

# Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Volume LXVII

December 5, 2021

No. 49



**Welcome to Alexanderwohl!** On this second Sunday of Advent, as we wait for Christ's coming, we hear from the biblical prophet Malachi. Our focus will be on the concept of peace with justice as we "imagine the wideness of God's embrace of all creatures and creation!" May our hearts be widened to do the things that make for a just peace.

## *Second Sunday of Advent*

### GATHERING TO WORSHIP

**Gathering Music**     *Lift Up Your Heads* ~arr. Behnke     Jared Janzen

**Welcome**     Pastor Caleb Yoder

**Opportunities for Celebration and Service**

**Call to Worship**     *Zechariah's song* (Luke 1:68-79)

**Invocation**

**Lighting of Advent Candles and Peace Prayer+**  
Josh, Nicole and Jaxson Hein

**\*Gathering Song**     *Comfort, Comfort, O My People*     VT 212

**Children's Story**     Eric Schrag

**Morning Prayer**

**Advent Hymn**     *Prepare the Way! The Prophet Called*     VT 220

**Prayer of Confession**

Leader: God, we begin these moments of confession by imagining your beauty and goodness. (silence)

**People: You are the God of all creation and you have declared it good!**

Leader: Held in your goodness, we give to you the noise, the conflict, the irritations that occupy our minds and sap our energy. (silence)

**People: You are the God who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation.**

Leader: Give us grace and wisdom to heed their warnings and forsake our sins.

**Hymn of Assurance**     *Come and Fill Our Hearts*     VT 52

**Worship With Our Tithes and Offerings**

First Fruits Giving

**Offertory** *Of the Father's Love Begotten* ~arr. Held

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

Pastor Caleb

**HEARING GOD'S WORD**

**Scripture Reading**

Malachi 3:1-4

Bryant Miller

**Message**

"God's Justice"

Pastor Lois Harder

**SENT AS GOD'S PEOPLE**

**\*Hymn of Response** *For the Healing of the Nations*

VT 705

**\*Benediction**

Pastor Lois

**\*Postlude** *Comfort, Comfort Now My People* ~arr. Manz Jared Janzen

\*All who are able are invited to stand.

+ The peace lamp serves as a visual reminder for us that we follow Jesus the Prince of Peace and believe in uncertain times that God's shalom will prevail.

This service made use of resources and ideas from *Leader*, Fall 2021

**Song Leader:** Marcia Brubaker

**Greeters:** North – Kyle & Justine Unruh; South – Lois Janzen

**Visual Arts:** Tina Schrag

**Christmas Decorations:** Young Adult Sunday School Class

**Nursery Staff:** Kim Voth, Tina Schrag, Nicole Hein

**Worship Technology:** Steve Unruh, Levi Schrag, Delton Voth

**November 28 Attendance:** 119 in person, 7 households on Zoom

**Questions for Reflection –**

1. What is it in your life that needs the purification of "the refiner's fire"? What might be consumed by flames in that process?
2. What does God see within you that is the "precious metal" that will remain after refining?
3. Do you see any modern-day prophets announcing or preparing the way for God's justice?

This **Advent season** we will study Old Testament prophecies looking to the coming of Christ and modeling faithful imagination of God. Next Sunday's passage will be from Zephaniah 3:14-20.

***Praying for our Congregation and Beyond***

- ❖ We pray for Marvin Voth as he adjusts to living at Bethesda; he made that move this past Monday, November 29.
- ❖ We pray for Rannie Schmidt as recovers from a heart catheterization and implanting of a pacemaker.

- ❖ We pray for Connie Wiens as she heals from surgery to decompress her vertebrae.
- ❖ We pray for the family of Linda Deasy who passed away peacefully Friday morning at Bethesda Home.
- ❖ We pray for medical personnel and caretakers as Covid-19 continues and the flu season begins in earnest.
- ❖ We pray for Carson Sterk and Leah Booten as they marry on Saturday, December 11.

**A note about the advent display:** Following prompts from the worship resources provided by MCUSA. This advent season we are challenged to dare to imagine our path forward with God toward God's good dream for our world. We are invited to travel with God into the future. From these words of invitation came the idea to use a variety of items that inspire my imagination, I hope they inspire you as well.

Some specific items in the display to take note of: a suitcase (the large one was Aaron and Betty Epp's), brass items (the two upside down metal cups are from Afghanistan), stained glass (candle holders and stars are from Haiti), the Keffiyeh (white and black scarf is from Palestine), the large paper star and the small star garland are from Ten Thousand Villages and were made by artisans in India. This advent - may we dare to imagine. ~ Tina Schrag

## **WEEK AT A GLANCE**

### **Monday, December 6**

2:00 pm Prayer Team

### **Tuesday, December 7**

9:30 am Staff Meeting

### **Wednesday, December 8**

6:15 pm Christmas Eve Program Volunteer Sharing Recording

6:30 pm Midweek Activities

6:30 pm Children's Christmas Eve Program Rehearsal

7:00 pm Board of Trustees

### **Sunday, December 12 – Advent 3**

9:30 am Sunday School

10:30 am Worship Service in person or on Zoom

7:30 pm Christmas Brass Concert at Goessel High School gym

## **COMING EVENTS**

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Dec 13 | 1:00 – 6:00 pm -- Blood Mobile at Goessel Church |
|        | 5:45 pm – Board of Mission and Service           |
|        | 7:00 pm – Church Council                         |
| Dec 15 | 6:30 pm -- Midweek Activities                    |
|        | 6:30 pm -- Children's Midweek Christmas Party    |
| Dec 17 | 10:00 am – Senior Coffee                         |

The Board of Deacons has completed the mid-cycle review of our pastors' ministry. Input was gathered from boards and committees; the congregation was also invited to offer their perspectives. A summary report was compiled

and shared with each pastor who in turn shared their reflections and goals with the Deacons. The Board of Deacons thanks all who participated in this positive, helpful review process.

**The children grades 1-5 made felt Christmas tree candy candy ornaments this last Wednesday.** An envelope label with their name and address on it is attached and hung on the tree in the lower south lobby. We would like to invite you to pick up one of these ornaments off the tree and send the child a Christmas card. They had a lot of fun making these and are excited to get a card in the mail.

**On Wednesday December 8th, the Junior High Midweek Group** will be traveling to the Newton Walmart to purchase supplies for Middle/High School teacher appreciation gift bags, as well as supply items for the New Hope Shelter. Our group will be collecting funds for this project after today's church service at both exits. Thank you for your support. ~Kevin & Bonnie Gaeddert, sponsors

The Children & Junior High Youth will be participating in a pre-recorded video for the 2021 **Christmas Eve Program**. Our Covid taskforce will evaluate whether or not we will proceed with an in-person Christmas Eve service. If we meet in person, we will sing carols and have candle lighting along with watching the recording of the Christmas Eve program together, and the service would be viewable via Zoom. Either way, the recorded program will be made available to all on Christmas Eve via YouTube. The recording includes the traditional "sharing time" as well as performances of children and youth from age 2 through Junior high.

**"Dare to Imagine!"**, Mennonite Church USA's annual Advent at Home worship guide, is now available. Download the free guide here <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/resource-portal/resource/advent-at-home/> or pick up a printed copy from one of the lobbies.

**Come and join the prayer team!** We're a small group that meets twice a month (Mondays 2:00 – 3:00 pm). We have a devotion time and offer prayers for the church. December meetings will be the 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Sunday School – 9:30 a.m.**  
**Worship Service – 10:30 a.m.**  
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Marilyn Unruh  
Flaming  
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