

“Growing God’s Kingdom”



THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT HANGING OF THE GREENS

December 9th, 2018

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Messiah Lutheran Church

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Slone Smith and Hannah Ehrisman

Interim Pastor
Worship Leader
Organist
Choir Director
Altar Guild
Acolytes
Ushers

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT Hanging of the Greens Service (The Nativity Scene) December 9, 2018– 10:30 a.m.

*Please Stand as **YOU** Are Able

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER IN PRAYER TODAY

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

CHIMES: CALL TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE:

“ _____ ” _____

[A Time for Meditation and Prayer]

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Forerunners and messengers advance the advent of our God. While John the Baptizer's voice in the wilderness may be the principal focus of the day, Malachi's prophecy could as easily herald the coming Lord Jesus as forerunner of the Lord of hosts. Finally all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the coming of the Lord and assist all flesh in capturing a vision of the “salvation of God.”

* BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

WL 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.

Let us come before God in confession.
Silence is kept for reflection.

WL 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.

WL Children of God, 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.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH PLACING THE CRECHE FIGURES

* HYMN “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” #34 Green Hymnal (vss. 1, 2 & 5)

* PRAYER OF THE DAY (spoken in unison)

WL Let us pray...

C Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

THE NATIVITY

Luke 2:6-7

Reader 1 – Diana Wise

And while they were there the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the Inn.

The manger, or crèche, is placed as a reminder that Jesus Christ was born in the humblest of places, because humankind would not make room in their heart to hold the Son of God. Jesus, who was born in this most modest beginning, has compassion on all God’s children - from the humblest to the richest. Today, we set our focus upon that manger and the symbolism that surrounds it as we truly begin to celebrate the coming birth of Jesus Christ.

R1 We thank God for the joy that surrounds us in this place, and we ask God’s blessing as we prepare for the holy season of Christmas.

**C I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord!”
(Psalm 122:1)**

R1 As we prepare the church for Christmas, let us prepare our hearts to receive Jesus, our Savior and Friend. Gracious God, we thank you for the coming of Jesus long ago in Bethlehem, for his willingness to become like us, to live with us, to die for us, and to come to live with us again. Make us ready to open our lives to his coming every day.

C Come, Lord Jesus.

R1 Help us to remember the gifts of Jesus' coming: how he fed the hungry, healed the sick, and freed us from fear. Free us now to do his work.

C Come, Lord Jesus.

R1 You have promised to plant a tree by the riverside, a tree with roots deep in the soil of your love: Help us to grow and become strong and beautiful for you.

C Come, Lord Jesus.

R1 Make our homes bright with the joy of your presence and our churches alive with glad songs of praise for your coming. Give us faces that shine with your light for the world to see.

C Come, Lord Jesus. Amen

*NATIVITY HYMN

“Away in a Manger”

#67 Green Hymnal

THE EVERGREENS

Reader 2 – Slone Smith

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, among them a light has shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given. And the government will be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The evergreens are “old friends” of Christmas. They bring symbols of life to our church and homes, which calls to mind the life God gives us through the Savior, Jesus. From ancient times, evergreens have been considered a symbol of eternity, a sign of God's everlasting nature. Isaiah tells us that there will be no end to the reign of the Messiah. Therefore, we hang the wreaths in the shape of a circle, and place garlands of green, as a sign of everlasting life. These are symbols of Christ's gift of eternal life and of the celebration of Christmas itself. And with this life they bring beauty, fragrance and joy, and that truly is what Jesus brings to us with his life when we have him in our lives.

CAROL

“O Christmas Greens”

O Christmas greens, O Christmas greens, how faithful are your branches!
O Christmas greens, O Christmas greens, how faithful are your branches.
So green when summer breezes blow; still green amid the winter snow.
O Christmas greens, O Christmas greens, how faithful are your branches.

O Christmas greens, O Christmas greens, O leaves of green, unchanging,
O Christmas greens, O Christmas greens, O leaves of green, unchanging.
Since evergreen you stand, we know God doth eternal life bestow.
O Christmas greens, O Christmas greens, O leaves of green, unchanging.

