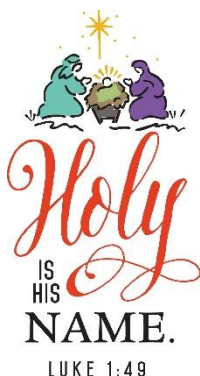


Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Volume LXIX

December 24, 2023

No. 51



Welcome to Alexanderwohl on this Fourth Sunday of Advent! This morning we hear the good news from the Gospel of Luke! John the Baptist's birth is foretold, Zechariah prophesies and Jesus is born... Glory to God in the highest!

GATHERING TO WORSHIP

Gathering Music *I Saw Three Ships* ~arr. Page Mary Schmidt
 Angels We Have Heard on High ~arr. Page
 Joy to the World ~arr. Bock

Welcome Marilyn Unruh Flaming

Opportunities for Celebration and Service

Call to Worship and Invocation+ VT 234

One: The angel said, "Do not be afraid! Look!
I bring good news to you – Your savior is born today in the city of David. He is Christ the Lord." A great angelic assembly was praising God, saying,

All: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those who please God."

***Gathering Hymn** *Angels We Have Heard on High* VT 249

Lighting the Advent Candles

Renae, Jason, Myra, and Celia Peters

Advent Hymn *Unexpected and Mysterious* VT 229

Children's Story Karl Brubaker

Worship Music *Psalm 23* ~arr. Girl Named Tom
Julianna, Jacob, and Timothy Schrag

Morning Prayer Pastor Lois Harder

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scripture Luke 1:5-13; 57-80 Marilyn Unruh Flaming

Hymn of Response *Light Dawns on a Weary World* VT 205

Scripture Luke 2:1-20 Marilyn Unruh Flaming

Message "Thoughts from an old, grateful prophet" Pastor Lois

Song of Response	<i>Angels, from the Realms of Glory</i>	VT 265
Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings		
Offertory	<i>Silent Night! Holy Night! ~Hustad</i>	Mary Schmidt
*Prayer of Dedication		Pastor Lois

SENT AS GOD'S PEOPLE

*Song of Sending	<i>Oh, How Joyfully</i>	VT 254
*Benediction		Pastor Lois
*Postlude	<i>Gloria ~arr. Bock</i>	Mary Schmidt

*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: Marcia Brubaker

Greeters: North – Myron and Pat Schmidt
South – Myron and Ruth Goertzen

Visual Arts: Tina Schrag

Christmas Decorations: Route 15 Sunday School class

Nursery Staff: Susan Nafziger, Laura Unrau

Worship Technology: DJ Flaming, Steve Goertzen, Delton Voth

December 17 Attendance: Sunday School – 108; Worship -- 155 in person;
8 Zoom Households

December 17 Offering: Sunday School -- \$27.88; First Fruits – \$4,853.00

Next Sunday is the first Sunday in the Christmas season! There will be time for fellowship during the Sunday school hour with donuts and cider. We'll worship with scripture readings and singing of Christmas hymns with the Harder family accompanying the singing.

Praying for Our Congregation and Beyond

- ❖ We pray for Meribeth Schmidt, Cindy Hastings, Russ Schmidt and Bart Shulman and all of the extended family and friends who are grieving the loss of Rannie Schmidt. We are grateful for Rannie's life - faithful and exemplary for all who knew and loved him!
- ❖ We pray for those who are struggling with medical issues or treatments; May God grant healing and strength.
- ❖ Be present, God, with those who feel the depth of the longest night in their hearts and souls. May your Love be transformative in the midst of the shadows.
- ❖ O God, help us to create spaces in the hustle and bustle to be attentive to the ways Jesus' arrival changes the world, bringing your Hope and Light.
- ❖ We pray for Palestinians and Israelis, for Ukrainians and Russians, for those in situations of war, fear and violence; may the Prince of Peace be welcomed in their midst.

+This week pray for: Neal Brubaker and Carly Wyse, LaVern and Arlene Goossen, Ann Hiebert, Jerald and Patricia Voth, Verney and Janice Voth

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 24 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:30 am – Sunday School

10:30 am – Worship

6:40 pm – Piano Prelude for Christmas Eve Service

7:00 pm – Christmas Eve Service

Monday, December 25 – Monday, January 1, 2024

Church Offices Closed

Sunday, December 31

9:30 am – Fellowship time for JH, HS and adults (see announcement)

10:30 am – Worship

COMING EVENTS

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 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

The motion “that we set aside the requirement in our constitution prescribing a set number of members for each board for 2024” passed.

All individuals on the affirmation ballot last Sunday were strongly affirmed and will begin their positions January 1, 2024:

Church Treasurer – Dwight M. Flaming

Board of Deacons – Jenny Fast, Karen Unruh

Board of Worship – Bryant Miller, Kevin Gaeddert

Board of Trustees – 1 position open to fill

Board of Mission and Service – John Fast, Nathaniel Schmucker

Board of Christian Education – Bonnie Gaeddert, Ann Hiebert

Gifts Facilitating – Jenny Fast

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.

The church offices will be closed Monday, December 25 – Monday, January 1. For pastoral needs this week, contact Pastor Lois.

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.

Budget Support Update - Thank you everyone for your generous support during 2023 with your First Fruits gifts. We have worked together during this year to adjust to changes and keeping the ministries of Alexanderwohl supported financially. With your support, as we finish the year, it is anticipated that we will be able to meet our expenses and support our mission partners according to our plan. Thank you!

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. 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. 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!

If you would like a printed paper copy of the 2023 annual reports, please sign up in either lobby by Sunday, January 21, 2024. Reports will be emailed to those who have email.

As you have updates (addresses, emails, cell phone or land line numbers) for the 2024 Church Yearbook, turn them in to the church office.