

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Volume LXVIII

December 11, 2022

No. 50



THIRD SUNDAY OF *Advent*

Welcome to this service of Lessons and Carols! This morning we will worship through the Biblical story in Scripture and song, from creation, to words of prophecy, then words from the epistles and finally the narrative of Jesus' advent and birth from the Gospel of Luke. May God be praised in our worship!

GATHERING TO WORSHIP

Gathering *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus* ~ Behnke Marcia Brubaker
In the Bleak Midwinter ~ Cherwien
Go Tell It on the Mountain ~ Kerr

Welcome

Pastor Lois Harder

Opportunities for Celebration and Service

Call to Worship and Invocation (by Melody Zimmerman)

Leader: In the wilderness, in the dry places, in our lack, God will meet us.

All: *The redeemed will rejoice*

Leader: JOY - like water bubbling up in the desert

JOY - like blossoms in the wilderness

JOY - like a song filling the air – the glory of the LORD on display

All: *The redeemed will rejoice*

Leader: For God will come and save and lead us home with singing.

Lighting of the Advent Candles+

Dwight and Tammy Flaming

Advent Hymn

O Come, O Come, Immanuel (v. 1, 7)

VT 210

***Gathering Hymn**

Hark! the Glad Sound!

VT 217

Children's Story

Eric Schrag

Morning Prayer

Pastor Caleb Yoder

Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings

First Fruits Giving

Offertory *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* ~ Burkhardt Marcia Brubaker

***Prayer of Dedication**

Pastor Lois

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Reading Genesis 1-2:3 excerpts

Ben, Tina, Noah, and Levi Schrag

Choir *Planets Humming as They Wander* [VT 175]
~ text by Heather Josselyn-Cranson, music by Sally Ann Morris

Reading Isaiah 35:1-10 Craig, Jody, Javin Schmidt and Karl Raddatz
Congregation *Light Dawns on a Weary World* VT 205

Reading James 5:7-10 Jake and Shari Wiens
Choir *We Come* [VT 225] ~Jim Croegaert, David Adam, Susan See

Reading 1 John 4:7-12, 18-19 Cambry and Megan Duerksen
Choir *Love Came Down at Christmas*
~ text by Christina Rossetti, music by Howard Helvey

Reading Luke 1:26-55 Emma & Mallory Schroeder, Pastors Caleb & Lois
Congregation *The Angel Gabriel Called Mary Blessed* VT 221
Verses 1-2

Reading Luke 2:1-7 Colby and Brendon Nafziger
***Congregation** *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* VT 261

Reading Luke 2:8-12 Pastor Caleb
Choir *Night Long Awaited* [VT 242] ~ music by Ariel Ramírez
text by Félix César Luna, translated by Adam Tice

Reading Luke 2:13-20 Pastors Caleb and Lois
Choir *Gloria* ~ Franz Joseph Haydn, arr. Patrick Liebergen
Translation: "Glory to God in the highest"

SENT AS GOD'S PEOPLE

***Benediction** John 1:1-5, 14 (NRSV) Pastor Caleb
All: *And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.*

***Benediction Hymn** *O Come, All Ye Faithful* VT 241
vs. 1 & 2 in harmony; vs. 3 & 4 in unison

***Postlude** *Joy to the World* ~ Uehlein Marcia Brubaker

*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.

Song Leader and Chancel Choir Director: Renae Schmidt Peters

Pianist | Organist: Marcia Brubaker

Greeters: North – Chelan & Megan Duerksen

South – Dennis & Norma Duerksen

Visual Arts: Tina Schrag

Christmas Decorations: Friends and Followers Sunday School Class

Nursery Staff: Brody Schroeder, Emmalyn Schroeder, Kim Voth

Worship Technology: Steve Unruh, Steve Goertzen, Delton Voth

December 4 Attendance: Sunday School – 105; Worship -- 132 in person, 16 Zoom households, 14 YouTube views

December 4 Offering: Sunday School – \$115.93; First Fruits – \$7,581.21

Praying for our Congregation and Beyond

- ❖ We pray for those in our congregation who may be ill or struggling with grief or depression in this holiday season. May they know your comforting love, God.
- ❖ We give thanks for Phyllis Voth's recuperation and return to Bethesda.
- ❖ Bolivia Mennonite Church has 12 congregations and church plants around Santa Cruz. Pray for the growth of the church and its youth, as they mature in their commitments to Jesus.
- ❖ MCC requests prayers for those working with people who are displaced in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. We pray for Christ's peace and calm in the midst of tension and anger there.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 11 - Third Sunday of Advent

9:00 am – Choir warm up in the choir loft and readers gather in the chapel

9:30 am -- Sunday School

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

7:00 pm – Christmas Brass Concert

Monday, December 12

1:00 – 6:00 pm – Blood Drive at Goessel Church

5:45 pm – Board of Mission and Service

7:00 pm – Church Council

Tuesday, December 13

4:30 pm – Prayer Team

Wednesday, December 14

9:30 am – Staff Meeting

No Regular Midweek Activities

6:30 - 7:30 pm – Christmas Eve Program Practice for Ages 3 – 8th Grade

Thursday, December 15

5:00 pm – Board of Deacons

Friday, December 16

2:00 pm – Senior Coffee – Singing group from Schowalter Villa, Hesston

Sunday, December 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:30 am – Sunday School

Short Congregational Meeting – Gifts Discernment Ballot

10:30 am – Worship

COMING EVENTS

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 25, 26, 27 Serve at New Hope Shelter, Newton

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

Budget Update -- Based on previous giving history for December and after estimating our expenses as we close out the year, we are within \$7,000 to \$10,000 of meeting all of the expenses to fund our local church ministries for 2022. Thank you for the generous giving during the past several months to get this close to covering the expenses of continued ministry. If the estimates are close to correct, we would still be below our giving goal but expenses have also been kept under budget as well. Please consider how you can help reduce this budget deficit during the final weeks of December. Everyone's continued generosity is vital to support Alexanderwohl's ongoing ministry in the Goessel community.

All gifts purchased for the Christmas Giving Tree should be wrapped and brought to the Credit Union by **Monday, December 12**. The credit union personnel will assist with the checking in process.

It's time to renew our group subscriptions to the magazine *Anabaptist World*. 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 **today (December 11)**.

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 join us for the annual Christmas Eve program on Saturday, December 24, at 7 p.m. The children and junior high youth will be presenting an in-person program, *Christmas at the Stable: The Animals Tell Their Stories*. The drama portion of the program is based on the book of the same title, written by local author, Kimberly K. Funk, and features the familiar song, "The Friendly Beasts." There will also be congregational carol singing, volunteer sharing time, and a candle-lighting service. A Zoom option will also be provided.

There will 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).