

Messiah Lutheran Church

3 South Third Street
Mifflintown, PA 17059
Church Office / 4366213

The Rev. Chris Mathiason
Andrea Cameron
June Bricker
Andrea Cameron
Bob St. Clair
Tawny Mummah
Hope Miller & Slone Smith
Kevin & Kate Swailes

Interim Pastor
Lay Worship Leader
Organist
Choir Director
Lector
Altar Guild
Acolytes
Greeters

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Children's Christmas Program

December 17, 2017– 10:30 a.m.

*Please Stand as **YOU** Are Able

Those we want to remember in prayer today—please refer to “Prayers of Intercession.”

PREPARATION

CHIMES: CALL TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE:

[A Time for Meditation and Prayer]

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

"Rejoice always," begins the reading from First Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. "All God's children got a robe," go the words of the spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes that make us feel happy just to put on. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God's party.

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace.

C Amen.

P Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P God of all time,

C we confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us. We ignore our neighbors in need and fail in the labor of justice and peace. In your mercy forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.

P Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. In + Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and all things are made new. Rejoice in this good news!
C **Amen.**

GATHERING

* ENTRANCE HYMN “Hark, the Glad Sound!” #35 Green Hymnal

* GREETING

P Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the promised gifts of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Narration

Carol “O Little Town of Bethlehem” Green Hymnal #41

Narration

Carol “What Child Is This?” Green Hymnal #40

Narration

Carol “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” Green Hymnal #60

Narration

Carol “Away in a Manger” Green Hymnal #67

Narration

Carol “Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful” Green Hymnal #45

Narration

Carol “We Three Kings of Orient Are” (WOV) Blue Hymnal #646

Narration

Carol “Joy to the World” Green Hymnal #39

“Happy Birthday to You, Jesus” and “We Wish You a Merry Christmas”

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

PLACING THE CRECHE FIGURES

* THE VERSE “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (vs. 3)

Oh, come, strong Branch of Jesse, free Your own from Satan’s tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save and give them vict’ry o’er the grave.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

* GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28

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

C Glory to you, O Lord. (sung)

THE GOSPEL READS:

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³He said,

"I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

'Make straight the way of the Lord,'"

as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ. (sung)

* HYMN OF THE DAY "Comfort, Comfort Now My People" #29 Green Hymnal

* 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 Guided by the light of Christ, let us pray for the coming dawn of joy, healing, and comfort for all God's people.

A brief silence.

P Guiding Lord, bless church leaders, volunteers, teachers, musicians, acolytes, deacons, pastors, seminarians, and those discerning a call to ministry. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Creating God, protect Earth's wilderness, especially where the lands are isolated and unexplored. Watch over all living creatures who remain free from human exploitation. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Prince of Peace, send us your Spirit of unity, so that justice may spring up among the nations. Give us the will to repair the broken systems that perpetuate injustice. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Merciful God, comfort your children who are mourning, bind up the brokenhearted, and heal our wounds. We pray for those who are homeless or imprisoned, refugees, those who struggle with addiction or mental illness, and all in need (especially all of our shutins: Reba Sigler, Kitty Walters, Jane Marhefka, Ruth Cisney, Ray Bramm, Dottie Smith, Dorothy Cleck, Carol Simonton, Lura Aughey, Mona Lawson, Sara Ann Aurand, Betty Karstetter, and Jim Yetter). And for Bob & Jeanette St. Clair, Avonel & Rick Waller, Sr., Jim Woltman, Bob & Andrea Cameron, Mary Ernest, John Miller, Randy Clark, Joan Fulkroad, Don Clark, Tom Lyter, Butch & Sandy Pines, Joyce Bradley, Minnie Minick, Dr. Laurie Cox, Pat Forney, Bob Bell, Megan Hart, Austin Parker, Terry Coder, John Towsey, Barbara Wengerd, Audrey Peters, Rich Walters, Jim Gilson, and Jane Cleck. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Lord of justice, strengthen and increase the ministry of food pantries, meal service deliveries, employment training programs, and advocacy for equity among all classes and races. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P Lord of the Church, we give thanks to you for your death and resurrection, and that you are the Good Shepherd. Hear our prayer for our Call Committee and its work of discernment, and hear our prayer for your sending to us a pastor who will be a strong partner with us in the joy and service of your Gospel for those within your Church and those beyond our walls in this community. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Eternal God, clothe us in your garments of salvation, so that together we may rejoice in your presence with the saints who have died and with those unable to be with us today. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We raise our prayers to you, O God, in the name of the one who is, who was, and who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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 Savior of the nations, come. Make your home here in us. Feed us with your love, that our faith shine ever new and our lives reveal your light.

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 Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you. Share in the feast of salvation.