THE ADVENT WREATH

Jeremiah 23:5-6

Reader 3 – Haley Mummah

The days are surely coming says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous branch, and He shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which He will be called: “The Lord is our Righteousness.”

The Advent Wreath is a vivid symbol of preparation. The lighting of a new candle each of the four weeks before Christmas reminds us that something is happening, but more is yet to come. The circle of evergreens reminds us of the everlasting covenant offered in the birth of Jesus. The four candles symbolize HOPE, LOVE, JOY, AND PEACE. Last week, we lit the first candle as a symbol of Christ, our HOPE and expectation of what is to come. Today, the second candle was lit for the LOVE that God brings to us through His Son, Jesus Christ. It is also referred to as the “Bethlehem Candle,” as it also represents the manger scene and those who look to his coming. May the light sent from God shine in the darkness to show us the way of salvation.

THE PARAMENTS

Isaiah 40:3-5

Reader 4 – Andrea Cameron

In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill made low. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

We have placed the Advent paraments, which are navy blue, a royal color to remind us of the King of Kings, who came to be the “Light of the World.”

CAROL

“The King Shall Come”

#33 Green Hymnal (vss. 1 & 2)

THE HOLLY AND IVY

Isaiah 53:3a, 4a, 5-6

Reader 5 – Ron Yorks

He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; Surely, He has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases. But He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; Upon Him was the punishment that made us whole. And by His bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

For Christians, this passage from Isaiah reflects the sufferings of Jesus, who saved us from our sins by His death on the cross, and by His resurrection from the dead. In ancient times, holly and ivy were considered signs of Christ’s passion. Their prickly leaves suggest the crown of thorns, the red berries the blood of the Savior, and the bitter bark the drink offered to Jesus on the cross. As we view the holly and ivy as it decorates the doors and windows in preparation of Christmas Day, let us rejoice in the coming of Jesus our Savior.

THE POINSETTIA

Numbers 24:17

Reader 6 – Harrison Mumma

I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near ...a star shall come out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.

The poinsettia speaks to us symbolically in several ways. The starshaped formation of ten leaves calls to mind the star which shone that first Christmas. In a less joyous sense, the color of the flower is blood red, reminding us of the male infants killed because King Herod wanted to eliminate any threat to his throne. We sometimes forget this part of the story, which made it necessary for Mary, Joseph, and the Christ Child to flee to Egypt.

CAROLING

Psalm 96: 1-4a, 6

Reader 7 – Christina Martin

O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth, sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples. For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised. Honor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

The singing of carols is one of the greatest joys of the season. Please remain seated as we sing the first two verses of each carol listed below.

CAROLS

"Angels From the Realms of Glory"
"O Come All Ye Faithful"

#50 Green Hymnal (vss. 1 & 2)
#45 Green Hymnal (vss. 1 & 2)

THE EVERGREEN TREE

Micah 5:2, 4

Reader 8 – Melissa Ehrisman

But you, O Bethlehem, from you shall come forth one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from ancient days. 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; and He shall be the one of peace.

In ancient times the cedar was revered as the tree of royalty. It also signified immortality, and was used for purification. These trees are often used to decorate our churches and homes as a symbol of Christ, who reigns as King forever, and whose coming will purify our hearts.

THE TREE LIGHTING

John 1: 1-5, 9-14

Reader 9 – Cynthia Smith

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the Beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and without Him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in Him was life, and the life was

the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to what was His own, and His own people did not accept Him. But to all who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave power to become children of God, who were born not of the blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen His glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

As our final preparation for the coming of Jesus, the Light of the World, we will light the Christmas trees. And in this time of Advent, whenever you see a lighted tree, let it call to mind the One who brings light into our darkness, healing in our brokenness, and peace to all who will receive Him. May these trees, arrayed in beauty and splendor, remind us of the life-giving cross of Christ, that we may always rejoice in the new life that shines in hearts.

