

“Growing God’s Kingdom”



CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24th, 2017

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Messiah Lutheran Church

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The Reverend Chris Mathiason
Sam Leister
Andrea Cameron
Linda Clark
Linda Clark & Diana Wise
Bob St. Clair
June Bricker
Samuel Gutierrez

Interim Pastor
Lay Worship Leader
Senior Choir Director
Junior Choir Director
Altar Guild
Organ/Piano
Organ/Piano
Prelude Pianist

CHRISTMAS EVE PRELUDE CONCERT

A Time for Meditation and Prayer

December 24, 2017 -- 7:00 PM

“The Christmas Song” (Organ/Piano Duet) A. Adam

PIANO CONCERT

“Deux Arabesques” Claude Debussy

“Milonga” Alberto Ginastera

“Invention No. 13 in A Minor” Johann Sebastian Bach

“Für Elise” Ludwig Van Beethoven

“Nocturne Op. 9, No. 2” Frederic Chopin

CHIMES CALL TO WORSHIP

“CAROL MEDLEY” (Organ/Piano Duet) Arr. by D. Torrans

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF CAROLS & COMMUNION – 7:30 PM

*Please Stand as **YOU** Are Able

ANTHEM: “Children, Go Where I Send Thee” Music by Paul Race
Jr. and Sr. Combined Choirs

* GREETING (from the rear...please stand, if able)

WL: Today Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

C: And the people who have walked in darkness shall see a great light.
L: A branch shall grow out of the root of Jesse;
C: And those who have dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them shall see a great light.
L: And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him;
C: And they shall learn from him the ways of the Lord.
L: He shall reign on the throne of David forever.
C: And the nations shall flow to his mountain.
ALL: A shoot shall come forth from the stump of Jesse, and the people who have walked in darkness shall see a great light.

CAROL

“Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel”

Green Hymnal #34

II. THE LIGHT GIVEN

LESSON -- Luke 1:26-38

Harrison Mummah

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵ The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

DIALOGUE (Micah 5:2-4)

Jace White

L: But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are little to be among the class of Judah,
C: From you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.
L: Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in travail has brought forth;
C: Then the rest of his brethren shall return to the people of Israel.
L: 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.
C: And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.
ALL: From you, O Bethlehem, from you shall come forth one who is to be ruler of Israel.

CAROL

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Green Hymnal #41

III. THE LIGHT PROCLAIMED TO THE WORLD

LESSON -- Luke 2:8-20

Slone Smith

⁸There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby. It was night, and they were looking after their sheep. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them. And the glory of the Lord shone around them. They were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy. It is for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord. ¹²Here is how you will know I am telling you the truth. You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³Suddenly a large group of angels from heaven also appeared. They were praising God. They said, ¹⁴"May glory be given to God in the highest heaven! And may peace be given to those he is pleased with on earth!" ¹⁵The angels left and went into heaven. Then the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem. Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." ¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby. The baby was lying in the manger. ¹⁷After the shepherds had seen him, they told everyone. They reported what the angel had said about this child. ¹⁸All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary kept all these things like a secret treasure in her heart. She thought about them over and over. ²⁰The shepherds returned. They gave glory and praise to God. Everything they had seen and heard was just as they had been told.

DIALOGUE (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Haley Mummah

L: Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Judah.

C: For to us a son is born.

L: Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord.

C: To us a son is given.

L: But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord.

C: And the government shall be upon his shoulder.

L: I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

C: And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

L: And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

ALL: Behold, the days are coming when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, says the Lord.

ANTHEM: "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks"

Arr. By Keith Christopher

IV. THE LIGHT SPREAD TO US: THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

* LESSON -- John 1:1-5, 9-14

Garrett Berry

¹In the beginning, the Word was already there. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³All things were made through him. Nothing that has been made was made without him. ⁴Life was in him, and that life was the light for all people. ⁵The

light shines in the darkness. But the darkness has not understood it.

⁹The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. ¹⁰The Word was in the world that was made through him. But the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to what was his own. But his own people did not accept him. ¹²Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God. ¹³To be a child of God has nothing to do with human parents. Children of God are not born because of human choice or because a husband wants them to be born. They are born because of what God does. ¹⁴The Word became a human being. He made his home with us. We have seen his glory. It is the glory of the one and only Son. He came from the Father. And he was full of grace and truth.

HOMILY

Sam Leister

CAROL

“Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful”

Green Hymnal #45

* NICENE CREED (all)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Marina Holderman

This night the eternal Word of God is born in us. We pray for Christ's light of life to take flesh in the church, the creation, and all people of God.

A brief silence.

