**December 17, 2017 8:30 & 10:45**

**The Third Sunday in Advent**

Referring to John the Baptist, today’s Gospel reading states that *“he himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. (John 1:8)”* John’s wilderness experience is his preparation for Jesus. Jesus’ wilderness experience is his preparation for his ministry. What is our wilderness experience preparing us for?

**WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME …**

**Gathering Music**

 **Hymnal 220 Angels from the realms of glory** *Regent Square*

 **Hymnal 229 Infant holy, infant lowly** *W Zlobie Lezy*

**Greeting**

 Leader: Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors!

 **People: That the King of glory may come in.** *Psalm 24:7*

**Announcements**

**Choral Introit** 10:45 Alleluia! My spirit rejoices in God my Savior! Alleluia! *Karle Erickson*

**Call to Worship**

Leader: You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you

 to wake from sleep.

**People: For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers;**

**the night is far gone, the day is near.**

Leader: Let us then lay aside the works of darkness

**People: And put on the armor of light.** *Romans 13:11-12*

 **… TO GIVE PRAISE TO GOD …**

**Hymnal 211 O Come, O come, Emmanuel** (stanzas 1-4, standing) *Veni Emanuel*

**Opening Prayer** (in unison)

**Ever present God, you taught us that the night is far spent and the day is at hand.**

**Grant that we may ever be found watching for the coming of your Son.**

**Save us from undue love of the world, that we may wait with patient hope for the day of the Lord, and so abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may not be ashamed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.** *Church of Scotland, 20th Century*

**Silent Prayer**

**Worship & Song 3129** *Aihu*

**God of all living, God of all loving, God of the seedling, the snow, and the sun,**

 **teach us, deflect us, Christ, reconnect us, using us gently and making us one.**

**… TO CELEBRATE THE FAMILY OF FAITH …**

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath**  (seated)  8:30 Rob and Jane Spicher

 10:45 Jennifer, Maddy and Lauren Thompson

**Worship & Song 3047 God Almighty, we are waiting** (stanza 3, seated)*Hyfrydol*

**God the Spirit, we are waiting for your presence here and now.**

 **Humbled by our sinful weakness, at your mercy we will bow.**

 **Search our hearts and make us ready, speak in language strong and mild,**

 **help each one of us, your people, to receive you like a child.**

**The Sign of Peace** *Please pass the peace to your neighbors as a sign of reconciliation and love.*

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

 People: And also with you.

Gathering Song *James Ritchie*

 This, this is where children belong,

 welcomed as part of the worshiping throng.

 Water, God’s Word, bread and cup, prayer and song:

 This is where children belong.

 WORDS AND MUSIC: James Ritchie ©1999 Abingdon Press

**Message for Young Disciples** Rev. Thomas Q. Strandburg

 (All children are invited. Please sing as children come forward.)

After the children’s message at the 10:45 service, children ages 3 - 3rd grade may attend **Kids Praise** in the Welcome Center. Children will be escorted to and from Kids Praise by teachers. They will return to the Sanctuary near the end of the service, and parents may meet them.

Scripture Reading 8:30 Judi Phelps

 10:45 Sara Mercer

 A Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Joyful proclamations

**Pastoral Prayer**

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**… TO HEAR GOD’S WORD PROCLAIMED …**

**Celtic Alleluia** **Alleluia** (sing 4 times, standing) *O’Carroll and Walker*

Scripture Reading

 A Lesson from the Gospel

 John 1:6-8, 19-28 John’s witness

**Response**

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**.

**Sermon** “John, the Doppelgänger” Rev. Thomas Q. Strandburg

**Offertory Duet** 8:30Rise up, shepherd, and follow *arranged by Mark Hayes*

**Offertory Anthem** 10:45 A Savior from on High *Stephen Paulus*

 O sweet was the song the Virgin sang when she to Bethlehem Judah came,

 and was delivered of a son, and Jesus was his name.

 Refrain: Lulee, lully, lullo, lullaby. And Jesus was his name.

