

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Volume LXVIII

November 20, 2022

No. 47



Welcome to Alexanderwohl!

Today we gather to gratefully celebrate the many good gifts with which we've been blessed - even through difficult times. Using the Biblical image of an altar built of stones, we can recall and give thanks for God's steadfast presence in our lives.

GATHERING TO WORSHIP

Gathering *Now Thank We All Our God* ~Burkhardt Jason Peters
Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices ~Burkhardt
Thanksgiving ~Callahan

Welcome Pastor Lois Harder

Opportunities for Celebration and Service

Call to Worship and Invocation Psalm 95:1-3, 6-7

Leader: O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

People: Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

Leader: For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

People: O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker!

Leader: For he is our God,

People: and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

***Gathering Hymns** *Come, Christians, Join to Sing* VT 28
God of the Bible (omit vs 4) VT 420

Children's Story Laura Unrau

Morning Prayer Pastor Caleb Yoder

Worship with Bringing Forward Our Tithes and Offerings First Fruits

Offertory *Sing to the God of Harvest* [VT 122] Jason Peters

***Prayer of Dedication** *You Are All We Have (sing 2x)* VT 701

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Old Testament Stories

Taken from Genesis 12 and 26, Deuteronomy 27 and I Samuel 7

New Testament Reading	I Peter 2:1-8	Justine Unruh
Message	<i>Thanking God With Stones</i>	Pastor Lois
Song of Response	<i>Here by the Water</i> [VT 629]	Chancel Choir
Responding to the Gospel	<i>(open sharing)</i>	

SENT AS GOD'S PEOPLE

*Song of Sending	<i>Grant Us, God, the Grace</i>	VT 746
*Benediction		VT 963
*Postlude	<i>Now Thank We All Our God</i> ~Held	Jason Peters

*All who are able are invited to stand.

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

Song Leader and Chancel Choir Director: Renae Peters

Greeters: North – Kim Voth; South – DJ Freeman

Visual Arts: Anita Boese

Nursery Staff: Maryanne Esau, Mallory Schroeder, Liz Schmucker

Worship Technology: Steve Unruh, Caiden Duerksen, Delton Voth

November 13 Attendance: Sunday School – 106; Worship -- 129 in person, 10 Zoom households, 11 YouTube views

November 13 Offering: Sunday School – \$37.01; First Fruits – \$2,973.00

Questions for Reflection

1. Bring to mind a time when you were particularly grateful for God's presence in your life. How did you "mark" or honor your gratitude?
2. What does it mean to be "living stones" – Individually? Together?

Next Sunday is the first Sunday of Advent with the theme "Restoration is Near." Pastor Caleb will preach primarily from Matthew 24:36-44, as well as Isaiah 2:1-5.

Praying for our Congregation and Beyond

- ❖ We are thankful for the Community Thanksgiving Dinner that took place last Sunday. It was a wonderful opportunity to fellowship, eat, and work together!
- ❖ We pray for a spirit of gratitude as we celebrate Thanksgiving this coming week. We also pray for assurance of God's presence among us no matter what burdens or griefs we carry as we begin the waiting period of Advent.
- ❖ We pray for Marcia and Karl Brubaker and their family as they drive to Harrisonburg, VA this weekend to make final preparations for their

daughter, Erin's wedding to Dylan Slabach next Saturday, November 26. May God grant safe travels for all and blessings as they celebrate together.

- ❖ We are grateful for successful knee replacement for Karen Unruh this past Tuesday and we pray for continued healing.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, November 20

9:30 am – Sunday School

10:30 am – Worship

Monday, November 21

7:00 pm – Board of Worship

Tuesday, November 22

9:30 am – Staff Meeting

5:00 pm – Board of Deacons

Wednesday, November 23

No Midweek Activities

Thursday, November 24

Church Offices Closed for Thanksgiving

Friday, November 25

Church Offices Closed

Saturday, November 26

9:00 am – Advent Retreat – Shelter House

Erin Brubaker | Dylan Slabach Wedding in Virginia

Sunday, November 27 - First Sunday of Advent

9:30 am Sunday School

10:30 am – Worship

COMING EVENTS

- Dec 3 Lucas Hiebert | Michelle Schrag Wedding
- Dec 4 AMC hosts the Newton Community Children's Choir Concert
- Dec 11 A Service of Lessons and Carols
- Dec 11 7:00 pm -- Christmas Brass Concert at AMC
- Dec 12 Blood Drive at Goessel Church
- Dec 16 2:00 pm – Senior Coffee
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve Service
- Jan 20 Annual Reports due in Church Office
- Jan 22 Q & A on 2023 Spending Plan
- Feb 5 Annual Meeting

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Budget Support Update -- Your First Fruits offerings continue to support the ministries of our local church. Local Church ministries expenses continue to run at or under budget. Income from offerings is running behind budget. It will take \$97,000 during November and December to meet our 2022 giving goal. Thank you for your continued support as we finish out the year 2022.

Copies of the *Advent at Home 2022 Worship Guide*, “Restoration is Near!” for families and households is in the back of the sanctuary and also available online. It offers a guide for family devotions during Advent. You may also wish to check out thesoilandtheseedproject.org, which includes an Advent "little liturgy" and music for use at home or in small groups. Stay tuned for more information next week.

Expecting Emmanuel: Eight Women Who Prepared the Way is a new Advent devotional book by Joanna Harader, pastor of Peace Mennonite Church in Lawrence. Pastor Lois will offer an **Advent Retreat on Saturday, November 26 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** using this resource. Sign up on the south bulletin board by November 21 if you would like to participate.

The Daughters of Grace Christmas Brunch will not be happening in December this year. However, stay tuned for details of an event in the next few months. To organize this event and/or future events we do need additional help! Please talk to Tammy Flaming or Beth Yoder if you are interested!

Christmas Giving Tree -- The Goessel Ministerial Alliance and the Crossroads Credit Union are sponsoring a community giving tree to help with some of the expenses of Christmas for families in need. Tags with suggestions for gifts for children will be available on the tree at the Crossroads Credit Union on Tuesday, November 22. Gifts will need to be brought back to the Credit Union by Monday, December 12. The gifts should be wrapped and the credit union personnel will assist with the “checking in” process. It is our goal that everyone has a blessed and happy Christmas, both the giver and the receiver.

The board and staff of the Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum are filled with gratitude for all who attended our pizza fundraiser meal on November 9th. Contributions of \$1,200 were received and will be applied to year-end operating expenses. We also want to express our appreciation for the faithful support of the congregation through your First Fruits Gifts each quarter. With your shared vision, we are able to preserve and tell the stories of Alexanderwohl to future generations. ~Aileen Esau, Treasurer