



St. Peter's Lutheran Church
Highspire
Advent Two
December 7, 2025

Introduction

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

Overview

Pointing to Jesus

John the Baptist is a fitting messenger for the season of Advent, a time for the church to prepare for both the nativity of the Christ and for his second coming. John's call to repentance in preparation of Jesus' arrival carries a challenge for us to rid ourselves of everything that obstructs our view. His proclamation is filled with images of cleansing: straightening paths, cutting down useless trees, and burning away chaff. John's baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins means cleansing as well as a changing of the mind, a turning toward Jesus, so that one's whole self is pointed toward the Lord of this world and of eternity. Undistracted even by thoughts of our own worthiness, the church's focus year round is turned toward the coming of Christ. John points to Jesus, never to himself, and in so doing becomes a model for discipleship. Having heard John's cry, we join the chorus, becoming messengers in turn. All our efforts in worship and evangelism, education and social ministry point, not to ourselves, our programs, our skill or our saintliness, but only to Jesus. Preparing the way of the Lord is very much about pointing others to his real presence in and among us. This Sunday's Isaiah reading ("the grass withers, the flower fades") and that of 2 Peter ("all things are to be dissolved") reinforce the church's teaching that amidst all that is transient in our lives, and creation, only God's word is eternal. John the Baptist's testimony points us to that Word made flesh, who brings with him a new heaven and a new earth after all else has passed away. John directs us in our faith journeys as individuals and communities toward a witness that is forever pointing to Jesus.

WORDS OF WELCOME
PRELUDE

Juliet Mitton

The Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

ELW p. 94

P In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen

P God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

*KYRIE

Refrain



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.



1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
2 That we may live out your im - passioned re - sponse to the
3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for
4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you cen - ter our lives in the



u - ni - ty of all; for
hun - gry and the poor; that
friends and fam - i - ly; for
wa - ter and the word; that you



this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
we may live out truth and jus - tice and grace,
life and for love, for our work and our play,
nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,

Refrain



let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

P Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. John the Baptist calls all people to prepare the Lord's way for the kingdom of heaven is near. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Baptize us with the fire of your Spirit, that we may be a light shining in the darkness welcoming others as Christ has welcomed us, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

C Amen.

Light One Candle

vs. 2

ELW #240

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

1 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

3 His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,
4 but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
6 The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.
7 The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
9 They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.
10 On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the
peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be
glorious.

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 (read responsively)
May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace. (Ps. 72:7)

1 Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;

**2 that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

3 that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

**4 Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

5 May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

**6 Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

7 In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be
no more.

**18 Blessed are you, Lord God, the God of Israel;
you alone do wondrous deeds!**

19 And blessed be your glorious name forever,
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. Amen.

Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13

God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

4 Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, 6 so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Welcome one another, therefore, just as

Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. 8 For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors 9 and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles
and sing praises to your name”;

10 and again he says,

“Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”;

11 and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

12 and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope.”

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p. 188

Al-le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

***GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12**

P The holy gospel according to Matthew.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

1 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." 3 This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.' "

4 Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, 6 and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, 9 and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 10 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE
SERMON

Rev. Glenn Beard
Rev. Glenn Beard

*HYMN OF THE DAY Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding ELW #246

*NICENE CREED

ELW p. 104

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

A In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease especially *Don Alsedek, Connie Barner, Rachael Benkovic, Elijah Dean, Duck Harris, Rose Hoover, Samson Kennedy, Bernie Kunz, Rob Lipsitt, Jeff Myers and Kevin Schonewolf*. Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith especially Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, whom we commemorate today. Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

P Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

C Amen.

