

# Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Volume LXVIII

January 2, 2022

No. 1



## Welcome to Alexanderwohl!

The prophet Jeremiah speaks words of hope and celebration to a people who have experienced deep pain and disappointment. On this Epiphany Sunday, these can be words for us...

## Epiphany Sunday

### GATHERING TO WORSHIP

Gathering Music

Alyssa Burkholder

Welcome

Justine Unruh

Opportunities for Celebration and Service

Call to Worship

Psalm 147:1-12 NIV

**All: *How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!***

Leader: The Lord builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the exiles of Israel.

**People: He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.**

Leader: He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name.

**All: *Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.***

Leader: The Lord sustains the humble but casts the wicked to the ground.

**People: Sing to the Lord with grateful praise; make music to our God on the harp.**

Leader: He covers the sky with clouds; he supplies the earth with rain and makes grass grow on the hills.

**People: He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call.**

Leader: His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of the warrior;

**People: the Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.**

**All: *Extol the Lord, Jerusalem; praise your God, Zion.***

Invocation

Lighting of Christ Candle and Peace Lamp+

Duerksen family

|                                              |                                                                                         |                     |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>*Gathering Songs</b>                      | <i>Blessed Be Your Name</i>                                                             | VT 637              |
|                                              | <i>O Beautiful Star of Bethlehem</i>                                                    | VT 275              |
| <b>Children's Story</b>                      |                                                                                         | Suzanne Meier       |
| <b>Morning Prayer</b>                        |                                                                                         | Jim Schmidt         |
| <b>Prayer of Confession</b>                  |                                                                                         | Pastor Lois Harder  |
| <b>Words of Assurance</b>                    |                                                                                         |                     |
| Leader:                                      | God of the vast heavens, expansive oceans, majestic mountains,<br>and rolling prairies, |                     |
| <b>People:</b>                               | <b>forgive us for our need to conquer and control.</b>                                  |                     |
| Leader:                                      | Cause us to look up, reach out, and follow you.                                         |                     |
|                                              | <b>All: <i>For you, O God of infinite imagination, will lead us.</i></b>                |                     |
| <b>Worship Music</b>                         | Alyssa Burkholder & Julianna Schrag                                                     |                     |
|                                              | <i>Still, Still, Still</i>                                                              |                     |
| <b>Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings</b> |                                                                                         | First Fruits Giving |
| <b>Offertory</b>                             |                                                                                         | Jared Janzen        |
|                                              | <i>Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning</i> ~Burkhardt                        |                     |
| <b>*Prayer of Dedication</b>                 |                                                                                         | Pastor Lois         |

## HEARING GOD'S WORD

|                          |                  |             |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| <b>Scripture Reading</b> | Jeremiah 31:7-17 | DJ Freeman  |
| <b>Message</b>           | God's Hope       | Pastor Lois |

## SENT AS GOD'S PEOPLE

|                         |                                   |        |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| <b>Song of Response</b> | <i>A Voice Was Heard in Ramah</i> | VT 278 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|

### \*Benediction

**\*Postlude** *O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright* ~Burkhardt 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 – Elaine Banman; South – Darla Banman

**Visual Arts:** Tina Schrag

**Nursery Staff:** Aileen Esau, Cambry Duerksen, Kim Voth

**Worship Technology:** DJ Flaming, Steve Goertzen, Delton Voth,  
Steve Unruh

**December 24 Attendance:** 146 in person, 35 households on Zoom

**December 26 Attendance:** 106 in person, 14 households on Zoom

### Questions for Reflection – Jeremiah 31:7-17

1. Can you identify times in your life when you could see (perhaps in hindsight) God's presence through difficulty?

2. What do think God's hope looks like in the world right now?

This **Advent and Christmas season** we have reflected on Old Testament prophecies looking to the coming of Christ and modeling faithful imagination of God. Next Sunday we will begin a new sermon series asking "What is the church?" and "How does God work through the church?" Our primary scripture will be 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.

