**December 16, 2018 8:30 & 10:45**

**3rd Sunday in Advent**

*“The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem”*

After Mary received word that she was going to give birth to a child – to the long-awaited Messiah – she was likely confused and terrified. With whom could she discuss this incredible news? She travels to see her cousin Elizabeth, who is expecting an unusual birth of her own.

**WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME …**

**Gathering Music**

 **Hymnal 219 What child is this** (seated) *Greensleeves* **Hymnal 220 Angels from the realms of glory**  *Regent Square*

**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 Prepare the way of the Lord. Make straight his paths *Karle Erickson*

**Call to Worship**

Pastor: 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.**

Pastor**:** 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 Emmanuel*

**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 3119** (standing) *Take, O take*

 **Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be;**

 **set your seal upon my heart and live in me.**

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

**Advent Candle Lighting** (seated) **8**:30 Scott, Natalie, and Madeline Miller

 10:45 Eric, Courtney, Dillon, Olivia, and Emily Schmidt

**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**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

 **People: And also with you.**

**Gathering Song**

 **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.**

**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 through 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.

**… TO HEAR GOD’S WORD PROCLAIMED …**

Scripture Reading 8:30 Judi Phelps 10:45 Barbara Watson

 A Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures

 Zephaniah 3:14-20 A word of hope to a people in despair

**Response**

 Leader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

 **People: Thanks be to God**.

**Pastoral Prayer**

**The Lord’s Prayer**

 **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Gospel Acclamation:** **Festival Alleluia** (standing) *James Chepponis*

 **Alleluia** (repeat 6 times)

Scripture Reading

 A Lesson from the Gospel

 Luke 1:39-45 Mary visits Elizabeth

**Response**

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**.

**… TO OFFER OUR GIFTS AND TO DEDICATE OUR LIVES …**

**Offertory Anthem** 10:45 He is born! a*rranged by Dan Forrest*

**Hymnal 219 What child is this** (stanza 3) *Greensleeves*

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own 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.**

**Sermon** “The Journey: Mary & Elizabeth” Rev. Thomas Q. Strandburg

**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** *Ríu, ríu, chíu* (nightingale sounds) *16th C. Spanish Carol, arr. Greenberg*

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

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

**Fourth Lesson** The angelsLuke 2: 13-14

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

 **Anthem** Angels we have heard on high *arranged by Donald McCullough*

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

 **Anthem** Mary’s Lullaby *John Rutter*

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

 **Anthem** Hark! the herald angels sing *arranged by Dan Forrest*

**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.**

**Hymnal 211** (refrain) *Veni Emmanuel*

 **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**Tableaux Participants**

Readers: Rich and Kathy Tremblay

The Holy Family: Justin and Carey McClintock and Cora McClintock

Gabriel: Anna Rhoton

Shepherds: Asher Ward, Silas Ward, Jacob Lowe, Xavier Sanchez

Kings: Josh Kelly, Jacob Cerneskie, Grant Carvendar

Angels: Emma Purtill, Abby Purtill, Emily Shoff, Evan Shoff, Teddy Alexander, Gideon Alexander, Agnes Alexander, Addison Alexander, Lydia Slater, Olivia Schmidt, Lauren Thompson, Abigail Lowe, Cameron Grabowski, Abby Nagle, Julie Aneja, Andrea DeLuca, Liam DeLuca, Hannah Baker, Samantha Baker, Faith Carvender

Special Thanks to our Adult Helpers: Carrie Purtill, Donna Chesleigh, Jennifer Thompson, Caryl Drabick, Stacey Roslek, Sherry Faddoul, Cori DeLuca, and Marsha Manke

**Today’s Services**

**The flowers in the chancel** are given by Mary Garber in celebration of Christmas with our Zwickau friends.

**The altar flowers** are given in loving memory of what would have been Ginnie and Bill Smith's 76th wedding anniversary on December 18th and in celebration of the first wedding anniversary of Andrea Megan Finnis and Jordan Wade Moran, who were married a year ago today, by their daughter and mother, Cyndy Smith Finnis

**Special music at 10:45** is provided by the Chancel Choir with pianist Joy Crummie, oboist Renate Sakins, flautist Alyssa Pysola, percussionist Josh Dougherty, and soloists Kirby Dilworth, Kathleen Whittaker and Timothi Williams; conducted by Richard Minnotte. Our guest musicians are here thanks to the many contributors to the Friends of Music Fund.