We bring to the manger our longing for the visible unity of the church of Jesus Christ, that undivided it proclaim the one whose birth brings good news of glad tidings to all people. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger hope for the well-being of creation, that every valley be exalted and every rough place be made plain so that every living thing may flourish. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger a vision of the reign of the Prince of Peace, that the nations, tribes, and peoples of this world will see and cherish in each other the very image of Christ, whose scepter is mercy and whose judgment is love. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger concern for those who have no place to lay their heads this night and for those who dwell in the shadow of loneliness, despair, illness, or death (*especially*). We come begging that the child for whom there was no room will open the doors of our hearts to the needs of our neighbors and ourselves. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger all people who, like the holy family, gather with children in the splendor of this most holy night, that the gift of faith be lavished on another generation. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We bring to the manger the hopes and dreams of all the years, that with Mary and Joseph, angels and archangels, saints and martyrs, loved ones of every time and every place, our prayers and praises join in a common song uniting heaven and earth in a single peace. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Into your outstretched arms, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Jesus Christ, the light and life of the world.

Amen.

* **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

WL The peace of the Lord be with you always. **C And also with you.**

Congregational sharing: **“Peace be with you.”**

* **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

WL Glory to God in the highest. **C And peace to his people on earth.**

WL The Lord be with you. **C And also with you.**

WL Lift up your hearts. **C We lift them to the Lord.**

WL Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

* **COMMUNION CANTICLE** “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” Green Hymnal #42 (vss. 1 & 5)

* **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

WL We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.

He is your Word, inseparable from you, through whom you created all things, and in whom you take delight.

He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb.

He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary.

He, our Lord Jesus, fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you.

He is the one who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light

to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you, said: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way 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.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we take this bread and cup, giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people.

Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your church; gather into one all who share this bread and wine; fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ; through whom all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both 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

WL Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let every heart receive your Savior.

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

* COMMUNION CAROL "What Child Is This" Green Hymnal #40

COMMUNION: "Night of Wonder" L. Smith

DISTRIBUTION (by Intinction)

[Come forward by the center aisle. Receive the wafer from the pastor on your side and dip it into the wine held by the lay assistant. After partaking, you may go to the rail for a time of silent prayer or return directly to your pew by the side aisle].

* BLESSING

WL The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

WL On this day, O God, you gave us Christ the Son to save us. As you sent the one

foretold send us now with good news for all people. Let the gladness of this feast have no end as we share with others the joy that fills us; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE INDIVIDUAL CANDLES

Hunter Berry

(The assistants will light the candle of the first worshipper in each pew, who will then pass it to the next person. Please do not tilt the lighted candles as you pass the light to those with unlit candles.)

SOLO: Andrea Cameron

“Ave Maria”

Schubert

* POST-COMMUNION CAROL

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

Green Hymnal #65

* DISMISSAL

WL Glory to God in the highest!

C Peace to God’s people on earth!

WL Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

C Thanks be to God.

* CLOSING CAROL

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

Green Hymnal #70

* POSTLUDE

(The candles remain lit, symbolizing that the light of the Christ Child is shining in our world)

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Candles Garrett Berry, Hunter Berry, Marina Holderman
Crucifer.....Harrison Mummah
Acolytes Zeb Berry, Julia Martin
Communion AssistantsAndrea Cameron, Sam Leister
Ushers and Offering..... Braedon Walton, Slone Smith, Haley Mummah, Caden Swailes

TONIGHT WE ARE COMMUNING BY INTINCTION -- Intinction is an early means of distribution, first recorded in the third century. It originated as a way to make communing easier for the ill. Over the centuries, it has become one of the several accepted methods of Distribution of the Sacramental Element.

IN THE NAME OF THE CHRIST CHILD we cordially welcome all parents and children and all who worship with us at the Family Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. May love and peace, God's gift to us in the Christ Child, fill all our hearts this night and always.

A SPECIAL "THANK YOU" to all those who are taking part in the service: the choirs and choir directors, our organist for providing special music for the Prelude Concert, and especially to our youth, young adults and members of Messiah, and to all those who worship here tonight.

ABOUT OUR PRELUDE CONCERT PIANIST – SAMUEL GUTIERREZ

Samuel Gutierrez, 15, is a foreign exchange student from the town of Malaga, Spain and is the guest of host parents and Messiah members John and Kim White. Samuel has been studying piano since the young age of four, with his favorite composer being Chopin. Samuel will be providing music during our prelude concert tonight. Samuel is currently attending Juniata High School and describes his hometown of Malaga, as being larger than Mifflintown but smaller than a city. His reason for wanting to be a foreign exchange student was that he "...thought that it would be good for learning English, another culture, and it would open doors for my future, but living in another place." We welcome Samuel to Messiah and invite you to enjoy his selections of music this evening in preparation for the celebration of the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

ATTENTION KIDS! At the time of the children's sermon, all children are invited to come forward to gather around the worship leader in the chancel area.

FRIENDSHIP PADS -- We invite everyone (members and visitors) worshipping with us this evening to sign the Friendship Pads during the Organ Offertory. If you are a visitor, please be sure to include your address when signing. The pads are found on the aisle seat of each pew in the nave, and in each section of the Adult Sunday School Room.

MATTHEW 25 FUND – All loose offering at tonight's 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.

THIS EVENING WE ARE LED IN WORSHIP by Sam Leister, 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 worship service, 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.

WE WISH ALL OF YOU a Christmas filled with blessings from God and His peace which passes all understanding.



