



2ND SUNDAY OF *Advent*

DECEMBER 5, 2021

Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church

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Welcome Visitors: We are pleased you have chosen to worship with us today. If you have questions concerning the service, please feel free to ask greeter or a person sitting near you. If you do not have a permanent church home, please consider joining us. May God bless your experience in worship with us today. We are here to serve, so please let us know how we might better serve you.

DECEMBER 5, 2021
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
ORDER OF WORSHIP – 11:15 AM

CELEBRATION THROUGH CENTERING

PRELUDE

“From East to West”

J.G. Walther

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHIMES AND BRINGING FORTH THE LIGHT

CELEBRATION THROUGH ADORATION

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

No.211, vs. 1, 2 & 4

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show and cause us in her ways to go. Refrain*

*O come, thou root of Jess's tree, and ensign of the people be;
Before thee rulers silent fall; all peoples on thy mercy call. Refrain*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: The Lord has looked with favor on God's people.

People: Praise the Lord!

Pastor: A messenger of peace will be sent to us.

People: Thanks be to God!

Pastor: The messenger will place peace in our hearts and our spirits.

People: Come, O Messenger of Peace, we stand in need of your presence. AMEN.

OPENING PRAYER

We have prepared our homes, and our gifts, Lord, but we need help in preparing our spirits to receive your message of Peace. Free us from the stresses and strains of this time and place your peace which passes all our understanding in our hearts. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

INTROIT

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

No. 218, v. 1.

*It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:*

*“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.*

CHILDREN'S MOMENTS

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY (The Candle of Peace)

Pastor: Peace in the midst of conflict—No matter how much we yearn for peaceful lives, conflict seems to permeate our human condition on a regular basis.

People: In a world where peace seems so far away, we call upon the Prince of Peace to come.

Pastor: In this season of Advent, we are reminded of God's desire of peace for all of us.

People: We wait for the coming of Peace in our world. We await the birth of Emmanuel, God with us, who comes into our lives in a new way.

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF PEACE

HYMN

(to the Tune "Away in a Manger"

No. 217

Light two Advent candles, experience the glow
Of peace that exceeds any peace you may know.
Light two Advent candles and wait for the morn
When new birth will happen and light will be born.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray;
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Pastor: Take a deep breath and reflect on some place where conflict is present and the fear that drives it. (Silence)

PRAYER

Loving God, we pray for the peace that only you can bring through your Son, Jesus the Christ. May we walk in paths of peace. Amen.

CELEBRATION THROUGH THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Pastor: Prepare the way of the Lord.

People: **We listen for the word of God.**

THE RESPONSE

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

No. 234 (refrain)

*"O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord"*

FIRST LESSON

Malachi 3:1-4

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

No. 238 (refrain)

"Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!"

GOSPEL LESSON

The Lord be with you,

And also with you.

A reading from the Gospel of St. Mark.

Glory to You, O Lord.

*THE GOSPEL IS READ

Mark 13:24-37

THE GOSPEL RESPONSE

The Gospel of the living Christ.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*GLORIA PATRI

No. 70

CELEBRATION THROUGH PROCLAMATION

SERMON

"Anticipating the Advent"

Pastor Russel Shuluga

CELEBRATION THROUGH FORGIVENESS AND PARDON

CALL TO CONFESSION

Because it is so hard to wait, it is not easy to live through Advent's days. But watch what God does during this time. God waits for us to turn from our old ways to find the right paths; God waits for us to admit what we have done, and failed to do, so we might be forgiven and graced with new life. Let us approach the One who waits -- for us!

GENERAL CONFESSION

Pastor: God of light and love, your prophets call us to prepare for your coming, and to open our hearts to all who seek compassion and relief.

People: **Too often, we close our ears to cries of pain, closing ourselves off from the healing power of kindness and love.**

Pastor: Your messengers call us to straighten the paths of all who might stumble, and to make a way in the wilderness, where there seems to be no way at all.

People: **Too often, we close our eyes to the sight of those in need, fearing that justice for others will bring loss to ourselves.**

Pastor: You call us to bring light into the shadowy places, and to be messengers of your coming into a world of death and despair.

People: **Forgive us when we are unwilling to bear your light, when we close off the pathways of our hearts to those who are in need of your good news.**

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Pastor: Hear the good news: When we cannot find our way through the gloom, God gives light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

People: **In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen.**

HYMN OF ASSURANCE

God, Your Gift of Peace is Precious'

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

CWM RHONDDA 8.7.8.7.8.7.7 ("God of Grace and God of Glory")

God, your gift of peace is precious in this world of sin and loss:

You have given joy and gladness, making peace through Jesus' cross.

