

# 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  
Sam Leister  
Sandy Pines

Pastor  
Choir Director  
Lector  
Altar Guild

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT December 23, 2012 – 10:30 a.m.

\*Please Stand as **YOU** Are Able

### PEOPLE TO REMEMBER IN PRAYER TODAY

Marian G., Reba S., Sue C., Flo B., Ethel B., Virginia F., Goldie K., Jean M., Cassie S., Helen K., Sis S., Jane M., Fay M., Dorothy P., Ruth C., Ray B., Anna Mary Z., Ryan K., Sarah D., Gene R., Jesse K., Susan M., Tammy W., Josh B., Matt H., Cade C., Lura A., Herbert B., Martin E., Pat and Joe F., Dan C., Florence B., Betty K., Jeanette St. Clair, Patty S., Arthur A., Destiny D., and Margaret B.

### PREPARATION

CHIMES: CALL TO WORSHIP  
MEDITATION AND PRAYER  
PRELUDE

*[A Time for Meditation and Prayer]*

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS  
INTRODUCTION

*Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and the blessed virgin Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in the holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."*

### \* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the Lord of Israel who comes to set us free, the mighty Savior who comes to show mercy, the Dawn from on high who guides us into peace.*

**C Amen**

*P Let us come before God in confession.*

*Silence is kept for reflection*

*P To you, O God,*

**C** we lift up our souls. You know us through and through; we confess our sins to you. Remember not our sins; remember us with your steadfast love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

*P* Sisters and brothers, come with joy and draw water from the well of salvation. Remember the gift of baptism: your sin is washed away in the name of + Jesus; you belong to Christ; you are anointed to serve. Stand up and raise your heads! The reign of God is near.

**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 binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

## WORD

*The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem). This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.*

FIRST READING: Micah 5:2-5a

The First Lesson is from the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter of Micah.

THE LESSON READS:

<sup>2</sup>But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. <sup>3</sup>Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup>And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; <sup>5a</sup>and he shall be the one of peace.

Lector: Here ends the reading.

**Cong: Thanks be to God.**

PSALMODY: Luke 1:46b-55

*L – You Lord, have lifted up the lowly. (Luke 1:52)*

<sup>46b</sup>My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, <sup>47</sup>my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
**<sup>48</sup>for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed:**

<sup>49</sup>you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name.

**<sup>50</sup>You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation.**

<sup>51</sup>You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit,

**<sup>52</sup>casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly.**

<sup>53</sup>You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.

**<sup>54</sup>You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the promise of mercy,**

<sup>55</sup>the promise made to our forebears, to Abraham and his children forever.

**All – You Lord, have lifted up the lowly.**

*The author of Hebrews uses the image of religious sacrifice to convey the significance of Christ's coming. Through obedient acceptance of God's will, Christ allows his own body to become the greatest sacrifice of all, one through which we are made a holy people.*

SECOND READING: Hebrews 10:5-10

The Second Lesson is from the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of Hebrews.

## THE LESSON READS:

<sup>5</sup>Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; <sup>6</sup>in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. <sup>7</sup>Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

<sup>8</sup>When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup>then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup>And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

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.

*We are presented with Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.*

- \* GOSPEL: Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

*P The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.*

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

## THE GOSPEL READS:

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

[<sup>46</sup>And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy

is his name. <sup>50</sup>His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. <sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup>according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."]

*P The Gospel of the Lord.*

**C Praise to you, O Christ. (sung)**

SERMON

Pastor Esborn

\* HYMN OF THE DAY "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

\* 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 Filled with expectation and longing, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.*

*A brief silence.*

*P Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. We pray for your church around the globe, for our neighbors in other faith communities, and for all who still long to hear your voice. Lord, in your mercy,*

**C hear our prayer.**

*P Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. We pray for your creation, especially where it is wounded; for farmlands and wetlands; for cities and villages; for domestic and wild animals. Lord, in your mercy,*