*PEACE

ELW p. 189

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

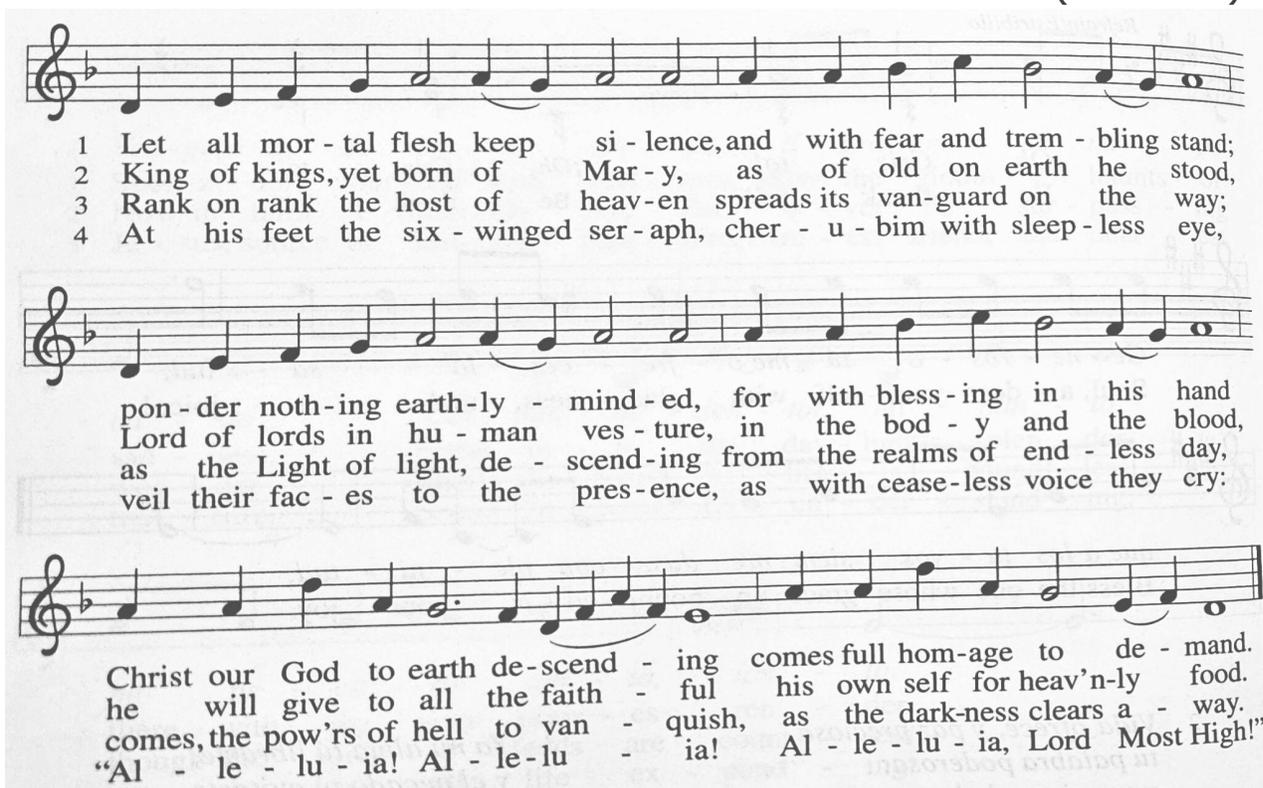
Advent Meditation

Bell Choir

The Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

*OFFERTORY HYMN "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" ELW #490
(v. 1 & 2)



1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;
2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth he stood,
3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van - guard on the way;
4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim with sleep - less eye,

pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand
Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
as the Light of light, de - scend - ing from the realms of end - less day,
veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry:

Christ our God to earth de - scend - ing comes full hom - age to de - mand.
he will give to all the faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.
comes, the pow'rs of hell to van - quish, as the dark - ness clears a - way.
"Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.

C Amen

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW p.190

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PREFACE

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
 san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
 est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

***EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

P 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:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

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.

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.

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

ELW p.191

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

*SHARING THE MEAL

P Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

COMMUNION HYMNS:

Lamb of God

ELW p.191

There's a Voice in the Wilderness

ELW #255

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cries

ELW #249

The Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

*BLESSING

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

C Amen.

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

C Amen.

*BENEDICTION

P May God who comes among us, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

C Amen.

