

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Volume LXIX

December 17, 2023

No. 50



Welcome to Alexanderwohl on this Third Sunday of Advent! This message this morning is from the prophet Ezra. Ezra was with the Hebrew people as they returned from exile and rebuilt the Temple. There was loud rejoicing as they worshiped together and recalled God's constant presence with them.

GATHERING TO WORSHIP

Gathering Music

Deck the Halls ~arr. Marlatt Gabriel's Trumpets
Christmas Fantasy ~arr. Frank
Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful ~arr. Frank

Welcome

EIRoy Wiens

Opportunities for Celebration and Service

Call to Worship and Invocation+

Psalm 47, adapted

One: Clap your hands, all you people; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

Many: For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome,

All: a great king over all the earth...

One: God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

Many: Sing praises to God, sing praises;

One: sing praises to our King, sing praises.

Many: For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

One: God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

Many: The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

One: For the shields of the earth belong to God;

All: God is highly exalted!

*Gathering Hymn

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns

VT 101

Lighting the Advent Candles

Laura, Jared, Ellie, Logan and Cody Unrau

Advent Hymn

Unexpected and Mysterious (vs. 1, 3)

VT 229

Children's Story

Suzanne Meier

Worship Music Carol of the Bells ~arr. Shaw/Valerio Gabriel's Trumpets
Morning Prayer Pastor Lois Harder

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-4, 10-13 ElRoy Wiens

Message Pastor Rosie Jantz
"Rebuilding: A New Opportunity to be Faithful"

Song of Response Hope Is a Candle VT 211

Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Wachet Auf ~arr. Miller Karen Unruh

***Prayer of Dedication** Pastor Lois

SENT AS GOD'S PEOPLE

***Song of Sending** Sleepers, Wake VT 226

***Benediction** Pastor Lois

***Postlude** Joy to the World ~arr. Marlatt Gabriel's Trumpets

*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.

Song Leader: Kyle Unruh

Gabriel's Trumpets: Kyle Unruh, Evan Koch, Aaron Ratzlaff, Jacob Schrag, Eric Schrag, Arlin Buller

Greeters: North – Bryant and Christiana Miller
South – Larry Voth

Visual Arts: Tina Schrag

Nursery Staff: Bryant and Chrystiana Miller, Natalie Church

Worship Technology: DeAlan Unrau, Lynel Unrau, Delton Voth

December 10 Attendance: Sunday School – 103; Worship -- 137 in person; 11 Zoom Households

December 10 Offering: Sunday School -- \$16.92; First Fruits – \$8,944.02

Next Sunday is Christmas Eve – the fourth Sunday of Advent. The lessons will come from the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke. Pastor Lois will preach.

Praying for Our Congregation and Beyond

- ❖ We pray for Steve and Sandy Banman and their family as they grieve the passing of Steve's dad, Jim Banman. Jim died on Saturday, December 9.
- ❖ As holiday travel begins we pray for safety to and from our destinations.
- ❖ We pray for those who are lonely or grieving and for whom the holidays are difficult.
- ❖ We pray for those in our communities who live with fear or violence; be particularly near to them.

- ❖ We pray for those around the world who have been displaced from their homes by war, hunger, lack of enough and are seeking safety and rest.
- ❖ We pray for local, national and world leaders; give them open eyes, open hearts, wisdom and compassion.

+This week pray for: Darla Banman and Gary Lyndaker, Kevin and Irene Lehrman, Bryant and Chrystiana Miller family, Marilyn Schmidt, Doug and Vanessa Schroeder family

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 17 – Third Sunday of Advent

9:30 am – Sunday School
 Short Congregational Meeting
 10:30 am – Worship

Tuesday, December 19

9:00 am – Staff Meeting

Wednesday, December 20

No Meal or Regular Midweek Activities
 Christmas Eve Program Practice – Large Group Rehearsal
 6:30-7:00 pm – 2 year olds through Kindergarten
 6:30-8:00 pm – Grades 1-8

Sunday, December 24 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:30 am – Sunday School
 10:30 am – Worship
 7:00 pm – Christmas Eve Service

COMING EVENTS

Dec 25-Jan 1	Church Offices Closed
Dec 27	No Midweek Activities – Christmas Break
Dec 31	Donuts and cider during the SS hour for JH, HS & adults (see announcement)
Jan 3	No Midweek Activities – Christmas Break
Jan 7	“Getting to know Pastor Luann” during the SS hour for JH, HS and adults – Fellowship Hall
Jan 10	Midweek Activities Resume
Jan 10	Youth Parent Meeting at the Youth House, 7:00 pm
Jan 17	Annual Reports for 2023 due in church office
Jan 21	2024 Budget Q & A during the Sunday School hour
Feb 4	Annual Meeting following worship and lunch

ANNOUNCEMENTS

During the Sunday School hour on Sunday, December 31, there will be a time of fellowship with donuts and cider. Children will be invited to pick up their snacks and go to their SS classes. Junior high, high school, college age and adults are invited to mingle and fellowship during this hour.

There will be a Sharing Time for children during the Christmas Eve program. It is voluntary. If your child/grandchild would like to participate, pick up a form from 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. If you have any questions, please contact Susan Nafziger (620-386-0469 or nafziger@mtelco.net).

Luann Yutzy will begin as our transitional pastor on January 6. During the Sunday School hour on January 7, all junior high, high school youth and adult classes are invited to the fellowship hall to welcome Luann and learn more about her. Refreshments will be served. Heidi Regier Kreider from Western District Conference will install Luann during the worship service. Details about her shared schedule between Salina Mennonite and Alexanderwohl will be shared as they are developed.

Many thanks to the Route 15 Sunday school class for decorating our worship space so beautifully!

Natalie Church is collecting non-perishable food donations and cleaning supplies for the New Hope Shelter in Newton. She has chosen this as her STAR event for FCCLA (Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America). STAR stands for Students Taking Action with Recognition. These are competitive events in which members are recognized for proficiency and achievement in chapter and individual projects, leadership skills, and career preparation. Natalie's goal is to assist the homeless population of Harvey County with food bags when they leave New Hope Shelter so they do not leave empty handed. Her other goal is to make it to Nationals with this STAR event. Please help her fill the wrapped box in the south lobby with non-perishable food donations and cleaning supplies through the end of the year. Thank you for your help!