(If you desire, you may take a gluten free wafer located on the oak pedestal on the step in front of the chancel).

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 for whom we wait, you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share.
Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts, and send us forth to be your
people in the world, announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

SENDING

* BLESSING

P May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you and scatter the darkness from
before your path. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and
forever.

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

* CLOSING HYMN

“Joy to the World”

#39 Green Hymnal

* DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE:

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from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches
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NEXT WEEK'S LECTOR – Jean Compton

NEXT WEEK'S ALTAR GUILD – Linda Clark & Diana Wise

NEXT WEEK'S LAY WORSHIP LEADER – The Rev. Paul Kampa

NEXT WEEK'S ACOLYTES – Harrison Mummah & Braedon Walton (AM)

Zeb Berry & Julia Martin (PM)

WELCOME

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 or indicate such in the Friendship Pads being sure to include your contact information. Our
fellowship in Jesus Christ is open and extended to all persons who confess His Lordship over all life. Thank you
for worshipping with us.

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.

GLUTEN FREE WAFERS ARE ALSO PROVIDED FOR COMMUNION. Wine and wheat wafers are used
and if you so desire, you may take a gluten free wafer located on the oak pedestal on the step in front of the
chancel.

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.

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 Diane Hower by family.

THIS MORNING WE ARE LED IN WORSHIP by Andrea Cameron an Authorized Lay Worship Leader of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Authorized Lay Worship Leaders 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 Eucharist in specific situations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is committed to ordained ministry as the primary means for filling the needs of this church for Word and Sacrament, but at this place in the church's pilgrimage, the church's inability to provide all congregations with full-time ordained pastoral ministry presents a challenge. On any given Sunday, congregations have needs that cannot be met by available ordained ministers. Therefore, because it is the bishop's responsibility to meet the Word and Sacrament needs of the congregations in this synod, synodically authorized lay worship leaders are trained to meet this need. On behalf of the whole church, Bishop Collins is deeply gratified by the ministry of these servants of the Gospel.

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

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

PRAYER REQUESTS will be placed in the Sunday bulletin for **one month**. If you wish to have someone included in the prayer list for an additional month, please contact the church office at 436-6213 or messiahlutheran@pa.net. If you have anyone who is a “last minute” addition after the bulletin has been printed on Fridays, please fill out an orange prayer card in the pew and lay it on the stand where the gluten free wafers are placed PRIOR to the morning worship service.

PLEASE NOTIFY THE CHURCH OFFICE for any change in addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, or for any requests for building usage. There are a lot of activities and some coordination is needed so events are not “overbooked” in any specific areas of the church (this also applies to church groups who meet in the church). Please contact the office at 436-6213 or email messiahlutheran@pa.net for any changes or requests.

REQUEST from the Board of Worship & Music: In light of our congregation's recent acceptance of Messiah's Mission Statement (including “....making disciples of Christ through Fellowship....”), we invite more of the congregation to sit in the main sanctuary during the worship service. Unifying everyone into one space will help make us more welcoming to all members and visitors as well as creating a sense of community, sharing and togetherness. Worship Leaders will be able to better “connect” and “communicate” to all worshipers (and you to them) during the service. Other benefits include better sound while singing hymns, listening to the sermons/anthems/special music and an easier time of “Sharing the Peace.” Also, give us your feedback regarding the removal of several rows of pews in the sanctuary and replacing them with soft chairs. Thanks for making this positive transition to your worship experience!

THE DEADLINE for all items to be included in the Sunday bulletin is **Thursday noon**.

HOME COMMUNION NEEDS HELP – The Compassionate Services Committee is again looking for at least two people who would like to give communion to our shut-ins. A rotating schedule of our shut-ins will be used on a quarterly basis. Training is available. Complete Home Communion kits are also available, including all liturgy needed. If interested in this important ministry, contact Don Geedey at 717-436-6433 or geedey@centurylink.net.

THE 2018 CHURCH OFFERING ENVELOPES are now available to pick up in the Library. Anyone who would like a statement of their contributions for 2017 for tax purposes may call the church office and your statement will be mailed to you.

MATTHEW 25 FUND – All loose offering at the Christmas Eve Service will go to the Matthew 25 Fund to help those in need throughout the year. You can also donate to the fund by writing Matthew 25 Fund on your regular offering envelope and the amount you wish to contribute.

THE NEW FLOWER CHART for 2018 is now in the Adult Sunday School Room. If you wish to place flowers on a specific date, please sign-up on the chart.

MESSIAH'S DOORS will be unlocked at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings for Sunday School and Worship.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED to press quilt tops for “The Needlers.” Tops can be taken home and pressed and brought back to the church. Anyone who is interested, please contact one of “The Needlers.”

