

Messiah Lutheran Church

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

The Reverend William N. Esborn
June Bricker
Andrea Cameron
Bob St. Clair
Sandy Pines

Pastor
Organist
Choir Director
Lector
Altar Guild

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT December 22, 2013 – 10:30 a.m.

*Please Stand as **YOU** Are Able

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER IN PRAYER TODAY

SHUT-INS: Marian G., Reba S., Sue C., Flo B., Ethel B., Virginia F., Jean M., Cassie S., Helen K., Sis S., Jane M., Fay M., Dorothy P., Ruth C., Ray B., Florence B.

OTHERS: Tammy W., Audrey L., Josh B., Karl and Margaret G., Darlene Y., Arielle D., Sarah S., Troy B., Riley C., Esther L., Rick V., Michael S., Trent P., Charlene A., Wendy S., Gretchen W., Jack S., Todd E., Kim S., Cindy V., Jo-Anne B., Linda R., Connor L., Matt H., Luke, Amber & family, Shirley B., Chris A., Rick W., Avonel W., family & friends of Brian Marshall.

PREPARATION

CHIMES: CALL TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE

[A Time for Meditation and Prayer]

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday in Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, our life, our mercy, our might.

C Amen

P As we await the day of the Lord, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection

P Great and Holy One,

C in this time of waning daylight, we confess the shadows of sin in our lives. We build ourselves up at the expense of others. We rely on our own efforts to make our lives secure. Yet you, O Lord, are the potter, and we are the clay. Come to restore us in your image, remake us into your people, and rebuild what sin has broken, that we and the whole creation may rejoice. Amen

P Fear not, people of God: the Almighty has done great things for us. God casts away our sin from us and makes of us a new creation. In + Jesus Christ, God comes to set you free. Take heart in the tender compassion of our God.

C Amen

GATHERING

* ENTRANCE HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

* GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the refining fire of the Holy Spirit, and the peace of God, which surpasses understanding, 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.**

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (vs. 2)

For Christ is born of Mar – y, and, gath – ered all a – bove
while mor – tals sleep, the an – gels keep their watch of won-d'ring love.
O morn – ing stars, to – geth – er pro – claim the ho – ly birth,
and prais – es sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!

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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

WORD

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking refuge in Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign of Immanuel that is the only source of true safety: God is with us!

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16

The First Lesson is from the 7th chapter of Isaiah.

THE LESSON READS:

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹²But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. ¹³Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

Lector: Here ends the reading.

Cong: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

L – Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. (Ps. 80:7)

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

²In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.

³Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴O LORD God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

¹⁷Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for yourself.

¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

All – Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.

SECOND READING: Romans 1:1-7

The Second Lesson is from the 1st chapter of Romans.

THE LESSON READS:

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, ⁷To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lector: Here ends the reading.

Cong: Thanks be to God.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

PLACING THE CRECHE FIGURES

* THE VERSE "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 4)

O come, O Branch of Jes – se, free your own from Sa – tan's tyr – an – ny;
from depths of hell your peo – ple save, and give them vic – t'ry o'er the grave.

Refrain

Re-joice! Re-joice! Em – man – u – el shall come to you, O Is – ra – el.

Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Jeseeph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."

* GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 1st chapter.

C Glo - ry to you, O Lord. (sung)

THE GOSPEL READS:

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³"Look, the

virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ. (sung)

SERMON

Pastor Esborn

* HYMN OF THE DAY "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

* APOSTLES' CREED (all)

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

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.

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 In hope and anticipation, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

P Continually restore and give life to the people of your covenant established in Christ. Use our presence in the world to reveal your salvation for all people. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P Reveal your light to those who dwell in darkness during this season. Awaken all creation to the hope of new life through your promised coming. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P Secure your grace and your peace among the nations. Lead us in ways of unity and justice to work with one another for the sake of all people. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P Deliver the hope of Emmanuel, God with us, to all who suffer loneliness and despair. Send your Spirit to accompany those who long for your healing (especially all of our shut-ins [both at home and in nursing homes], and for Tammy Walton, Dorothy Patterson, Audrey Landis, Josh Beitz, Karl and Margaret Guss, Darlene Yutzy, Arielle Dougherty, Sarah Shellenberger, Troy Burd, Riley Cooper, Esther Long, Rick Varner, Michael Slagle, Trent Phillips, Charlene Aughey, Wendy Swartz, Gretchen Wray, Jack Stutts, Todd Eby, Kim Shearer, Cindy Van Gavree, Jo-Anne Brooks, Linda Rhine, Connor Lauver, Jean McNaught, Helen Knox, Matt Hutchinson, Marian Gross, Luke, Amber & family, Shirley Beitz, Chris Albright, Rick Waller, Jr., Avonel Waller, and family and friends

of Brian Marshall). Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P Prepare a way of safety and security for children to grow up free from fear or threat. Establish prosperity in every land, that no child may go hungry. Hear us, O God,

C Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P We give thanks that you welcome the saints into your eternal dwelling place. Train us to look forward to the day when you come to dwell among all your people for all time. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P Almighty God, we entrust to you all for whom we pray, confident that you fulfill your promises through Christ our Savior and Lord.

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

[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

"Come Emmanuel"

Price Besig

* 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:

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 Come to the table where Christ comes to make a home in you.

(In hospitality and attempting to meet the needs of individuals, Messiah now offers gluten free communion hosts. If you wish to receive gluten free hosts, please come to the side where Pastor Esborn is serving).