 ’O sweet babe,’ sang she, ‘my son.’ And so a Savior is born,

 who was given from on high to visit us that were forlorn. Refrain

**Hymn 219 What child is this** (stanza 3, standing)*Greensleeves*

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to won him;**

 **the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.**

 **This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;**

 **haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary**

**Prayer of Dedication**

**Hymnal 240** 8:30 **Hark! The herald angels sing**  (standing)*Mendelssohn*

**Tableaux** 10:45

 **First Lesson** Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem Luke 2: 1-5

 **Hymnal 230 O little town of Bethlehem** (stanza 1) *St. Louis*

 **Second Lesson** Saint Luke tells of the birth of Jesus Luke 2: 6-7

 **Anthem** Let all mortal flesh keep silence*arranged by Carlton R. Young*

 **Third Lesson** Gabriel announces to the shepherds Luke 2: 8-12

 **Hymnal 238 Angels we have heard on high** (stanza 2) *Gloria*

**Fourth Lesson** The angels Luke 2: 13-14

**Hymnal 238 Angels we have heard on high** (stanza 1)*Gloria*

**Anthem** Angels’ Carol *John Rutter*

**Fifth Lesson** The shepherds visit the Christ Child Luke 2: 15-20

 **Anthem** What child is this*arranged by Dale Warland*

**Sixth Lesson** The wise men are led by the star to Jesus Matthew 2: 7-12

 **Anthem** Where shepherds lately knelt*Craig Courtney*

**Hymnal 234 O come, all ye faithful** (stanzas 1-3) *Adeste fideles*

**… TO GO REJOICING IN GOD’S NAME!**

**Benediction**

 Leader: A young woman is with child and shall bear a son.

 He shall be called Emmanuel

 **People: We go forth with anticipation and longing. Share the good news, Emmanuel is coming. We hear, believe, accept and obey the Advent promise that God is with us.**

**Congregational Response #211** *Veni Emmanuel* **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel**.

**Today’s Services**

**The altar flowers** are given in loving memory of what would have been Ginnie and Bill Smith’s 75th wedding anniversary on December 18th; and **the chancel flowers** are given in celebration of Andrea Megan Finniss and Jordan Wade Moran’s marriage on December 16th, by their daughter and mother, Cyndy Smith Finniss.

**Special music at 8:30** is provided by John Esaias and Kirby Dilworth, members of our Chancel Choir.

**Special music at 10:45** is provided by the Chancel Choir with flautist Jennifer Barnabei, harpist Julia Scott, oboist Renate Sakins and Amy Strandburg playing handbells. The presence of the instrumentalists is made possible through contributions to the Friends of Music Fund.

**Acolytes** Cary Young and Luke Grabowski

**Greeters** **8:30** Bob and Beverly Fester **10:45** Barbara Watson

**Worship options for children** We encourage children to participate in the **Children’s Sermon** at both services, and in **Kids Praise** during the 10:45 service. **Nursery services** are offered in Room 204 of the Education Building. Ask ushers or greeters and follow signs for direction.

**Podcasts of Sunday Sermons** Would you like to share this morning’s sermon with a friend or did you miss a Sunday? Catch up on the messages from MLUMC with a podcast of Pastor Tom’s and others’ Sunday sermons. Sermons can be found at http:// mlumc.buzzsprout.com or navigate to the site from the link on our webpage, [www.mlumc.org](http://www.mlumc.org). Sermons also will be posted to iTunes. Full recordings of the service are available upon request.

**Flower Donations needed for January 7** Honor or remember a loved one or friend with a Sunday flower arrangement donation for January 7 or other Sundays and holidays throughout the year. Contact Lizzie Diller, 412-860-3614.

**Tableaux Participants**

Readers Laura Ward and Jim Young

The Holy Family Stephanie, Kirk and Elizabeth Lowe

Gabriel Rachel Dale

Angels Addison Alexander, Agnes Alexander, Teddy Alexander, Hannah Baker, Samantha Baker, Faith Carvender, Andrea DeLuca, Abigail Lowe,

 Emily Shoff, McKenzi Shotsberger, Lydia Slater, Anastasia Sunder,

 Clayton Sunder, Elyse Sunder, Maddy Thompson

Shepherds Liam DeLuca, Jacob Lowe, Joseph Lowe, Evan Shoff, Asher Ward,

 Silas Ward

Kings Grant Carvender, Russell Dale, Xavier Sanchez

Production Staff Donna Chesleigh, Caryl Drabick, Laura Shoff, Jennifer Thompson

**Today’s Scriptures**

**Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11**

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; 2to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; 3to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