**C hear our prayer.**

*P Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. We pray for victims of violence and torture, for children orphaned by disease, war, and famine, and for the sick and injured (especially all of our shut-ins [both at home and in nursing homes], and Ryan Keresey, Sarah Dressler, Gene Rhine, Jesse Kint, Susan Minick, Tammy Walton, Josh Beitz, Matt Hutchinson, Cade Clark, Florence Beasom, Betty Karstetter, Lura Aughey, Herbert Burd, Martin Ehrenzeller, Jeanette St. Clair, Joe and Pat Forney, Dan Conner, Marian Gross, Patty Shearer, Arthur Aumiller, Destiny Devlin and Margaret Bryner). Lord, in your mercy,*

**C hear our prayer.**

*P Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. We pray for doctors, nurses, and midwives; for women preparing to give birth; for adoptive and foster families; for children with special needs. Lord, in your mercy,*

**C hear our prayer.**

*P Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. We pray for visitors among us, and members who cannot be here; for the safety of travelers; for those who find the holidays difficult. Lord, in your mercy,*

**C hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

*P With Mary, we magnify you, O Lord, and we bless you for those who nurtured us in the faith. Keep us in communion with the saints who have gone before us, until we also find rest in you. Lord, in your mercy,*

**C hear our prayer.**

*P Hear the prayers of your people, O God, and in your mercy grant us all we need, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our 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

**\* 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 God fills the hungry with good things. Taste and see that the Lord is good.*

**(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 Holy One, we give you thanks that in this bread and cup we have feasted again on your endless love. Let that love overflow more and more in our lives, that we may be messengers to prepare your way, harvesters of justice and righteousness, and bearers of your eternal Word, our Savior Jesus Christ.*

**C Amen**

## SENDING

### \* BLESSING

*P May God direct your ways in peace, make you abound in love for one another and for all, and strengthen your hearts until the coming of our Lord Jesus. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.*

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

### \* CLOSING HYMN

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

### \* DISMISSAL

*P Go in peace. Christ is with you.*

**C Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

NEXT WEEK'S LECTOR – Barbara S. Geedey

NEXT WEEK'S ALTAR GUILD – Ann Beaver and Kay Varner

## 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.

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 17<sup>th</sup> 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, early twentieth century Scottish Christian minister and teacher (1874 – 1917): When Jesus Christ shed his blood on the cross, it was not the blood of one man for another; it was the life of God poured out to redeem the world.

### **CONGREGATIONAL NEWS**

SYNOD ASSEMBLY DELEGATES NEEDED – Two members of Messiah are needed to attend the annual Synod Assembly in June 2013 at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove. If you are interested in serving, please contact the pastor or the church office.

LUTHERAN STUDY BIBLES by Augsburg Fortress are available in the church office for anyone who would like one. Cost is \$24.00 each.

THE 2013 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 OFFERING ENVELOPE in your packet, plus the loose plate offering at the Christmas Eve Service goes to the Matthew 25 account to help needy people and situations throughout the year. Please be as generous as you can.

THE 2013 CHURCH OFFERING ENVELOPES are now available for you to pick up in the Adult Sunday School Room. Anyone who would like a statement of their contributions for 2012 for tax purposes may call the church office and your statement will be mailed to you.

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.

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).

### **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.

MESSIAH WOMEN OF THE ELCA will meet on Thursday, January 10, 2013 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).

### **JUNIATA COUNTY FOOD PANTRY NEEDS FOR DECEMBER**

#### **BASIC NEEDS:**

ALL NON-PERISHABLE FOODS, PERSONAL AND BABY CARE PRODUCTS, PAPER AND CLEANING SUPPLIES.

NURSE'S NOTES – Beginning today, set aside at least 10 minutes to just sit, take deep cleansing breaths, and *listen*...for as Elijah discovered, God was not in the wind ... the earthquake ... the fire ... but in the "sound of sheer silence." May his whisper flow over and around you as we celebrate the birth of his son ... Emmanuel ... God with us! (To be continued ...)

### **THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH**

- Today:** -9:15 a.m., Children's Sunday School Christmas Program.  
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church.
- Monday:** -OFFICE CLOSED.  
-7 p.m., Family/Youth Christmas Service.  
-9:30 p.m., Prelude Concert with Louis Lynch.  
-10 p.m., Candlelight/Communion Service.
- Tuesday:** -OFFICE CLOSED.
- Sunday:** -FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY.  
-9:15 a.m., Children's Sunday School Christmas program.  
-10:30 a.m., Service of Healing/Communion/Jr. Church.