CAROL

“Joy to the World”

#39 Green Hymnal

John the Baptist is a herald of the saving Lord, whose way is prepared by "repentance for the forgiveness of sins." As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.

* GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-6

P The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 3rd chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord. (spoken)

THE GOSPEL READS:

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' ⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; ⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ. (spoken)

SERMON

Deborah Hackenberger

* HYMN

“On Jordan’s Banks the Baptist’s Cry”

#36 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

WL As we await the coming of Christ, we pray in hope for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

WL Prepare your church to share the good news, life-giving God. Put your word within us and dwell among us. Send us out to proclaim the mercy and salvation that abides in you. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

WL Protect the creation, life-giving God. Sustain the mountains and hills. Restore the rivers. Give us wisdom and compassion to care for wilderness areas and urban ecosystems. Move us to care for your creation in all its forms and richness. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

WL Purify the hearts of all people, life-giving God. Remove the hate that lives within us and among us. Mold us into peacemakers. Raise up leaders rooted in your love and fed by your word. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

WL Comfort all who hurt, life-giving God. Wrap them in your tender care. Remember the forgotten and send us out to share your love with them. Be with the wandering, the worried, and the woeful Today we pray especially for our shut-ins, the sick, and those who may be grieving who are in our hearts and minds listed here: Kitty Walters, Jane Marhefka, Ruth Cisney, Ray Bramm, Dottie Smith, Dorothy Cleck, Carol Simonton, Mona Lawson, and Jim Yetter. And for Bob & Jeanette St. Clair, Jim Woltman, Bob & Andrea Cameron, Mary Ernest, John Miller, Joan Fulkroad, Don Clark, Butch & Sandy Pines, Joyce Bradley, Minnie Minick, Austin Parker, Terry Coder, Barbara Wengerd, Rich Walters, Mary Sanders, Jane Ann Baney, Lysha Maldonado, Donna Barton, Carolina Rubio and family, Josh Hohol, Noel Peachey, Shirley Miller, Jean Zimmerman, Elienai Ramirez, Larry Miller, Mike Maugans, Jamie Miller, Ed Fraker, Ben & Dorothy Towsey, Tami Metz, Dottie Wilson, Sieber Stoner, Megan Shoop, Steve Baborik, Pastor Nancy McClure, Ken & Ruth Mummah and family, Dorothy Smith & family, Carol Lyter and the California Wildfire victims. Hear us, O God,

C Your mercy is great.

WL Bless this congregation, life-giving God. Give strength and joy to worship leaders,

musicians, and our altar guild as they prepare the way for the celebration of the Christ child's coming among us. Hear us, O God,

C Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

WL 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. Hear us, O God,

C Your mercy is great.

WL We remember the generations who have shown us your faithfulness, life-giving God. Shine your light on those who mourn and prepare us for that day when we will see you face-to-face. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

WL Confident that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we bring to you these prayers and those unspoken, in the name of Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

* SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE

WL 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 together praise our God Before his glorious throne;

For he will open heav'n above, To give us his own Son, To give us his own Son.

* OFFERING PRAYER

WL 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

* ADVENT DIALOG

WL We have come with great expectation to meet the coming Messiah.

C All creation waits with longing for the Son of God.

WL 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.

WL O come to us, Emmanuel!

C God, be with us and save us from our sins.

* EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

WL 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.

WL 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.

WL 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.

WL 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

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

(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

WL The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen

* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

WL 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

* BLESSING

WL 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" #30 Green Hymnal

* DISMISSAL

WL Go in peace. Christ is with you. **C Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

NEXT WEEK'S LECTOR – Ron Yorks

NEXT WEEK'S ALTAR GUILD – Linda Clark

NEXT WEEK'S WORSHIP LEADER – Jim Bahorik

NEXT WEEK'S ACOLYTES – Braedon Walton and Nick Reed

NEXT WEEK'S USHERS – Julia Martin and Gabby Reed

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