4They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

8For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. 9Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

10I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

**John 1:6-8, 19-28**

6There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

19This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” 20He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” 21And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” 22Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” 23He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’” as the prophet Isaiah said. 24Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. 25They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” 26John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, 27the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” 28This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

**Keep in Prayer**

**Convalescing in Care Facilities**

Leila Berkey, Asbury Heights

Ed Clarke, Asbury Place

Earl Killian, Asbury Heights

Pat Seitz, Concordia

**Convalescing at Home**

Shirley Baker, Mary Birks, Jean Boyer,

Mary Caldwell, Carolyn Dagg,

Charles Hohing, David Lewis,

Susan Lichtenfels, Robert Murray,

Betty Trout

**In the Military**

Jason Boyer, SPC Natalie Brown

**Maj. Zachary Allen Finch, USMC**James Iantelli, 1st Lt. Jaskiewicz
S. Sgt. Keith Kimmell, Adam Kmick
PFC Brendan Lamport
Sgt. Matthew McConahan, Thomas Orda
David Poncel, Sgt. Steven Reitz
Capt. Scott B. Rushe, Pastor Rick Townes
Maj. Azizi Wesmiller

Maj. Matthew C. Wesmiller
Sgt. Keith Scott Winkowski

Sgt. Michael Zimmerman

**Dormont Fire: A Thank You to the MLUMC Congregation, Community and Friends**

You may remember the tragic fire in Dormont this past October. Just down the street from MLUMC, on Peermont Avenue, one person died and several people were injured in a fire, including children and family members. This congregation and church friends and neighbors have responded generously.

Last week, Pastor Tom sent the family who suffered this tragedy a check for $2,451.86. The financial gift represents the proceeds of our community fall festival, a contribution from our Family Fund, as well as individual donations from many parishioners.

In a letter to the family, Pastor Tom wrote, “Your family has continued to be upheld in our thoughts and our prayers, ever since the tragic fire of this past fall. We pray that God’s peace has surrounded you in your time of grief, and that God’s healing power has helped to heal the physical wounds that have been suffered by your family members. We also hope that your family is well on its way to resupplying the material necessities of life, after such a devastating loss.”

Let us join with Pastor Tom in continuing to pray for the survivors and victims of the fire. And thank you to the congregation of Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church, community members, and friends for showing such love for your neighbors.

**A New Format for Hands and Hearts** Hands and Hearts announces a new format for the New Year  -  Beginning in January Hands and Hearts will meet only on the first Thursday of the month from 9am to noon.  This will allow more time to complete projects and participants can drop in when their time permits.  Please join us for fellowship, education and even some fun – we always have sewing and non-sewing projects available.  Our first meeting will be Thursday, January 4th  9am to noon.  For further information, contact Caryl Drabick  at drabicks@verizon.net  or 412-344-5312.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 THRU SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23**

**SUNDAY 12/17**

 8:30 am Worship Sanner Chapel

 9:30 am Sunday School for All Ages/Coffee Café Various/Brookline Parlor

 10:45 am Worship Sanctuary

 Kids Praise Welcome Center

 11:45 am Youth Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

 5 pm Dinner and Caroling Wesley Hall and Neighborhood

 6:30 pm Boy Scout Board of Reviews Various

**MONDAY 12/18**

 6:30 pm Community Events and Outreach Committee Wesley Hall

 7 pm Chapel Bells Rehearsal Bell Room

**TUESDAY 12/19**

 7 pm Boy Scout Troop #23 Asbury Center

**WEDNESDAY 12/20**

 9:30 am Bishop’s Advent Study Wesley Hall

 7 pm Cub Scout Pack 870 Asbury Center

 7 pm Trustees Wesley Hall

**THURSDAY 12/21**

 9:30 am Circle Faith Wesley Hall

 12 pm Rebecca Circle Wesley Hall

 6:30 pm Promise Bells Bell Room

**FRIDAY 12/22**

 9:30 am Women’s Bible Study Room 102

 6:30 pm Cub Scouts, Arrow of Light Asbury Center