WELCOME

This evening we would like to welcome you to our celebration of the birth of the Christ. This festival is one of the most beautiful and moving of the church year reminding us that God has freely chosen to submit himself to the limits, pains and suffering of this world. He has done this that He might dwell with us in the flesh and share our experience that we might have real hope through Him.

It is through this incarnation, being made flesh, which Christ's sacrifice for our sins on Good Friday is made possible and the reality of Christ's resurrection on Easter is proven to be for you.

This evening the forgiveness of sins given for you is once again made incarnate as Christ offers himself in His Holy Supper. It is in this meal where Jesus says to us, "This is my body given for you," that once again you receive the undeniable, physical assurance that God's grace applies to you specifically this day.

The life of every Christian is dependent on this very grace from God. We hope and pray that you will join with the Messiah Family to regularly partake of the assurance of God's grace offered in this meal. You are invited to come and join with us as we gather weekly to give thanks to God for His many blessings and to ask His Spirit be upon us as we serve Him and our neighbors.

Please place a check mark in the Friendship Pads at the end of each pew seat in the box (beside your name) if you are communing this evening so we may have a record of your presence with us.

Thank you again for blessing us with your presence this evening. We hope that you are also blessed by your participation with us and we pray that the peace of Christ may be upon you and yours in this Holy Season.

**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO GAVE POINSETTIAS to decorate the church in honor of Christ's birth.
You may pick up your poinsettia(s) after the Worship Service tonight.**

TO THE GLORY OF GOD:

In memory of Sue Collins by family.

In memory of Nora Ella Singer by Ed singer and family.

In memory of Robert E. 'Hap' Smith, Lloyd and Flossie Showers and Clarence and Beulah Leister by Sam and Linda Leister and family.

In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Knisely by Warren and Claire Mummah.

In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Mummah by Warren and Claire Mummah.

In memory of Harry 'Preach' Fairman by family.

In memory of Lehman and Shirley Imes by Carolyn Bryner.

In memory of my dad, James W. Harvey by Debrann Meinsler.

In honor of my mom, Florence Williams by Debrann Meinsler.

In memory of John and Helen Sieber by George and Kay Varner and family.

In memory of loved ones by Sieber and Ona Stoner.

In memory of loved ones by Don and Barb Geedey and Velma Suloff.

In memory of my grandparents, John and Hulda St. Clair, by Bob St. Clair.

In memory of my grandparents, Lester and Grace Parsons, by Bob St. Clair.

In honor of my parents, Robert and Jeanette St. Clair, by Bob St. Clair.

In loving memory of our parents, Ansel and Jean McNaight, by Janie Shearer and Anne McNaight.

In memory of family and friends whom we miss by Paul Goss and family.

In memory of George and Evelyn Shirk and Gerald and Evelyn (Nootie) Davis by family.

In memory of Jean, George and Bill Flint and Mary Lorraine Hazard by the George Hazard, Jr. family.

In honor of family and friends by George and Marylou Hazard.

In memory of my husband Barry Lauver, sadly missed by his wife Donna and the Mansfield community.

In memory of Sam Zeiders by the family.

In memory of parents, Harry and Martha Mummah, by Ken and Ruth Mummah

In memory of parents, Dale H. and Charlotte Henry, by Ken and Ruth Mummah.

In memory of Denise and Diane Hower and George and Anna Ruth Dullea by Herman and Judy Armstrong.

In memory of husband and loved ones by Midge Rowell.

In loving memory of Daniel and Thelma Dreibelbis and Abram and Ruth Shoener by the Stephen Dreibelbis family.

In memory of Tammy Pines Walton by the Walton, Pines and Stoner families.

In memory of Carolyn J. Wieseman and Paul F. Wieseman and Mr. and Mrs. Cloyd A. Pines, Sr. by the Pines and Stoner families.

In loving memory of Barry T. Stratford by Betty and family.

In honor and in memory of loved ones by Larry and Diana Wise.

In memory of our parents by Leon and Madeline Kramer.

In memory of our brothers and sister by Leon and Madeline Kramer.

In memory of our parents, Paul and Dorothy Patterson and Richard and Daisy Van Gavree, by Rich and Cindy Van Gavree.

The large Poinsettia on the piano in the front of the sanctuary was placed in memory of Joyce Yetter by Vernon Gunnion and family.

MEMORIALS FOR LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

In memory of John and Helen Sieber by George and Kay Varner and family.

In memory of Richard and Daisy Van Gavree and Paul and Dorothy Patterson by Rich and Cindy Van Gavree.

In memory of my dad, James W. Harvey and in honor of my mom, Florence Williams by Debrann Meinsler.

In memory of Steve and Elizabeth Bahorik and Wilbur and Ruth Wert by Steve and Linda Bahorik.

In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Knisely and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Mummah by Warren and Claire Mummah.

In memory of Robert E. 'Hap' Smith, Lloyd and Flossie Showers and Clarence and Beulah Leister by Sam and Linda Leister and family.

