

**Third Sunday in Advent**

Some have said that Mary sang the first Christmas carol while Jesus was still in the womb: *“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. (Luke 1:46)”* Could it be that Mary’s “Magnificat” reinforced the mission of her divine-human Son even before he was born? He comes to lift up the lowly, and to fill the hungry with good things.

**December 15, 2019 8:30 & 10:45**

**WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME …**

\*Asterisk indicates to rise in body or spirit

**Gathering Music** **Hymnal 215 To a maid engaged to Joseph** *Annunciation*

**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**

\*10:45 **Introit** Come, Lord, for in our hearts we make thee room.*Douglas E. Wagner*

**\*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 626 Let all mortal flesh keep silence** *Picardy*

**\*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**

**\*Response Come and find the quiet center** (stanza 1) *Beach Spring*

**Come and find the quiet center in the crowded life we lead,**

**find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:**

**clear the chaos and clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see**

**all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.**

Shirley Erena Murray ©1992 Hope Publishing Company

**TO CELEBRATE THE FAMILY OF FAITH …**

**Advent Candle Lighting** 8:30 Joeta D’Este and Betsy Harkins 10:45 James, Jen, and Penny Mazzocco

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

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**\*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. 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.

**Hymnal 197 Ye who claim the faith of Jesus** *Julion*

stanza 4 © 1982 Church Pension Fund

**… TO HEAR GOD’S WORD PROCLAIMED …**

Scripture Reading 8:30 Joeta D’Este 10:45 Stacey Rosleck

**A Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures**

Isaiah 35:1-10 The Lord’s ransomed ones will return

**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.**

**\*Celtic Alleluia: Alleluia.** (sing 4 times) *James J. Chepponis*

**Scripture Reading**

**\* A Lesson from the Gospel**

Luke 1:46b-55 Mary praises God

**Response**

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**.

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

10:45 **Offertory Anthem**  *16th C. French Carol, arr. Howard Helvey*

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

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

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

*and bid us hail the dawn of grace.*

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 Praise God, from whom all blessings flow** (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!**

adapt. © 1989 The U. Methodist Publishing House

**Prayer of Dedication**

**Sermon** “The First Christmas Carol” Rev. Thomas Q. Strandburg

**TO GO REJOICING IN GOD’S NAME!**

\***Hymnal 198 My soul gives glory to my God** (stanzas 1-4) *Morning Song*

\***Benediction**

\***Hymnal 198 My soul gives glory to my God** (stanza 5 ) *Morning Song*

**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 to honor or memorialize a special person, event, or milestone. If you are interested in donating flowers on a particular Sunday, contact Lizzie Diller, 412-860-3614. The cost is $33 for the altar, narthex, or columbarium arrangements, and $66 for the chancel flowers.

**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 Service**

**The flowers on the altar** are given by Joyce Magill in loving memory of her husband, Joseph.

**The rosebud on the altar** is given by Tom and Liz DiPietro in celebration of the birth of their granddaughter, Aliancia Elisabeth, to proud parents Avri and Anthony DiPietro.

**The flowers in the chancel** are given in loving memory of what would be Ginnie and Bill Smith's 77th wedding anniversary on December 18th and in celebration of the second wedding anniversary of Andrea Megan Finniss and Jordan Wade Moran, who were married December 16, 2017, by their daughter and mother, Cyndy Smith Finniss.

**Acolytes** Frieda Lasch and Lydia Slater

**Greeters** 8:30 Joeta D'Este 10:45 Cleon and Vera Jane Cornes

**Special Music at 10:45** is provided by the Chancel Choir, conducted by Julia Scott, a member of the choir and a professional harpist.

**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.

**Today’s Scripture**

**Isaiah 35:1-10**

35The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus 2it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. 3Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. 4Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.”

5Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 6then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; 7the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. 8A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God’s people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. 9No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. 10And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**Luke 1:46b-55**

46And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, 47and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; 49for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. 50His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. 51He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. 52He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; 53he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. 54He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, 55according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

**Keep in Prayer**

**Convalescing in Care Facilities**

Bonnie Amos, Providence Point

Ed Clarke, Asbury Heights

May Frederick, Baptist Home

John Katshir, Asbury Heights

Woody Kimmel, Providence Point

Pat Seitz, Concordia

Doris Trimble, Providence Point

Olivia Woods, Baptist Manor

**Convalescing at Home**

Bishop George Bashore,

Jean Boyer, Mary Caldwell,

John Dean, Joseph Festor,

Ezra Gibson, Leon Grant, Jr.,

Steve Howard, Dave Lewis,

Susan Lichtenfels, George Lindow,

Bob Mallery, Jinny Sheppard, Carol Van Sickle, Arlene Stewart, Peyton Wisterman

**In the Military**

Matt Lewis, USMC,

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



*Each year the W PA Conference and Eastern German Conference create daily Advent and Christmas devotionals for use in our homes and churches. We have chosen devotionals from each week.*

**Wednesday, 11 December; Isaiah 62: 6-12**

**6-12 Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, WPC**

I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth. The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: “Never again will I give your grain as food for your enemies, and never again will foreigners drink the new wine for which you have toiled; but those who harvest it will eat it and praise the Lord, and those who gather the grapes will drink it in the courts of my sanctuary.” Pass through, pass through the gates! Prepare the way for the people. Build up, build up the highway! Remove the stones. Raise a banner for the nations. The Lord has made proclamation to the ends of the earth: “Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your Savior comes! See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.’ ” They will be called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord; and you will be called Sought After, the City No Longer Deserted.

Rejoice! Claim your citizenship as a child of God. God has not forgotten you. God has promised salvation to God’s people. God has promised wholeness to the creation. God’s promises are sure!

Expect! Salvation is at hand. As you look around, it may feel as if you are still in exile. But God’s grace and mercy is sure! The Savior has made you Holy. You have been redeemed by the Lord.

Prepare! Let all the world know. Ready the world for the salvation this is and is to come. Build up systems of love and grace. Clear away systems of racism, poverty, hatred, and vitriol. Lift the Savior up in all the earth.

As the second waved of exiled Israelites looked at their circumstances, they probably questioned whether God had forgotten them. Today as we see all of the injustices, deep poverty, war, and hateful rhetoric in the world we may also wonder if God has forgotten us. But this scripture reminds us that even while we live with the consequences of humankind’s free will, God has not forgotten us. And even in the midst of our circumstances we are called to rejoice in who God is, expect big things from God, and prepare ourselves and the world for the salvation that is and is yet to come. My prayer is that today you will take some time to rejoice, expect, and prepare for the salvation of the world.

**CALENDAR – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15 THRU SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21**

**SUNDAY 12/15**

8:30 am Worship Sanner Chapel

8:30 am The Gathering Asbury

9:30 am Sunday School Various

10:45 am Worship - Tableaux Sanctuary

10:45 am Kids Praise Welcome Center

11:45 am Youth Choir Choir Room

3 pm Pittsburgh District Clergy Dinner Asbury

5 pm Community Christmas Caroling Welcome Center

6:30 pm Eagle Board of Review Various

**MONDAY 12/16**

7:30 pm Community Outreach Meeting Welcome Center

**TUESDAY 12/17**

11 am Program Staff Meeting Pastor’s Office

7 pm Boy Scout Meeting Wesley

7 pm Missions Committee Meeting Welcome Center

**WEDNESDAY 12/18**

**No TRUSTEES MEETING**

7 pm Cub Scout Pack Meeting Wesley

**THURSDAY 12/19**

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

**SATURDAY 12/21**

10 am Food Lift/Food Pantry Food Pantry

**The office will be closed 12/24/19 – 1/1/20 for the holidays.**