

“Growing God’s Kingdom”



CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24th, 2020

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH

3 SOUTH THIRD STREET
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THIS EVENING’S INTRODUCTION: *In winter’s deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus’ birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.*

WELCOME

This evening, a quiet evening in a year of unknowns and apprehension, we would like to warmly welcome everyone 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 to be upon us as we serve Him and our neighbors.

Thank you again for blessing us with your following 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.



Messiah Lutheran Church

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Mifflintown, PA 17059

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Samuel Leister
Bob St. Clair
Andrea Cameron
Linda Clark
Diana Wise & Cynthia Smith

Vicar
Organist
Choir Director
Junior Choir Director
Altar Guild

CHRISTMAS EVE PRELUDE CONCERT OF PIANO MUSIC – 5:45 PM
by JUSTIN AURAND of Sunbury, PA – www.justinspiano.com

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE OF SCRIPTURE AND SONG -- 7:00 PM

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

GREETINGS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

ORGAN PRELUDE Lighting of the Altar Candles and Candelabras

GREETING

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.

OPENING GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20 **Slone Smith**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among

those whom he favors!"

[¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.]

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

- 1 Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him Born the king of angels:

Refrain:

Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

- 2 The highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! **[Refrain]**

- 3 Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation, Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest: **[Refrain]**

- 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning; Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing: **[Refrain]**

CHILDREN'S HOMILY – Lighting of the Advent Wreath and Christ Candle

Vicar Leister

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray...

C Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON:

Isaiah 9:2-7

Hannah Ehrisman

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness--on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with

righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

OLD TESTAMENT CAROL

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

PSALM 96 (responsively by verse)

Nick Reed (and family)

¹Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

³Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

⁴**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

⁶**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."**

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

PSALM CAROL

“Joy to the World”

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive its King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

THE EPISTLE LESSON:

Titus 2:11-14

Braedon Walton

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

EPISTLE CAROL

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, From heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay To hear the angels sing.

THE GOSPEL: John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. 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. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And 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.

HOMILY (Placing of the Christ Child in the Creche Scene)

Vicar Leister

CAROL OF THE DAY

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

- 1 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born king;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic hosts proclaim "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain:

- Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born king!"
- 2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! **[Refrain]**
- 3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, Ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild He lays his glory by, Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth, Born to give us second birth. **[Refrain]**

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

OFFERING PRESENTATION

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

P Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, reveled in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

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.

COMMUNION CAROL

“What Child Is This”

What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, The babe, the son of Mary!

DISTRIBUTION

P The Body of Christ given for you. (Wafer)

P The Blood of Christ shed for you. (Juice)

P Almighty God, you provide the true bread from heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that we who have received the sacrament of his body and blood may abide in him and he in us, that we may be filled with the power of his endless life, now and forever.

C Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ. Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C Amen

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

SOLO: Andrea Cameron

“Ave Maria”

Schubert

POST-COMMUNION CAROL (Piano by Slone Smith)

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

- 1 Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
- 2 Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts. . sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!
- 3 Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

DISMISSAL

- L Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus!
C Thanks be to God!

CLOSING CAROL

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain, Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain That Jesus Christ is born!

- 1 While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens There shone a holy light. **[Refrain]**
- 2 The shepherds feared and trembled When lo, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus That hailed our Savior's birth. **[Refrain]**
- 3 Down in a lonely manger The humble Christ was born;
And God set us salvation That blessed Christmas morn. **[Refrain]**

POSTLUDE

PLEASE NOTE that we do not sing all the verses of every hymn, but only those verses which reiterate the message of the Scripture Word.

IN THE NAME OF THE CHRIST CHILD we cordially welcome all parents and children and all who worship with us remotely for our 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.

THE MATTHEW 25 FUND was created to help needy people and situations throughout the year. Please be as generous as you can.

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



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 Christmas Eve Service.

TO THE GLORY OF GOD:

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 honor of our grandson, Braedon Walton, by Butch and Sandy Pines.

In memory of my grandparents by Kenton Stuck.

In honor of my parents by Kenton Stuck.

In memory of Ansel and Jean McNaight by daughters Jane Shearer and Anne McNaight.

In memory of Al McClure by Alice McClure.

In memory of Sue Collins by family.

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

In memory of my dad, James Harvey, by Debbie Meinsler.

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

In loving memory of my husband, Barry, and our fathers, Wayne Lauver and Samuel Zeiders, by Donna Lauver.

In memory of daughters, Denise and Diane by Herman and Judy Armstrong.

In memory of our parents by Herman and Judy Armstrong.

In memory of Warren 'Dutch' Walters by Kitty, Deb, Cyndi and Bob.

In memory of my sister, Esther Dunkelberger, by Kitty Walters.

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

In honor of our children, Susan, Carol and Kenneth, by Ken and Ruth Mummah.

In honor of our grandchildren, Harrison, Haley and Olivia, by Ken and Ruth Mummah.

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

In memory of our loved ones, Arlyne and Karen Goss, by Paul, Larry and family.

In memory of Donald Sr., Margaret 'Peg', Ronald 'Tink', Donald Jr., and Johnny Beward by Nick, Bethanie, Thea and Brea Beward.

In memory of Dorothy and Karen Swab and Rich Fultz by Nick, Bethanie, Thea and Brea Beward.

In honor of our Mam-Maw and Pappy Leister by Thea and Brea Beward.

In honor of our Nammy Beward by Thea and Brea Beward.

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 memory of Velma Suloff by Don and Barb Geedey.

The large Poinsettia was placed in memory of Joyce Yetter by Vernon Gunnion and family.

DONATIONS TO LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE:

In memory of Ansel and Jean McNaight by daughters Jane Shearer and Anne McNaight.

In memory of Al McClure by Alice McClure.

In memory of Warren 'Dutch' Walters and Esther Dunkelberger by Kitty Walters and family.

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