**Thank you** for all the Christmas cards, family pictures, and words of season's greetings, and even gifts! We are delighted to be a part of this caring community as we grow in our faith together! ~ Pastor Caleb and Beth Yoder and Pastor Lois Harder

## *Praying for Our Congregation and Beyond*

- ❖ We pray for Leona Schroeder, and for Norman, as her doctors continue to work at finding solutions for troubling heart issues.
- ❖ We pray for safe travels for Pastor Caleb and his family as well as college students and others who are traveling in the coming days.
- ❖ We pray for our sister church Luz del Evangelio in Dallas, TX at the start of a new year.
- ❖ Thank you God, for the gift of a new year!

### **WEEK AT A GLANCE**

#### **Monday, January 3, 2022**

5:30 pm Board of Christian Education

#### **Tuesday, January 4**

9:30 am Staff Meeting

#### **Wednesday, January 5**

7:00 pm Board of Trustees

#### **Friday, January 7**

2021 Annual Reports due in Church Office

#### **Sunday, January 9**

9:30 am Sunday School

10:30 am Worship Service in person or on Zoom

### **COMING EVENTS**

- Jan 10 Prayer Team; Church Council
- Jan 12 Midweek Resumes
- Jan 21 Senior Coffee
- Jan 23 2022 Budget Q & A during Sunday School
- Jan 30 Annual Business Meeting following noon lunch

**Today -- January 2, 2022**, the college-age folks are invited to gather in the Shelter House during the Sunday school hour (beginning at 9:30) for coffee and fellowship.

**Congregational Budget for 2022** - Sunday January 23, 2022 there is a time scheduled during the Sunday School hour for information and questions

about the proposed 2022 congregational spending plan. Treasurer Dwight M. Flaming will walk the group through details and rationale of the plan. There will be time for questions and answers. This is an opportunity aside from the annual meeting to more fully understand the spending plan proposal and to provide feedback to the treasurer, trustees and Church Council. **This special meeting will provide more detail about the spending plan than what will be presented at the annual meeting.** For those interested, please plan to attend.

**Congregational Annual Meeting** – Sunday, January 30, 2022, following the worship service and a meal. We anticipate a time of discernment, of recollection, and celebration of God’s provision in challenging times. We will take action on the 2022 congregational spending plan, hear about any construction project updates, as well as address other issues brought before the congregation. Members are encouraged to attend either in person or by Zoom. Ballots can be requested from the church office in advance if attending by Zoom. Such ballots must be back to the Church Office no later than Sunday morning January 30, 2022.

**As you have updates (addresses, emails, cell phone or land line numbers) for the 2022 Church Yearbook**, turn them in to the church office.

**If you would like a printed paper copy of the 2021 annual reports, please sign up in either lobby by Sunday, January 16, 2022.** Reports will be emailed to those who have email.

**As we look forward to this New Year, we recently formed a vision team** which includes Matt Voth, Laura Unrau, Kris Schmucker, and Myron Schmidt. The pastors, along with this team, invite conversation about what it means for Christ to be the head of the church as we reflect on who we are as a congregation. We want to create an opportunity for conversation within adult/HS Sunday School classes: we will provide a summary of key ideas from our upcoming worship series, a few scripture passages to read together, along with several questions to prompt conversation. The main themes/dates are: January 16th --What is the church?; January 30 --Why church?; and February 6 -- How shall we be church? More information will be forthcoming about how to facilitate these conversations and about an upcoming leadership retreat in February,

**Our first opportunity to serve at New Hope Shelter** will be January 8-11. You will find a signup sheet in the south lobby for evening volunteers (5 -11 pm). Thank you for helping those who are less fortunate than we are.

**Sunday School – 9:30 a.m.**  
**Worship Service – 10:30 a.m.**  
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**Deacons:**  
Marilyn Unruh  
Flaming  
Ruth Goertzen  
Jim Schmidt  
Kris Schmucker  
Sandy Banman