, December 14 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the Juniata High School Auditorium. This year's 14th annual Christmas Cantata performance "*A Light Still Shines*" will be held Sunday, December 19, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. in the auditorium of Juniata High School.

BELL RINGERS ARE NEEDED for the Juniata County Salvation Army at Mexico Market and Schlegel's Store during weekdays and evenings, Monday through Friday. Individuals, Sunday School classes, or youth groups who are willing to help may call Sylvia Kepner at 527-2386 or Dena Wagner at 436-9699.

DINING OUT TO HELP THE HUNGRY – The Family House Restaurant is joining with the Juniata County Food Pantry to raise funds for helping those in need in our community. On Friday, December 17, 2010, the Family House will contribute 20% of your bill to the Juniata County Food Pantry when you present a discount ticket. You can get a ticket through your local church or at the office at the Food Pantry on Main Street, Mifflintown during regular hours. Thank you for helping us to care for the families of our community.

NURSE'S NOTES – Gift ideas for caregivers:

- CDs of soothing music; videos of family and friends; gift cards for long-distance calls.
- “Errand Coupons” for grocery shopping, dry cleaning, an apple pie, dog walking, laundry service, putting up and/or taking down the Christmas tree; car wash – be creative!
- Provide a cleaning service at a one-time, weekly, or once-a-year (before holidays).
- Respite for a set period of time; for example once-a-month so the caregiver can attend church or synagogue.
- Homemade frozen dinners labeled with date, content, time and temperature for reheating, in containers that do not have to be returned.
- “Care box” full of household items such as toilet tissue, laundry detergent, garbage bags, zip loc bags, paper towels, tissues, soap, rolls of stamps, etc. Pack it all in a new laundry basket.
- Daily devotional books.

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

- Today:** -The Third Sunday of Advent.
-Hanging of the Greens Service.
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church.
-11:30 a.m., Brief Worship & Music Committee meeting.
- Monday:** -NEWSLETTER DEADLINE.
-7 p.m., Community Chorus rehearsal at JHS.
-8 p.m., AA meeting.
- Tuesday:** -9 a.m., “The Needlers” in Fellowship Hall.
-11:30 a.m., “The Needlers” Christmas Lunch in Fellowship Hall.
- Wednesday:** -7 p.m., Choir rehearsal.
-7 p.m., 4-H Puppy Club in Fellowship Hall.
- Friday:** -7 p.m., Sq. Dancing in Fellowship Hall.
- Sunday:** -Fourth Sunday of Advent.
-9:15 a.m., Children's Sunday School Christmas Program.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church.
-2 p.m., Christmas Cantata at Juniata High School.