**December 9, 2018 8:30 & 10:45**

**2nd Sunday in Advent**

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

Taken aback as Mary was by the visit of the angel Gabriel, and by the enormity of the task laid before her, there was someone else who was surely just as shocked by the news of a child to be born. This morning we turn our attention to the other half of this human equation – Mary’s fiancé, Joseph.

**WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME …**

**Gathering Music**

 **Hymnal 202 People, look East** (seated) *Besançon*

 **Hymnal 197 Ye who claim the faith of Jesus** (stanzas 1-2) *Julion*

**Greeting**

Leader: Sing to the Lord a new song! Sing to the Lord, all the earth!

**People: Declare God’s glory among the nations; declare his wondrous works among all people.** *Psalm 96:1, 3*

**Announcements**

**Choral Introit** 10:45 Alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord. Make straight his paths. *Karle Erickson*

**Call to Worship**

Leader: A voice cries in the wilderness:

**People: “Prepare the way of the Lord!”**

Leader: A challenge is uttered from on high:

**People: “Make God’s paths straight.”**

Leader: For every valley will be lifted up, and every mountain will be made low.

**People: Every crooked path will be made straight and every rough way will be made smooth.**

Leader: All will see the salvation of our God. *Adapted from Luke 3*

**… TO GIVE PRAISE TO GOD …**

**Hymnal 209 Blessed by the God of Israel** (standing) *Merle’s Tune*

**Opening Prayer** (in unison)

**God of love and renewal, enter the wilderness of our lives, and call us to prepare once more for the coming of your Son. Fill the valleys of our insecurities with hope, and bring low the mountains of our pride and conceit. Make straight the paths before us, and guide our feet in the ways of peace. Amen.** . *B. J. Beu*

**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 Barbara, Cameron, and Luke Grabowski

 10:45 Amy Strandburg and Zach Kurta

**Worship & Song 3047 God Almighty, we are waiting** (stanza 2, seated)*Hyfrydol*

 **God Incarnate, we are waiting for the feast day of your birth.**

 **Looking back and looking forward to the Christ’s return to earth.**

 **Help us to proclaim the gospel, ‘til the world is reconciled.**

 **Let us set your holy table for each woman, man, and child.**

**Celebration of Our Baptismal Covenant** (10:45) *UM Hymnal, p. 33*

**Introduction**

 **Presentation of Candidates**

 **Renunciation of Sin & Profession of Faith**

 **Sacrament of Baptism:** *Luke David Gerger, son of David & Blair Gerger*

**Congregational Response:**

Pastor: Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life

and include *Luke David* now before you in your care?

**People: With God's help we will proclaim the good news
      and live according to the example of Christ. We will surround** *Luke David* **with a community of love and forgiveness, that he may grow in his service to others.**

**We will pray for him, that he may be a true disciple, who walks in the way that leads to life.**

**Reception of New Members:** *Jim Arena,* *Catherine Balmer,* *Becky Cook,* *Anna Jefferies,* *Karen Jones, Sandi McPhee, and Samuel Schaub*

**Congregational Response: We give thanks for all that God has already given you and we welcome you in Christian love. As members together with you in the Body of Christ and in this congregation of The United Methodist Church, we renew our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness, that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.**

**The Sign of Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

 **People: And also with you.**

Offering of Teddy Bears

Those who have not already done so are invited to bring their gifts to the chancel area during the Passing of the Peace.

**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 Joeta D’Este 10:45 Joyce Magill

 A Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures

 Malachi 3:1-4 God sends a messenger

**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

 Matthew 1:18-24 The birth of Jesus

**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 *French Carol, arr. Howard Helvey*

O come, divine Messiah! The world in silence waits the day

 when hope shall sing its triumph, and sadness flee away.