God, in love you came to save us, giving freedom from our sin —

In you, gifts of peace begin.

Jesus, you are God's example in the life on earth you lived.

Help us see your face in others, teach us freely to forgive.

When, in all your children's conflicts, hate and violence increase —

Blest are those who work for peace.

CELEBRATION THROUGH COMMITMENT

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

The Lord is coming. Prepare the way! Prepare to welcome the messiah! Welcome the redeemer with your very lives. Know the Lord's tender mercy. Let all that you are become an offering pleasing to God.

THE LORD'S OFFERING

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*DOXOLOGY

To the Tune "What Child Is This"

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

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

Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary."

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

We delight in your love and salvation, Lord, there can be no greater gifts than these. We will gladly serve you in holiness and righteousness. We offer ourselves. We offer all that you have provided us. May it be used to bring your light to those who dwell in darkness. Prepare us and complete us, Lord. Amen.

CELEBRATION THROUGH HOLY EUCHARIST

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor: As we wait to celebrate Christ's birth, may the Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: As we await Christ's return, let us lift up our hearts.

People: Our hearts are lifted to our God.

Pastor: As we trust the one who comes to us, let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: Joy is in our hearts, and praise is on our lips.

Glory and praise are offered to you, God of Advent. On the first day of eternity, you began to create all that is true and just, beautiful and blameless, calling all that you shaped and formed "Good!"

Our ancestors danced in Eden's fields, pure and innocent, but hearing the tunes the world played, they turned away from you. When you called us back through the mouths of the prophets, we defied you to follow those with power and pain. Then you sent John, your messenger, to proclaim the coming of the One who ushers in your kingdom of justice and righteousness.

Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with those who, from the first day to the last, glorify your name, singing,

THE SANCTUS

Sung to the tune of "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

***Holy, Holy, Holy Lord! God of Hosts, by all adored!
Heaven and earth cannot contain all the glory of Your name!
Hail, Hosanna, God Most High! Blest is He who now draws nigh.
In the name of God the King! Hallelujahs glad we sing!
Hail, Hosanna! Praises due be forever, Lord, to You!***

And you give us this great gift: Child of Life, Prince of Peace, Emmanuel —God-with-us! In the birth of a tiny baby, born on the edge, born in a shack, visited by the poor, guarded by his parents' love, you give us yourself! He laughed with those who laughed, he grieved with those who grieved, he listened and taught, but most of all—he loved. He loved us with a love that pointed us back to You. He loved us with a love that shocked and challenged. He loved us with a love that raised up the lowly and sent the powerful away to reflect and learn. He loved us into a new relationship with You. Your Christmas gift to the world. Thank you, loving God!

Thank you, loving God!

On the night before his life would be ended, ended because overwhelming love can sometimes cause fear to react in violent ways, Jesus sat with his friends, celebrating, like we sit with our friends, celebrating. Together, they remembered the story of the people of Israel, brought out of slavery by your love. During the meal, Jesus took a loaf of bread and blessed it, giving thanks to You, God, for your gift of life. He broke that bread and passed it to his disciples, and said, "This is my body, given for you. Each time you eat this, remember me." When the meal was almost over, Jesus took a cup of wine, and blessed it, giving thanks to you, God, for your gift of love. He lifted that cup, passed it to his disciples, and said, "This is my life's blood. This is my promise. This is for you and for the world. Each time you drink, this remember me." So, we eat, we drink and we remember. A tiny baby born in a shack. A great teacher. God-with-us—then and now. We remember.

O Christ has died, O Christ is risen

Christ will come again. Yes, Christ has died!

Yes, Christ is risen! The Christ will come again!

Sung to the refrain of "What child is This" (Greensleeves)

THE CONSECRATION

Holy Spirit, come to us, and to these gifts of the bread and the cup. As you transform these everyday objects into sacramental grace, transform us from ordinary folk into the citizens of God's kingdom. Fill us with the Bread of heaven, so we would feed the hungriest of your children. Pour the cup of grace into us, so we might overflow with love. Make us a compassionate people, who have a passion for your justice.

Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory are yours, Great God, our Hope, our Peace, now and forever. Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Sung to the tune "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

Our Father, Lord on Heaven's high throne, most holy be your Name. Your Kingdom, come. Your will be done—in heaven the same. Give us, this day, the food we need; forgiven may we be. Into temptation do not lead; from evil set us free. Yours is the kingdom, unto you in grateful love we bow; And yours is the power; Lord, let us view your mighty presence now. The glory yours, your praise be sung by angel hosts and men, In every land, by every tongue, forevermore! Amen.

COMMUNION CAROL

Sung to the tune "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

*The evergreens and paraments declare the season's cheer.
The story old shall be retold as love casts out all fear.
We journey forth in longing to meet the Word-made-flesh;
On Christmas Day, we'll find our way to worship at the crèche.
"O come to us, abide with us," we'll carol on that night.
Singing a song with angel throng as Mary's eyes shine bright.*

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

THE THANKSGIVING

Sung to the tune "Angels from the Realms of Glory"

*Thank the Lord, his praises voicing for this promised faithfulness!
All who seek the Lord, rejoicing, tell his love, his name confess,
For He leads us, with thanksgiving in the paths of righteousness.
At Your Word, Lord, let Your servant go in peace, for with my eyes,
I have seen Your bright salvation, Israel's Light, begin to rise,
As the Glory of the nations leading us to Paradise.*

CELEBRATION THROUGH SENDING

*BENEDICTION

Pastor: Practice peace!

People: In nonviolent speech.

Pastor: Practice peace!

People: With acts of reconciliation.

Pastor: Practice peace!

People: By calming the mind and body.

Pastor: Practice peace!

People: Through inviting stillness and active listening.

Pastor: Practice peace!

People: By creating beauty.

Pastor: Practice peace!

People: With an awareness of God's abiding presence.

Pastor: Practice peace!

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

"The First Noel"

No. 245 (Refrain only)

*RECESSIONAL HYMN

"Away in a Manger"

No. 217, v. 3

*POSTLUDE

"Once He Came In Blessing"

J.S. Bach

WE TAKE THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD



Jackie, Laura Lynn, Mary, Christina, Tom (friends of Ginnie's) - needing prayers
Alice (friend of Ginnie's) son - passed away
Richard Wilson - needing prayers
Barbara Thaw -diagnosed with breast cancer
Kim Viehland—recovery from hand surgery
Judy Spencer Baker - chemo treatments/continued prayers
Nanette & Len, husband & wife (friends of Ginnie) - recovering from automobile accident
Annie MacLemore—serious health problems, most recently cancer
Afghanistan refugees
Diamond Carter (friend of Richard's) - heart issues and a collapsed lung
Prayers that the violence will stop
Gary (Ginnie's son) - continued good health
Dick Healey (friend of Ginnie & Sue) - diagnosed with esophageal cancer
Phyllis (Dai's aunt) - improved health issues
Phyllis E. (former MAUMC education director) - cancer issues
Pastor Russel W. Shuluga
Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi
Rev. Deborah Ackley-Killian — Pittsburgh District Superintendent
Those who are traveling
Family & friends of those who have COVID
Family & friends of those who have passed away from COVID
Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church
Those in silence needing prayers



Adult Sunday School – Sunday – 9:45AM – New Advent Series, the Heart That Grew Three Sizes by Matt Rawle.
Wednesday, December 8th – 7PM – Pastor’s Zoom Advent Bible Study
Thursday, December 9th – 7:30PM – Larry’s Bible Study – In Person & Zoom – Samuel – The Old Testament
Sunday, December 12th – 3rd Sunday of Advent – Hanging of the Greens Service

DECEMBER MISSION OPPORTUNITY

“FAMILY PROMISE PITTSBURGH”

THEIR MISSION:

Our mission is to help families experiencing homelessness and low-income families achieve sustainable independence through a community-based response

REVENTION & DIVERSION:

We are there when a family’s homelessness is imminent, and we work to avoid the trauma of a family losing their housing. Our Affiliates do this through:

- Case management and community support
- Rental assistance, security deposits
- Utility support
- Landlord mediation
- Housing location
- Transportation – gas cards, bus passes, and car donations

Keeping families out of shelter is good public policy and good fiscal policy. When families have lost housing and reach out to Family Promise, we provide alternatives to shelter, including:

- Temporary hotel/motel stays
- Payments for rent in arrears, security deposits
- Landlord mediation and housing location
- Creative solutions leveraging a family’s strengths

To support Family Promise with a monetary donation, make your check payable to MAUMC and write “Family Promise” in the memo line or on your envelope and place in offering plate or mail to the church office.