**Acolytes** Anna Rhoton and Xavier Sanchez

**Greeters 8:45** Judi Phelps  **10:45** Luann Minnick

**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.

**Honor or remember a loved one with a flower donation.** The flowers that grace the sanctuary each week are generously donated by our church family members. This is a great way to honor or memorialize a special person, event, or milestone in your personal life or in the life of the church. If you are interested in donating flowers on a particular Sunday, contact Lizzie Diller , 412-860-3614. The cost is $30 for the altar, narthex, or columbarium, and $60 for the chancel.

**Today’s Scriptures**

**Zephaniah 3:14-20 A Song of Joy**
14 Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
   shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
   O daughter Jerusalem!
15 The Lord has taken away the judgements against you,
   he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;
   you shall fear disaster no more.
16 On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
   do not let your hands grow weak.

17 The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
   a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
   he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
18   as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,
   so that you will not bear reproach for it.
19 I will deal with all your oppressors
   at that time.
And I will save the lame
   and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
   and renown in all the earth.
20 At that time I will bring you home,
   at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
   among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
   before your eyes, says the Lord

**Luke 1:39-45 Mary Visits Elizabeth**

39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, 40where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit 42and exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. 43And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? 44For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. 45And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.’

**Keep in Prayer**

**Convalescing in Care Facilities**

Bonnie Amos, Providence Point

Ed Clarke, Asbury Place

John Katshir, Asbury Heights

Pat Seitz, Concordia

Carol Van Sickle, Marian Manor

Olivia Woods, Baptist Manor

**Convalescing at Home**

Bishop George Bashore, Jean Boyer,

Mary Caldwell, John Dean,

Joseph Festor, Leon Grant, Jr.,

Dave Lewis, Susan Lichtenfels,

Diane Shaw, Jinny Sheppard,

**In the Military**

Jason Boyer, SPC Natalie Brown,

**Maj. Zachary Allen Finch, USMC,**James Iantelli, 1st Lt. Jaskiewicz,
S. Sgt. Keith Kimmell,

Sgt. 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

**Condolences**

Sympathy is offered to the family of church member Betty Trout who passed away on Friday, December 6th, 2018, at the age of 96. Prayers of comfort can be sent to her son:

 Paul Steranka

 725 Churchill Drive

 Charleston, WV 25314

Betty’s life will be remembered at a memorial service in Sanner Chapel on Saturday, January 5th, at 3:00 p.m.

**Thank You**

The congregation received a thank you note from recipients of the Thanksgiving meal prepared and delivered from our church:

*Rev. Strandburg and congregation,*

 *We want to thank you and your fantastic volunteers who helped create a beautiful Thanksgiving dinner for so many of us. I myself was home alone and not cooking so I truly appreciated the meal. My neighbor Keith also was so impressed with the quality and quantity of the full meal and dessert, too. What lovely volunteers delivered, also. Thank you all so much*

 *Sincerely,*

 *Mary Lou Winkowski*

 *Keith Robinson*

 *(Creedmore Ave. Apartments)*

**New Code** We will be changing the door codes on Wednesday, December 26th.  Please call or visit the office for the new code.

**Communion Steward Volunteers Needed –** Volunteers are needed monthly to set up worship service locations for communion. Tasks include gathering supplies, assembling trays with plastic cups and bread, filling cups and positioning trays on the communion rails. Please call the church office if you are interested in helping: 412-531-7131.

**Podcasts of Sunday Sermons**  Catch up on 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.

**CALENDAR – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16 THRU SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22**

**SUNDAY 12/16**

 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

 6:30 pm Boy Scout Eagle Board of Review Epworth/102

**TUESDAY 12/18**

 2:00 pm Boy Scout Troop 23 Court of Honor Asbury Center

 7:00 pm Boy Scout Troop 23 Meeting Wesley/107

**WEDNESDAY 12/19**

 7:00 pm Cub Scout Pack Meeting Wesley Hall

**THURSDAY 12/20**

 5:30 pm Piano Recital Asbury Center

 7:00 pm Webelos Den Meeting Dormont Elementary

 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

**FRIDAY 12/21**

7:30 am Chartiers Center Asbury Center