

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

* BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. You call all nations to walk in your light and to seek your ways of justice and peace, for the night is past, and the dawn of your coming is near. Bless us as we light the first candle of this wreath. Rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes and welcome him into our hearts and homes, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

C Amen

GATHERING

* ENTRANCE HYMN "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying"

* 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, be – neath life's crush – ing load, whose forms are bend – ing low,
who toil a – long the climb – ing way with pain – ful steps and slow;
look now, for glad and gold – en hours come swift – ly on the wing;
oh, rest be – side the wea – ry road and hear the an – gels 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 (**sung**)

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. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

WORD

The visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in that light of that Lord now!"

FIRST READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

The First Lesson is from the 2nd chapter of Isaiah.

THE LESSON READS:

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. ²In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. ³Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. ⁵O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

Lector: Here ends the reading.

Cong: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 122

L – I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD." (Ps. 122:1)

¹I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."

²Now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

³Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity with itself;

⁴to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, the assembly of Israel, to praise the name of the LORD.

⁵For there are the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

⁶Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you.

⁷Peace be within your walls and quietness within your towers.

⁸For the sake of my kindred and companions, I pray for your prosperity.

⁹Because of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek to do you good."

All – I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ's coming in the future.

SECOND READING: Romans 13:11-14

The Second Lesson is from the 13th chapter of Romans.

THE LESSON READS:

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

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. 1)

O come, O come, Em – man – u – el, and ran – som cap – tive Is – ra – el,
that mourns in lone – ly ex – ile here un – til the Son of God ap – pear.

Refrain

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

Jesus describes his second coming as a sudden, unexpected event that will bring salvation or judgment upon people caught up in the usual affairs of daily life. He urges people to be alert and expectant.

* GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44

P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 24th chapter.

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

THE GOSPEL READS:

[Jesus said to the disciples,] ³⁶"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴²Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would

have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ. (sung)

SERMON

Pastor Esborn

* HYMN OF THE DAY "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

* 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 faithful God, you have given your people the gift of salvation. Renew us, and make us good stewards of all that you give. Proclaim your life-giving Word through the lives of your people. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P You show your glory through the wonders of your creation. Build sound homes and create safe havens for every living thing. Bring provision to places where there is little, especially in barren seasons, so that all who hunger may be fed. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P You call all nations into the unity and light of Christ. Establish strong and lasting justice in every land, and draw us into the peace you alone can give. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P You soothe the weary and lift up the lowly. Extend your gracious care to those who are troubled by loneliness and despair and to those who question your presence with them (especially all of our shut-ins [both at home and in nursing homes], Kevin Reynolds, Mary Martha Gilbert, Sara Dressler, Avonel and Rick Waller, Dorothy Swab, Fred Towsey, Ray Bramm, Sam Zeiders, Mac McLaughlin, Simon Williams, Sis Stetler, Paul Woltman, Bob Cameron, Norman Gloss, Jr. and Pastor Esborn). Ease their fear and worry by your abundant mercy. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P You are a healing balm to people in need. Calm the stress and anxiety of those who are troubled during holidays. Bring comfort where there is pain and wholeness where there is loss. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P You provide an eternal home for all the saints. As we remember their witness, reveal to us again the abundant grace shown in your Son, and remind us always of your great promises. 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

"Thanks Be To Thee"

Handel

[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

“The King Shall Come”

* DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“Behold, He Comes”

Blake

NEXT WEEK'S LECTOR – Cynthia Smith

NEXT WEEK'S ALTAR GUILD – Linda Dreibelbis

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.

ALTAR FLOWERS are presented to the Glory of God and in memory of Joyce and Mickey Yetter by Jim Yetter 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 – William James 1842 – 1910, Psychologist (in rebuttal to those who proclaim that salvation has not occurred until certain events occur in one's life): "There are higher and lower limits of possibility set to each personal life. If a flood goes above one's head, its absolute elevation becomes a matter of small importance; and when we touch our own upper limit and live in our own highest center of energy, we may call ourselves saved, no matter how much higher someone else's center may be."

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

PLEASE PRAY FOR PASTOR ESBORN who will be having knee surgery at Mt. Nittany Community Hospital in State College on Thursday, December 2, 2010.

