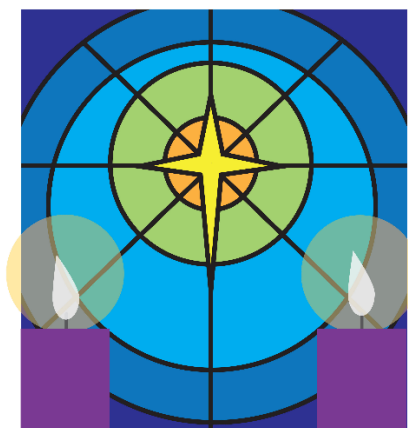


Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Volume LXVIII

December 4, 2022

No. 49



SECOND SUNDAY OF *Advent*

Welcome to Alexanderwohl!

Advent is a season of hopeful angst, watching for signs of Christ's coming, and waiting for restoration. Preparing the way for Christ's coming means considering what complicity or sin we need to repent of, in order to participate in Christ's reign of peace.

GATHERING TO WORSHIP

Gathering

Carol of the Bells

Gabriel's Trumpets

Ding Dong Merrily on High; Deck the Hall

Angels We Have Heard on High ~all arr. Marlatt

Welcome

Marilyn Unruh Flaming

Opportunities for Celebration and Service

Call to Worship

(Melody Zimmerman, The Soil and the Seed Project)

All: God of hope, fill us

Leader: with joy and peace as we trust in you
so that we overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: God of hope, fill us

Leader: Give us your hope! Hope to see the new that you are doing:
The shoot coming out of the stump of Jesse
Hope to see a world re-ordered: *The wolf lying down with the lamb*
Hope to see the righteous ruler: *Judging with equity.*
Protecting the meek and poor.
Christ, Hope of the nations, our hope is in you.

All: God of hope, fill us

Leader: with joy and peace as we trust in you
so that we overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: God of hope, fill us

Invocation Prayer

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Anita Boese and Marj Shoemaker

Creator of the Stars at Night ~Seth Thomas Crissman

Peace +

Congregational Response *O Come, O Come, Immanuel* (v.1, 2) VT 210

*Advent Hymn	<i>Bless'd Be the God of Israel</i>	VT 223
Children's Story		Eric Schrag
Worship Music	<i>Joy to the World</i> ~arr. Marlatt	Gabriel's Trumpets
Morning Prayer		Pastor Lois Harder
Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings		First Fruits Giving
Offertory	<i>Hark, The Glad Sound</i> ~arr. Held	Jared Janzen
*Prayer of Dedication		Pastor Caleb Yoder

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Gospel Reading	Matthew 3:1-12	Marilyn Unruh Flaming
Song of Confession	<i>Come Now, O God</i>	VT 143
Prophetic Reading	Isaiah 11:1-10	Marilyn Unruh Flaming
Message	<i>"Preparing ourselves"</i>	Pastor Caleb
Responding to the Gospel	<i>(open sharing)</i>	

SENT AS GOD'S PEOPLE

*Song of Sending	<i>Prepare the Way! the Prophet Called</i>	VT 220
*Benediction		Pastor Caleb
*Postlude	<i>Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel</i> ~arr. Leavitt	Jared Janzen

*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.

This service made use of resources from *Leader*, Fall 2022; and *Vol. 5 Advent-Christmas-Epiphany* of the Soil and the Seed Project.

A note about the worship table: Restoration is near and this year the Advent table is progressive. Restoration is a process. Each week the display will change slightly as we prepare for the birth of Jesus. It serves as a visual reminder that we are moving from darkness toward light (illumination) helping us to see more clearly.

Members of Gabriel's Trumpets: Kyle Unruh, Evan Koch, Braden Unruh, Jacob Schrag, Tim Regier, Eric Schrag, Arlin Buller

Song Leader: Renae Schmidt Peters

Greeters: North – Kyle & Justine Unruh; South – Kevin & Bonnie Gaeddert

Visual Arts: Tina Schrag

Christmas Decorations: Friends and Followers Sunday School Class

Nursery Staff: Susan Nafziger, Emma Schroeder, Nicole Hein

Worship Technology: Myron Goertzen, Steve Goertzen, Delton Voth

November 27 Attendance: Sunday School – 86; Worship -- 112 in person, 13 Zoom households, 18 YouTube views

November 27 Offering: Sunday School – \$21.07; First Fruits – \$7,863.54

Questions for Reflection

1. What reactions do you have to John the Baptist? To his words of judgment?
2. Who did John the Baptist think the Messiah would be? Did Jesus match his expectations?
3. What does it look like to prepare ourselves in order to be able to receive God's Messiah?

Next Sunday is the third Sunday of Advent. The Chancel Choir will lead a service of lessons and carols.