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 God of wonder, we give thanks that you have fed us once again with this foretaste of the feast to come. Strengthen us through this gift to serve our neighbor with joy, that all may come to see your glory reflected in the lives of your people; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen

SENDING

* BLESSING

P The God of hope, through Christ our peace, in the power of the Holy Spirit, + bless you now and forever.

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

* CLOSING HYMN

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

* DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Bring good news to the poor.

C Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

NEXT WEEK’S LECTOR – Barbara S. Geedey

NEXT WEEK’S ALTAR GUILD – Barbara S. Geedey & Pat Fisher

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) worshipping 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.

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.

ALTAR FLOWERS are presented to the Glory of God and in honor of the 18th Wedding Anniversary of Vance and Wendy Varner.

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 – Oswald Chambers, Scottish Minister and Teacher (1784 – 1917): Happiness depends on what happens, joy does not.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

PRAYER CHAIN – Any time you wish to add a name to our prayer list, please contact Stacie Kint at dskint@nmax.net. If at any time you would like to receive emails with prayer requests, please also contact Stacie.

NEW MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY – Sample copies of the new updated membership directory are on the table in the Adult Sunday School Room. Before final copies are made, members are asked to check their address, phone number and email address to be sure they are correct. Please make any corrections or additions to be included in the directory on the correction sheet provided or call the church office at 436-6213.

THRIVENT CHOICE – Thank you to everyone at Messiah who has designated choice dollars to Messiah. If you are a Thrivent member and have questions about Thrivent Choice please contact Stacie Kint at dskint@nmax.net or 436-6341.

MESSIAH IS IN NEED of a new treasurer to replace Ken Eyler after his many years of service. If you would like details, please contact Executive Director Guy Dillman or Pastor Esborn.

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).

SYNOD ASSEMBLY DELEGATES – Two members of Messiah are needed to attend the annual Synod Assembly in June, 2014 at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove. If you are interested in serving, please contact the pastor or the church office.

THE 2014 FLOWER CHART is now 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.

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 2014 CHURCH OFFERING ENVELOPES are now available in the back of the Adult Sunday School Room (in numerical order). Anyone who would like a statement of their contributions for 2013 for tax purposes may call the church office and your statement will be mailed to you.

PATIENCE NEEDED – Our Messiah bulletin board is in a poor state of repair and has been for some time. We seriously need to consider a replacement as moisture continues to cause damage to the board and the letters. In the coming months the Property Committee will research various options. Meanwhile we will try to make sure the old bulletin board has the church's pertinent information until a change can be made. Please be patient as we resolve this ongoing issue. Your input is welcome. Stay tuned.....

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.

HELP AVAILABLE – If you or someone you know needs help with home repairs or yard work, there are volunteers in our community who may be able to help. For more information, contact Michael "Doc" Johnston at 436-9209, or Cynthia Smith at 436-8512.

THANK YOU to the congregation and to Pastor Bill for all the acts of kindness during the illness and death of Mary Lorraine Hazard. Special thanks to the ladies who prepared the funeral meal. All was greatly appreciated.

The Hazard Family

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

MESSIAH WOMEN OF THE ELCA continuously collect new bath-size bars of soap (4oz. to 5oz., 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 Adult Sunday School Room.

MESSIAH WOMEN OF THE ELCA will meet on Thursday, January 9, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Youth Area.

COMMUNITY

MEALS-ON-WHEELS needs volunteer drivers, cooks and people to help assemble meals. If you have some spare time and can help, please call Dottie Heck at 436-6002 or 717-348-1950 (cell).

NEW 2014 CROP COORDINATORS ARE NEEDED – The coordinators duties include securing a site to hold the walk, distribute materials to churches and walkers, advertise, prepare the site for the walk, organize volunteers to receive walker forms and count money, file reports with Church World Services, and thank the churches for their participation. A notebook is available with step by step instructions on how to run a successful CROP Walk and includes a thumb drive with files. One or more people are needed who have a passion for hunger ministries (and the CROP Walk in particular), are self-starters, and are good at organizing and following through on projects. If you are interested in the job, or would like to suggest someone, please contact Graham Fowler at pastor.lostcreekpres@gmail.com.

THE FOOD PANTRY will be working with the Mifflintown Kiwanis Club, local churches and the Boy Scouts to help provide Christmas meals for every person in Juniata County who needs one. We are again asking this month for help to provide holiday meals. For every \$7.00 donated we can provide a complete holiday meal for a family of four. Or we will gladly accept donations of turkeys, hams, stuffing, sweet potatoes, fresh potatoes, fresh fruit (apples & oranges), rolls, and cake and icing mixes. If you will be alone for the holidays, please talk to your local pastor and they will be glad to match you up with a family to enjoy a Christmas meal. Our vestibule (located on ramp side of building) is open any hour any day to received donations. Cash or gift card donations may be deposited through the mail slot. Hours are Monday and Wednesday, 2—6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.—1 p.m. Please make checks payable to the “Juniata County Food Pantry,” P.O. Box 44, Mifflintown, PA 17059.

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

Today: -9:15 a.m., Children's Sunday School Christmas Program.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church.

Monday: -8 p.m., AA meeting.

Tuesday: -OFFICE CLOSED.
-7 p.m., Family/Youth Christmas Eve Service.
-9:30 p.m., Prelude Concert with Louis Lynch.
-10 p.m., Candlelight Service.

Wednesday: -OFFICE CLOSED.

Thursday: -OFFICE CLOSED.

Sunday: -FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY.
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School.
-10:30 a.m., Healing Service/Communion/Jr. Church.