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.mlcmissillintown.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.

RECEIVED IN STAINED GLASS FUND on Sunday, November 21, 2010: \$200. Total received in fund to date: \$49,295.00.

THANKOFFERING ENVELOPES may still be returned by December 5. Please make checks payable to Messiah Women of the ELCA and place them in the offering plate or give them to Claire Mummah. Additional envelopes are available on the table in the Adult Sunday School Room.

MESSIAH HERALD – At the October 10th meeting of the Board of Worship and Music, it was determined, and backed up by PPC, that, beginning with the January 2011 edition, the Messiah Herald newsletter will continue to be published monthly. However the delivery will be different. Due to declining mailing numbers, we will no longer be eligible for a U.S. Postal Service annual mailing permit for bulk rate. However, on the positive side, this will save us \$185 annually, plus an approximate \$37 charge each month for mailing the newsletter,

totaling around \$630 in savings each year. Beginning with January's issue, the Messiah Herald can be either downloaded online at www.mlc-miffintown.org (click on the "Publications" tab) or by picking up a copy at one of four locations in the church – the church office, narthex, kitchenette, or Fellowship Hall. We will continue to accumulate email addresses and the possibility of emailing the newsletter each month will exist sometime in the spring. As we continue to progress with our technology, we hope and pray that you continue to support, encourage, and utilize the new format by which the newsletter will be received into your homes.

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 will be in the Adult Sunday School Room by the end of December. 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.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

ALL the youth of the church are invited to attend a holiday activity full of fun and the spirit of giving on Sunday, December 5, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. We will be baking cookies and packing "trail mix" in gift bags. Pizza will be served followed by caroling and delivering cookies.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Today, Light lunch after worship service, prepared by the Fellowship Committee. Decorating of the church following lunch.

December 5, Youth holiday activity day at 2 p.m.

December 9, WELCA Christmas Festival at 7 p.m. in the Youth Area.

December 11, 7 a.m., Men's Prayer Breakfast at Stop 35.

December 12, "Hanging of the Greens" Service at 10:30 a.m.

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.

MESSIAH WOMEN OF THE ELCA will meet on Thursday, December 9, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Youth Area for their Christmas Festival. Each attendee is to bring a favorite Christmas reading and a "Goodie" for the holiday refreshment table.

CHRISTMAS ANGEL PROJECT – A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board in the kitchenette with names and sizes of the children for the Women of the ELCA Christmas Angel Project for those who wish to participate. Please have gifts wrapped and delivered to the church by early December. Include the child's name and family number on the outside of the box.

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 two rehearsal dates will be held on Tuesday, December 7 and Monday, December 13 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the Juniata High School Music Room. 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.

A LIVE NATIVITY will be presented on Saturday, December 11, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at Maple Grove Sunday School in Licking Creek Valley. Refreshments will be served following the presentation. All are welcome to attend.

ST. JUDE COOKIE JAR CHRISTMAS COOKIE WALK – Check baking cookies off your list—we've done it for you! Pick up your cookies on December 11, 2010 from 9:00 a.m. to ? at St. Jude's Catholic Church, Mifflintown, PA. Come early and have a cup of coffee and shop at our White Elephant Table for unique holiday items (doors open at 8:00 a.m.). Cookie boxes will be \$9.00 each with approximately 4 dozen cookies. Sponsored by St. Jude's Women's Guild.

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

- Today:** -The First Sunday of Advent.
-Food Pantry Sunday.
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church.
-11:30 a.m., Light Lunch in Fellowship Hall followed by church decoration.
- Monday:** -8 p.m., AA meeting.
- Tuesday:** -9 a.m., "The Needlers" in Fellowship Hall.
- Wednesday:** -7 p.m., Choir rehearsal.
- Thursday:** -1 p.m., Dulcimer rehearsal in Fellowship Hall.
-7 p.m., Thrivent meeting in Library.
- Friday:** -7 p.m., Sq. Dancing in Fellowship Hall.
- Sunday:** -Second Sunday of Advent.
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion.
-2 p.m., Youth Activity Day.