

December 6, 2020

9:30 AM Worship

Second 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 People, Look East – arr. Krug  
Handbell Choir

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 255 There's a Voice in the Wilderness

There's a voice in the wilderness crying,  
a call from the ways untrod:  
Prepare in the desert a highway,  
a highway for our God!  
The valleys shall be exalted,  
the lofty hills brought low;  
make straight all the crooked places  
where God, our God, may go!

But the word of our Savior is faithful,  
the arm of our God is strong,  
who stands in the midst of the nations  
and soon will right the wrong.  
Lord, feed your flock like a shepherd,  
the lambs so gently hold;  
in pastures of peace now lead them,  
and bring them to your fold.

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING LITANY - Julie Hovanec

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid.

**A voice cries out: "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 be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

**'And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'**

We light the second candle on the Advent wreath as a reminder of the promise of God's glory, revealed to the Israelites in times of old and revealed to us anew today.

*Light second candle.*

Let us pray. We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit, that we may be light shining in the darkness. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us. 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 Wisdom from on high,  
embracing all things far and nigh:  
in strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.

## OUR MINISTRY TOGETHER – 2020

A review of 2020

Recognition of Outgoing Council Members

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

*In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.*

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All people are grass,  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades;

but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup>Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good tidings;  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
“Here is your God!”  
<sup>10</sup>See, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.  
<sup>11</sup>He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms,  
and carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

*The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.*

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way;

<sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.’”

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION

Pastor Becky Schanely

OUR MINISTRY TOGETHER – The Business

Approve minutes from Annual Meeting 2019

Election of New Council Persons

2021 Budget Presentation and Vote

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

O God, be gracious to us:

**In mercy, restore us.**

Come near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**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 253 He Came Down

He came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have love;  
hallelujah forevermore.

He came down that we may have light;  
he came down that we may have light;  
he came down that we may have light;  
hallelujah forevermore.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE Allegretto - arr. Wolff  
Curry Moyer, Trumpet

*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.*

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**Prelude: People, Look East** ; Celebrate Christmas with Twelve Bells; Copyright © 2015 Choristers Guild. This edition copyright © 2020. All rights reserved. Podcasted/Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-709256

**There's a Voice in the Wilderness**; Text: James Lewis Milligan, 1876-1961, alt. Music © Estate of Eldred Bancroft. B. Burrows, Executor.

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel** ; Text: Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. composite Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress. OneLicense.net #A-709256. Podcasted/Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-709256

**He Came Down** - Text: Cameroon traditional

Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949

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**Postlude: Allegretto** - Wolfe; Baroque Music for Solo Instrument and Keyboard, Edited and Arranged by S. Drummond; Copyright © 1987 Morning Star Music Publishers; OneLicense.net #A-709256; Podcasted/Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-709256

## THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

### **Mon 12/7**

7:30 PM Council Meeting (Zoom)

### **Tues 12/8**

7:30 PM Book Club

### **Wed 12/9**

7:30 PM Confirmation

### **Sun 12/13**

9:30 am Zoom Worship - 3rd Sunday in Advent

1-2 PM Angel Tree gift drop off (at back entrance to the church)

## **Sponsorships for December 6**

The flowers on the altar are given in memory of Sidney Smith and Michael Johnson, given by Carolyn and James Lorenz.

The bulletins are given in memory of the birthday anniversary of son Douglas Kimber and of husband, William Rivers (12-7); a gift of Arlene Rivers.

The boutonnieres are given in honor of the birthday anniversary (12-10) of Matthew Reptsik; a gift from his sisters and parents.

## **ADVENT WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS**

As we continue worshipping in this season of Advent, we are inviting YOU to help with worship - from the comfort of your home! Whether our worship remains virtual or returns to in-person is still under consideration by the church council - but getting the congregation involved in helping to lead worship can happen either way!

Volunteers are needed to read the Advent Wreath Lighting litany for the last Sunday of Advent (Dec 20).

We are also planning to have our December 20th Advent worship be child-focused. The sermon will be the reading of a children's book followed by brief reflections. We invite our children who can read to help lead the different parts of the service, like they would at the 7 PM Christmas Eve Family Service. There are big and small parts - if you have a preference, please indicate that when signing up.

Contact the church office or sign up (see weekly email) online.

## **ANGEL TREE GIFT DROP OFF**

Thank you for signing up for all the gift tags on our Advent Angel Tree. If you did not receive your gift tags, they are on their way in the mail. If you do not receive them by the end of the week, please let Pastor Becky know!

All gifts must be returned to St. John's by Sunday, December 13 with the gift tag securely attached. A gift drop-off time will be held on the 13th from 1-2 PM at the back entrance of church.

If this drop off time does not work for you, please contact the church office to arrange an alternate drop off time! And thank you for bringing Christmas cheer to some of the residents at Pennsburg Manor and to one local family!

## **ADVENT IN A BAG**

There are still bags available for both families with children and those without. Contact the church office to arrange to pick one up or have one dropped off.

## **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.

## OPEN LINK FOOD PANTRY FOOD COLLECTION

Please bring your donations at the following times:

Saturday—9-11 AM to the back entrance— Dec 19

Sunday—to 9:30 AM worship—Dec 20

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 11/29/2020 - Zoom - 49 households		
Giving Amounts	Total received between 11/08-22/2020	Amount Needed between 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 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 - Donna Truskowski

**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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