Praying for our Congregation and Beyond

- ❖ We're grateful for the covenant of marriage celebrated yesterday by Lucas Hiebert and Michelle Schrag at Eden Mennonite Church in Moundridge. May God bless them richly in this new chapter of their lives.
- ❖ We pray for those still recovering from illness and we're grateful for healing that has happened.
- ❖ We pray for students and teachers in the busyness of the final weeks of the fall semester, including music concerts, projects, tests, and basketball games.
- ❖ We pray for families in need in our community seeking to celebrate Christmas while shouldering expenses.
- ❖ From the Mennonite Mission Network Prayer Vine - A worker based in the United Kingdom travels widely throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East and North America to encourage Muslim-Christian relationships. She appreciates prayer support during her extensive travels and for those who translate for her, as she communicates counter-cultural concepts.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 4 - Second Sunday of Advent

9:30 am Sunday School

10:30 am – Worship

3:00 pm – Newton Community Children's Choir Concert under the direction of Jill Siebert

4:00 pm – Chapel service at Bethesda – Pastors Caleb and Lois

Tuesday, December 6

9:30 am – Staff Meeting

Wednesday, December 7

Midweek Activities (final Midweek before Christmas)

7:30 pm – Board of Trustees

Sunday, December 11 - Third Sunday of Advent

9:30 am – Sunday School

10:30 am – Worship – A Service of Lessons and Carols

7:00 pm – Christmas Brass Concert

COMING EVENTS

- Dec 12 1:00 – 6:00 pm -- Blood Drive at Goessel Church
Dec 14 6:30 pm – Christmas Eve Program Practice
Dec 16 2:00 pm – Senior Coffee
Dec 21 6:30 pm – Christmas Eve Program Practice
Dec 24 7:00 pm -- Christmas Eve Service
Dec 25 Christmas Day -- No Sunday School – Worship at 10:30 am
Dec 26 & 30 Church Offices Closed
Jan 1 New Year's Day – No Sunday School – Worship at 10:30 am
Jan 2 Church Offices Closed
Jan 20 Annual Reports due in Church Office
Jan 22 Q & A on 2023 Spending Plan
Feb 5 Annual Meeting

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There are two **Advent devotional resources** in the back of the sanctuary:

- Advent at Home 2022 worship guide, "Restoration is Near!" is a guide for devotions at home during Advent and oriented toward families or households.
- The Soil and Seed Project has short weekly liturgies paired with original music for use at home or in small groups, Sunday school classes, etc. The booklet, song lyrics, and instructions for accessing the music are in the back of the sanctuary. You can also find the music on Spotify, YouTube, and Apple Music, or download directly from thesoilandtheseedproject.org

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 are available on the tree at the Crossroads Credit Union. Gifts will need to be brought back to the Credit Union by **Monday, December 12** and should be wrapped. 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.

Our group subscriptions to the magazine *Anabaptist World* needs to be updated. The cost for each subscription is \$39. If you have been part of our group subscription and wish to continue or if you would like to participate as a new reader, please return to Dwight M. Flaming a completed form (found in the lobby and also linked in the church email) plus your check of \$39 payable to Alexanderwohl by **December 11, 2022**.

Tis the season for giving our time and food to those in need. **We will be serving at New Hope Shelter, December 25 - 27.** The meals will be provided by Friends & Followers, Route 15 and Young Adult Sunday School classes. The sign-up sheet for the evening shift (5 -11 pm) is on the south lobby bulletin board. If you cannot serve, consider giving toward their wish list of current needs including: disposable vinyl gloves, coffee, creamer & sugar, Jello & pudding cups, fruit & granola bars, cookies, sliced meat & cheese, laundry pods, pillows & pillow cases, letter sized file folders, Pine-Sol, and Wal Mart or Dillion's Gift Cards. These items can be placed in the large box in the south lobby under the coat rack. Thank you for your support!

Everyone is invited to enjoy the McPherson Community Brass Choir under the direction of Jerry Toews, at Alexanderwohl on Sunday, December 11 at 7 pm. The Goessel High School Elbiata Singers, under the direction of Braden Unruh, will also be featured. A free-will offering will support local ministries. Sponsored by the Goessel Ministerial Alliance.

There will again be a **Sharing Time for children during the Christmas Eve program.** This has been a long-standing tradition in our church--it is strictly voluntary, for those who are interested in preparing a piece. Volunteer numbers could include a Christmas poem or recitation, sharing a Bible verse, a musical number (voice, piano, instrumental), etc. If your child/grandchild would like to participate in this part of the program, you may pick up a form located in the Sunday School office downstairs. Fill it out and bring it to the Christmas Eve program. Your child will hand it to the person leading the sharing time at the program. If you have any questions, please contact Susan Nafziger (620-386-0469 or nafziger@mtelco.net).