*SENDING HYMN Hark the Glad Sound! ELW #239

*DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Keep awake.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Juliet Mitton

***Thank you, Rev. Glenn Beard for presiding over worship today.
It is a blessing to have you here.***

***Thank you Juliet Mitton for being a guest musician today. We
appreciate you sharing your talents with us.***

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Prelude - Juliet Mitton, piano

Kyrie - p.184-185, ELW, setting 8

Lighting the Advent Wreath - "Light One Candle" ELW #240 (v. 1)
@1984 Augsburg Fortress Publishers Wayne L. Wold

Gospel Acclamation - "Alleluia, Lord to whom shall we go?" p.188. ELW

Hymn of the Day - "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding" ELW #246

MERTON PUBLIC DOMAIN

Special Music - "Advent Meditation" arr. Douglas E. Wagner, @1983 Sacred Music Press Bell Choir

Offertory Hymn - "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" ELW #490 (v. 1 & 2)

PICARDY PUBLIC DOMAIN

"Holy, Holy, Holy", p.190, ELW, setting 8

Distribution of Communion - Lamb of God, p.191, ELW, setting 8

"There's a Voice in the Wilderness" ELW #255 ASCENSION Music - @ Estate of Eldred Bancroft, B. Burrows, Executor, 2006 Augsburg Fortress Publishers Words - PUBLIC DOMAIN

"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cries" ELW #249 PUER NOBIS PUBLIC DOMAIN

Sending hymn - "Hark, the Glad Sound!" ELW #239 PUBLIC DOMAIN

words - Phillip Doddridge music - T. Haweis

Postlude - Juliet Mitton, piano

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For pastoral care, please reach out to the church office at 717-939-3492 or by email at stpetershighspire240@gmail.com. You can also call Rich Deutsch at 717-512-1136.

ALTAR FLOWERS

We are in need of sponsors for the altar flowers on the following Sunday's:
December 14th; January 11th, 2026; January 18th, 2026
If you would be interested, please reach out to Helene Hoch at
717-343-8397. Thank you!

The Centerpiece is Presented to the Glory of God in memory of Annette Kunz by her Husband Bernard, daughter Roseann and husband, Richard Deutsch, and in memory of Joseph L. Deutsch by Rosean and Richard Deutsch. Annette and Joseph's Birthday anniversaries are December 4th

The Advent Wreath is presented to the Glory of God in memory of Romaine (Mickey) Bruaw, Ben Hickman and loved ones by Stephen, Clydene and Stephanie Strauss.

Worship Participants for December 7, 2025

Presiding Minister	Rev. Glenn Beard
Music Director	Stephen Strauss
Musician	Juliet Mitton
Worship Assistant	Patrick Hawkins
Lector	Randy Hoover

Worship Participants for December 14, 2025

Presiding Minister	Rev. Catharine Senft-Geib
Music Director	Stephen Strauss
Musician	Dan Deitzel
Worship Assistant	Patrick Hawkins
Lector	Matt Hunt

CHOIR REHEARSALS

Rehearsals have begun for all St. Peter's choirs. This Wednesday, December 10th, there will be rehearsal for the Bell Choir at 6:30pm and the choir at 7:15pm. Join us at rehearsals and offer your talents to the Lord through music! Any questions, call or text Steve at 717-265-6854.

Monday Night Meals

Sally Schonewolf wanted to say THANK YOU to everyone for their food and monetary donations for the Thanksgiving Meal this past Monday. They served 265 meals that evening! Also, she wanted to remind everyone to keep bringing in plastic bags and brown paper bags!

All are Welcome Bible Study

The *All are Welcome Bible Study* meets on Tuesday nights at 6:30pm. We are currently reading Psalms. We send out a weekly email with the Zoom link, as well as a brief summary of what we covered the previous week. To get the link for attending the Zoom session, or just to get on the weekly email list, please contact Matt and Mary Hunt at allarewelcomebiblestudy@gmail.com.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our Annual Budget Meeting and Election of Council members will be held on Sunday, December 14th, 2025, immediately following the service. Please plan on attending, as we will discuss the proposed 2026 Budget and elect council members. We will need to elect 2 members to replace those that are ending their terms. If you would be interested in serving on council, you can let Rich Deutsch, or any member of council know.

REMINDER:

All members, please remember to fill out a communion card for this year in order to be able to vote at the Budget meeting and the Annual Meeting in 2026.

Come to church and stay for fellowship every Sunday in the Parlor. Enjoy coffee and snacks and friendly conversation! If you would be interested in "Hosting a Sunday" please check the sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board located in the hallway outside the Music Room/Church Office.