WEEKLY FINANCIAL REPORT:

December 10, 2017

Worship Service

Attendance – 80

Sunday School – 26

Total Offering \$3,434.32

Other Funds \$ 586.00

General Fund \$2,848.32

Other Funds

Benevolence – \$ 85.00

Building Fund – \$ 240.00

Sunday School – \$ 63.00

Flowers - \$ 93.60

Building Use - \$ 100.00

Disaster Relief - \$ 4.40

Total \$ 586.00

COPIES OF OCTOBER 22, 2017 PPC MINUTES are available in the Adult Sunday School Room.

WEIS AND GIANT GIFT CARDS are available to purchase from the Disciples Class. This is a very important outreach ministry that helps neighbors in need in our own community. We thank each and every one for continued support of this very worthwhile project.

CAN TREE – Donations of gallon-size canned food is again being collected this year through the end of December to benefit Bethesda Mission. Everyone is encouraged to donate as many cans as you are able.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY DELEGATES NEEDED – Two members of Messiah are needed to attend the annual Synod Assembly in June 2018 at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove. Synod delegates should also plan on attending the Juniata Valley Conference Assembly the 1st Sunday of May. If you are interested in serving, please contact Sam Leister or the church office.

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.

WEEKLY CHURCH OFFICE HOURS are as follows:

Tuesday – 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday – 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Friday – 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

THANK YOU – “Dear Members of Messiah Funeral Lunch Committee....thank you for providing and serving the funeral lunch after the service for our Mother, Jean McNaight. It is a caring ministry and we very much appreciate all of your kindness.”

Jane Shearer
Anne McNaight

THANK YOU to all Messiah Church members who sent cards, contributed food, labored in the kitchen or office, visited or called Mother, participated in the Memorial Service, expressed a caring concern, sent flowers to Mother as a shut-in, or contributed to her charities. We feel our Mother was loved by many, and are pleased at how magnificently she was honored.

Jane Shearer
Anne McNaight

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

NEW BATH-SIZE BARS OF SOAP (4oz. to 5oz., preferably Ivory or unscented Dove) is continuously collected 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.

COMMUNITY

JUNIATA COUNTY FOOD PANTRY BASIC NEEDS FOR DECEMBER

ALL NON-PERISHABLE FOODS; TISSUES; TOILET PAPER;
OVER-THE-COUNTER PAIN, COLD AND FLU MEDICINES,
COUGH DROPS, AND VICKS. WE ALSO GLADLY ACCEPT
DONATIONS OF CASH AND GIFT CARDS TO PURCHASE THESE SUPPLIES

* * * * *

Messiah’s December Christmas Events

**Please invite others to join us as we prepare ourselves in anticipation of
the coming of the Christ Child!**

December 17: Third Sunday of Advent: The morning worship service will include the annual **Children’s Program.**

December 24: Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve:

9:15 AM, Sunday School	7:00 PM, Christmas Eve Music Prelude Service
10:30 AM, Worship Service	7:30 PM, Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Candlelight Christmas Eve Services will begin with a **Prelude Service at 7:00 PM** featuring our own Bob St. Clair and June Bricker showcasing their talents with organ, and piano and organ duets. Also performing on the piano will be Samuel Gutierrez Felix, a concert pianist from Spain currently being hosted as an exchange student by John and Kim White. **The Candlelight Service will begin at 7:30 PM** and will include singing of Carols and special anthem music by the Jr. and Sr. Choirs. Andrea Cameron will also be performing “Ave Maria” during the lighting of the candles. We are additionally blessed that Messiah was selected as one of three local church services by our local radio station, Juniata County Radio, for **live broadcast** on Christmas Eve! Please plan to attend this beautiful service for the whole family in anticipation of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ!

THIS WEEK AT MESSIAH

- Today:** -THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.
-CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM.
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion (Lay Worship Leader: Andrea Cameron).
- Monday:** -8:00 p.m., AA meeting in Fellowship Hall.
- Wednesday:** -7 p.m., Choir rehearsal in Rearick Room.
- Thursday:** -1 p.m., Dulcimer rehearsal.
- Saturday:** -9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Quilters Guild in Fellowship Hall.
- Sunday:** -CHRISTMAS EVE.
-9:15 a.m., Sunday School/Catechetical Class.
-10:30 a.m., Worship/Communion/Jr. Church (Worship Leader: Rev. Paul Kampa).
-7 p.m., Christmas Eve Prelude Concert.
-7:30 p.m., Christmas Eve Worship Service of Song, Communion, and Candlelight (Lay Worship Leader: Sam Leister).
- Monday:** -MERRY CHRISTMAS!!