 *Refrain: Dear Saviour haste; come, come to earth, dispel the night and show your face,*

 *and bid us hail the dawn of grace. O come, divine Messiah! The world in silence waits the day*

 *when hope shall sing its triumph, and sadness flee away.*

 You come in peace and meekness, and lowly will your cradle be;

 all clothed in human weakness shall we your Godhead see. *Refrain*

 O Christ, whom nations sigh for, whom priest and prophet long foretold,

 come break the captive fetters; redeem the long-lost fold. *Refrain*

**Hymnal 94 Doxology** (standing)*Lasst uns erfreuen*

 Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

 Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!

 Praise God the source of all our gifts!

 Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

 Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Prayer of Dedication**

**Sermon** “The Journey: Joseph of Bethlehem” Rev. Thomas Q. Strandburg

**Hymnal 197 Ye who claim the faith of Jesus** (standing) *Julion*

**… TO GO REJOICING IN GOD’S NAME!**

**Benediction**

**Hymnal 665 Go now in peace** (standing; sing as a canon with pulpit side first) *Go in peace*

**Go now in peace, go now in peace,**

 **may the love of God surround you everywhere, everywhere you may go.**

**Today’s Services**

**The flowers in the chancel** are given in celebration of the baptism of our grandson Luke David Gerger from his loving grandparents, Jim and Beverly Weber and Tom and Eileen Gerger

**The altar flowers** are given by Joyce Magill in loving memory of her husband, Joseph. December 17th would have been their 62nd wedding anniversary.

**The columbarium flowers** are given by Joyce Magill in loving memory of Joe. We would have celebrated his 90th birthday today.

**Special music for the 10:45 service** is provided by the Chancel Choir, conducted by Ryan A. Keeling

**Acolytes** Logan Walters and Jacob Lowe

**Greeters 8:45** Gale Seymore **10:45** Alan Chesleigh and Xavier Sanchez

**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.

**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.

**Today’s Scriptures**

**Malachi 3:1-4 The Coming Messenger**

3See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. 2But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; 3he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. 4Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

**Matthew 1:18-24 The Birth of Jesus the Messiah** 18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. 20But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’22All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:
23 ‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
   and they shall name him Emmanuel’,
which means, ‘God is with us.’ 24When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife,

**Welcome New Members**

Today the congregation is receiving new members at the 10:45 service. Let’s welcome our new friends into MLUMC’s faith community.

Husband and wife **Jim Arena and Sandi McPhee** are becoming members of our church, and Sandi will soon be joining our Chancel Choir.

**Catherine (Cate) Balmer** is transferring to MLUMC from her UM church in Largo, Florida. Cate’s daughter, **Karen Jones** is also joining the church. Karen is a graduate of IUP and a manager at Pottery Barn. Karen’s husband is John Jones.

**Becky Cook** isretired and is transferring from the United Methodist Church of Mt. Pleasant. Her husband, Rev. Don Cook is a retired clergy member of the W PA UMC Conference.

**Anna Jeffries and Samuel Schaub** are joining our church together and will soon be married

***We rejoice to recognize you as members of Christ's holy Church, and bid you welcome to this congregation of The United Methodist Church.*** UMH#45

**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,

Betty Trout

**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

**CALENDAR – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9 THRU SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15**

**SUNDAY 12/9**

 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 Youth Choir Choir Room

 4 pm Lessons & Carols with combined choirs St. Bernard’s RC Church

**TUESDAY 12/11**

 6 pm Terrific Tuesday Asbury Center

 6:30 pm [Family Promise Board of Directors](https://www.mlumc.org/event/family-promise-board-of-directors?instance_id=22683) Library

 7 pm Boy Scout Troop #23 Wesley Hall

 7 pm Boy Scout Board of Reviews Network/105

 7 pm Cub Scouts Planning Meeting Epworth/102

 7:30 pm Mission Committee Welcome Center

**WEDNESDAY 12/12**

 7:30 am Finance Committee Meeting Welcome Center

**THURSDAY 12/13**

 7 pm Education Committee Meeting Brookline Parlor

 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

**FRIDAY 12/14**

1:30 pm Memoirs Group Wesley/107

**SATURDAY 12/15**

 10 am Food Distribution Food Pantry