

November 29, 2020

9:30 AM Worship

First Sunday in Advent

**Welcome to Worship  
at  
St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church**

As we resume in-person worship, please know that we will need to be flexible with worship and we will make adjustments as necessary as the pandemic continues. Thank you in advance for your flexibility and understanding!

Please keep in mind:

- We ask that you not attend in-person worship if you have had a fever, cough, runny nose, have been in contact with anyone who has COVID-19 or have traveled outside the state of PA in the last two weeks.
- We will practice social distancing. The ushers will direct you to your seat and dismiss folks pew by pew at the end of worship. Once seated, please do not move about the sanctuary.
- The bathroom across from Pastor Becky's office is available for all to use in emergency situations only. Please follow guidelines posted on the bathroom mirror.
- Masks are required, following CDC recommendations. If you need a mask, we can provide one for you.
- If you bring your offering with you to worship, please place it in the offering baskets located at the door when you enter worship or when you exit worship.
- We ask that you take your bulletin with you or recycle it in the blue bin at the door when you exit worship.
- When communion is celebrated, please dispose of your trash using the trash can at the door when you exit.
- As we move through our worship, there will be no congregational singing. Hymn verses are provided for your prayerful reflection as the hymn is played. Any bolded congregational responses are for the entire congregation to respond with as we move through our worship service.

Online Worship continues through Zoom. The link for worship is available on the website and in the weekly email.

If you have questions or concerns, please speak with either Pastor Becky, Erika Haldeman (chair of Worship and Music and the Return to Church Taskforce) or Colleen Carlin (council president).

## WORSHIP NOTES

Advent is one of the shortest seasons of the church year but it is rich with meaning and symbolism. The color is blue and symbolizes our waiting and watching - and the themes of hope, peace, joy and love. Join us in worship and watch as we light a new candle each week, as the light grows brighter and brighter, while we wait and prepare for the coming of the Light of the World, Jesus Christ, to be born.

## PRAYER LIST

The following names have been added to the prayer list: Alex Kunkel, Bob Moran, Betsy Rodger, Robin Seasock, Paige Seasock, Peyton Seasock, Nancy Terpoilli, Brian Allebach, Glen Van Dyke, Charles Krupp, Donna DiDio, RuthAnn Jadick, Jean Leister, Kenny Nace, Tom Ciesielka, Abigail and Eric Hails, Sonny Carson, Frank Puskoskie, Patricia Wheeler, Ann Brown Hager, Alyssa Gegan, Steve Sanko, David Mounts, Cathy Sweeney, and Barb Klees.

*Names are kept on the prayer list for three weeks unless specifically requested by the family or for those struggling through long-term illness or treatment. If you would like to add a name to the prayer list, please contact the church office at 215-234-4888 or [stj.stown@verizon.net](mailto:stj.stown@verizon.net).*

+ GATHERING +

PRELUDE Emmanuel Comes – Hayes

WELCOME

GREETING

St. John's is a community that is

**Ignited by Spirit, Growing in Love.**

We begin our worship in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

CONFESSION

Blessed be God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Loving and forgiving God,

**we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

HYMN ELW 244 Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

Rejoice, rejoice, believers,  
and let your lights appear;  
the evening is advancing,  
and darker night is near.  
The bridegroom is arising  
and soon is drawing nigh.  
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;  
at midnight comes the cry.

Our hope and expectation,  
O Jesus, now appear;  
arise, O Sun so longed for,  
o'er this benighted sphere.  
With hearts and hands uplifted,  
we plead, O Lord, to see  
the day of earth's redemption  
that sets your people free!

#### ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

**When you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. But about that day or that hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.**

Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come.

**Therefore keep awake, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.**

We light the first candle on the Advent wreath as a reminder for us to stay awake so that we will not miss the presence of Christ around us every day.

*Light first candle.*

Let us pray. We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the first candle on this wreath, rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes with all the saints and angels. Enlighten us with your grace, and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.  
**Amen.**

ADVENT SONG O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

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

+ WORD +

FIRST READING – Isaiah 64:1-9

*This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.*

<sup>1</sup>O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—

<sup>2</sup>as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil—

to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

<sup>3</sup>When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

<sup>4</sup>From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,

no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.

<sup>5</sup>You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.

<sup>6</sup>We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

<sup>7</sup>There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

<sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.

<sup>9</sup>Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING: Mark 13:24-37

*Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>24</sup>“In those days, after that suffering,  
the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,  
<sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

<sup>26</sup>Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

<sup>28</sup>“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>32</sup>“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Pastor Becky Schanely

ADVENT CREED

We believe in God the Father, creator of heaven and earth.

**The one who is full of patience,  
who is not afraid of silence,  
who does not need to fill each moment with activity and noise.  
The one who is beyond bluster and flurry,  
and who does not jostle for attention.**

We believe in God the Son, Savior of creation,  
**who slipped into Bethlehem one night, mostly unnoticed,  
who lived thirty years without headlines or hurry,  
who frequently took time alone with his patient Father,  
who waited for the right time to become the suffering servant,  
who stood quietly before the noise of his accusers,  
whose silence overpowered their words,  
who died, then rose again on a quiet Sunday morning.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
**who strengthens, empowers, renews and refreshes,  
sometimes arriving with obvious power,  
sometimes with the quiet breath of a whisper.**

**We believe in one God  
who patiently waits for us,  
and who longs for us to do the same.**

MUSICAL OFFERING Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning – arr. Franklin  
Kevin Schanely, tenor

#### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Stir up your strength, O God.

**Come to help us.**

Eternal Father, strong to save, receive our prayers for the sake of your Son Jesus, who came, who comes, and who will come, to bring us life.

**Amen.**

#### LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

+ SENDING +

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BENEDICTION

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,  
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,  
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,  
now and forever.

**Amen.**

### SENDING SONG ELW 439 Soon and Very Soon

Soon and very soon  
we are going to see the King.  
Soon and very soon  
we are going to see the King.  
Soon and very soon  
we are going to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
We're going to see the King!

No more crying there,  
we are going to see the King.  
No more crying there,  
we are going to see the King.  
No more crying there,  
we are going to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
we're going to see the King!  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE Awake, My Heart, with Gladness – Powel

*As the postlude is played, you will be dismissed from your pew. Please follow the instructions of the usher as to when and where to exit the sanctuary. Please take your bulletin with you and either take it home or place it in the blue recycle bin by the door.*

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

**Wed 11/30**

7:30 PM Confirmation (Zoom)

**Sat 11/5**

9-11AM Food Collection (drop off behind church)

**Sun 12/6**

9:30 am Zoom Worship - 2nd Sunday in Advent & Annual Congregational Meeting

### **Sponsorships for November 29**

The flowers on the altar are given in celebration of Pastor Becky's 20th anniversary of ordination with love from her family.

The bullertins are given in memory of the birthday anniversary (12-1) of Cynthia Lynn Roberts, a gift from her family.

The boutonnières are given in memory of Dale Miller, a gift from his family.

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## **2021 PROPOSED BUDGET**

The proposed budget for 2021 has been presented by the Finance Committee and approved by the Church Council. Hard copies of the budget are available in the narthex starting Nov 15 and can be mailed home to anyone who would like to see a copy. If you'd like to request a copy of the budget be sent to by mail, please contact the church office (215-234-4888). Financial forums are being offered for anyone who has any questions about the budget in anticipation of its approval at the Annual Meeting, which will be held within worship on Sunday, December 6 at 9:30 AM.

## **WORSHIP ASSISTANTS NEEDED**

When we resume in-person worship that is also live-streamed through Zoom, we will need two new teams to support our worship. The two groups are defined below. If you feel that you could offer your gifts and skills to either team, please contact Vikki Shelor in the church office ([stj.stown@verizon.net](mailto:stj.stown@verizon.net) or 215-234-4888).

- **Zoom Hosts** – the Zoom host is the person who oversees the Sunday morning worship Zoom. This person will admit folks into worship from the waiting room, make sure that participants are muted prior to the start of worship, record the online Zoom service and then advancing the Powerpoint that is used to guide our online worshippers through the service.
- **AV Team** – the responsibilities for our audio team have grown with the addition of live-streaming worship. Once our new live-stream system is fully installed, we will be training people to run both the audio and visual aspects of our in-person and online Sunday worship.

Training will be offered for both teams and a willingness to be in-person for Sunday worship is necessary.

## **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

Please save the date – Sunday, December 6 – and join us for our annual congregation meeting worship service at 9:30 AM. All confirmed members of the congregation have voice and vote! The meeting business will be interspersed with worship, which will be held both in-person and live-streamed on Zoom. All online worshippers will be able to participate in the meeting with the ability to both ask questions and vote when needed. In preparation for the meeting, the 2021 proposed budget will be available in the back of the church and on the church website.

## OPEN LINK FOOD PANTRY FOOD COLLECTION

To maintain our commitment as the Soup and Stew Congregation in the Upper Perkiomen Valley, the first weekend of the month this fall will be designated as Soup and Stew weekend! Please bring your donations at the following times:

Saturday—9-11 AM to the back entrance— Dec 5

Sunday—to 9:30 AM worship—Dec 6

ALSO, the following items are really low at the pantry right now:

Feminine Hygiene Products

Dish Soap

Hand Soap

If you don't feel comfortable going to the store, monetary donations are always welcomed and then we can do the shopping for you! Place donations for Open Link Thanksgiving Collection in an envelope – make checks payable to Open Link.

Thank you for helping the people in our local community!

### OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE

| Worship Attendance<br>11/15/2020 - Zoom - 47 households  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Giving Amounts   | Total received<br>between 11/08<br>-22/2020 | Amount Needed<br>between<br>11/08-22/2020 |
| General Fund   | \$10,593                                    | \$10,918                                  |
| Building Fund  | \$496.50                                    |   |
| <p><i>Weekly average is based on the 2020 budget. A weekly building fund amount needed is no longer reported as the building fund has been used for the mortgage, which has been paid off. All other building expenses are included in General Fund budget and giving.</i></p> <p><i>The above numbers include electronic giving.</i></p> <p><i>Mint duty is being done every other week for the time being.</i></p> |   |   |

| Capital Campaign Activity Update                                  |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Capital Campaign Contributions Pledged                            | \$ 260,000.00        |
| Capital Campaign Contributions received between<br>8/30-9/12/2020 | \$269.50             |
| <b>Capital Campaign Contributions received to date</b>            | <b>\$ 248,250.40</b> |



*Ignited by Spirit  
Growing in Love*

**SERVING TODAY IN WORSHIP**

Reader - Paul Barndt

**ST. JOHN'S LEADERSHIP**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Colleen Carlin, President

Bob Conrad, Property

Erin Eisenhart, Worship and Music

Kristie Faust, Communications and Marketing

Matt Hoh, Vice President/ Staff Support

Elaine Keller, Secretary/ Faith Formation

Noreen Kelly, Finance

Barry Long, Member Engagement

Kathy Weidner, Outreach

Rev. Rebecca L. Schanely, Pastor

(pastorbecky74@gmail.com, 215-234-4580)

Vikki Shelor, Office Administrator (stj.stown@verizon.net)

Janet Aldinger, Director of Music (jeald@yahoo.com)

Michele Peart, Bookkeeper

Julie Hovanec, S.S. Superintendent

Bob Ernst, Facilities Manager

Michael Herm, Treasurer

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