

**NOVEMBER 27, 2022**

***Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church***

Pastor Russel contact information:

Phone: (412) 735-5072

Email: [Shulugarussel@gmail.com](mailto:Shulugarussel@gmail.com)

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 the 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.

## ORDER OF WORSHIP – 11:15 AM

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### CELEBRATION THROUGH CENTERING

PRELUDE

“Chorale Prelude: Savior of the nations come”

J.S. Bach

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CELEBRATION THROUGH ADORATION

\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN AND BRINGING FORTH THE LIGHT

“All Earth is Waiting”

No. 210, vs. 1, 2 & 4

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: As we enter this sacred season, we find ourselves on the Advent road once again.

**People: In Advent we watch and wait, and prepare to welcome the Christ child into the world.**

Pastor: In Advent we prepare for a life of discipleship and watch faithfully for signs of God’s light breaking into the world.

**People: As we make this Advent journey, we watch for God’s signs in the world, actors of compassion and grace breaking in.**

Pastor: We recognize that we do not know the day or the hour but we know that the day is near.

**People: As we watch and wait we will worship and we will serve.**

OPENING PRAYER

**O Lord, on this first Sunday of the Advent Season, as we gather in your house of prayer and praise, we ask that the weeks ahead may be a very special time for us. May we arrive at a new awareness of your calm in our lives; may we gain a new appreciation of what it means to have God with us through the incarnation of you Son. We invite your Spirit into this beautiful Advent season. Renew our sense of holy anticipation! Let us be those who are waiting eagerly for Jesus to come again. More than anything, we ask that you be glorified in this season of expectation. Amen.**

INTROIT

“Hail to the Lord’s Anointed”

No. 203, v. 1

CHILDREN'S MOMENTS

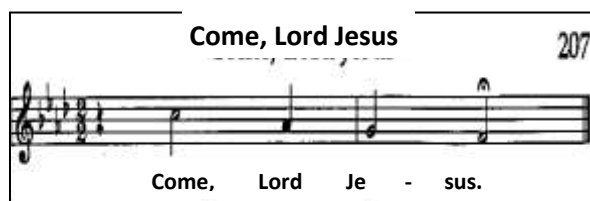
BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**People: who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: In the short days and long nights of Advent, we realize how we are always waiting for deliverance, always needing salvation by our God. Around this wreath we shall remember God’s promise. Listen to the words of the Prophet Isaiah: The people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light; Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing. (Isaiah 9:1-2) Christ came to bring us salvation and has promised to come again. Let us pray that we may be always ready to welcome him.

**People: Sung Response**



Pastor: That the keeping of Advent may open our hearts to God's love.

**People: Sung Response**

Pastor: That the light of Christ may penetrate the darkness of sin.

**People: Sung Response**

Pastor: That this wreath may constantly remind us to prepare for the coming of Christ.

**People: Sung Response**

Pastor: That the Christmas season may fill us with peace and joy as we strive to follow the example of Jesus.

**People: Sung Response**

Pastor: Let us now pray for God's blessings upon us and upon this wreath. Lord our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ. He is Emmanuel, the hope of all people; he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us; he is the Savior of every nation. O God, let your blessing come upon our community gathered here before you. Bless us and our Advent Wreath. May the light that shines forth from these candles illumine our way as we journey towards Christmas; may the light that shines forth from these candles illumine our lives as we wait in hope for the birth of the Christ-child. We ask this through Christ who is the Light of the World.

**All: Amen.**

**People: Sung Response**

#### ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY (The Candle of Hope)

Pastor: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

**People: those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.**

Pastor: We join with sisters and brothers around the world, lighting candles to mark our steps in this Advent journey.

**People: Today, we light the candle of Hope.**

Pastor: Even though the world seems dark and cold, we know the light of Christ is coming. The face of our Lord will shine, and we shall be saved.

**People: Testifying against all suffering and darkness, we kindle this light. Together we proclaim to the world that in Christ we have hope.**

#### LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF HOPE

HYMN

“(to the Tune “Away in a Manger)”

No. 217

*Light one candle and whisper a prayer  
For hope for a world often lost in despair.  
Light one Advent candle and wait for the morn  
When new birth will happen and light will be born.*

#### PRAYER

Father, let your hope arise in our hearts! Lift our eyes up to see that you alone are where our hope comes from. Help us to shake off the anxiety, discouragements, and distractions that have filled this year. May we pause to remember that we have hope in you.

### CELEBRATION THROUGH THE WORD

#### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Pastor: Prepare the way of the Lord.

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

CHORAL 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 Romans 13: 11-14  
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. Matthew.  
**Glory to You, O Lord.**

\*THE GOSPEL IS READ Matthew 24: 36-44

THE GOSPEL RESPONSE  
The Gospel of the living Christ.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

\*GLORIA PATRI No. 70

### CELEBRATION THROUGH PROCLAMATION

SERMON "To Dream the Impossible Dream" Pastor Russel Shuluga  
or  
"Where Do We Go Now?"

HYMN 'You Are Mine' TFWS No. 228

(During the singing of the hymn, 5 large candles will be lit for the  
5 killed at Club Q. The 25 smaller candles will be lit for the injured.  
We will also light the individual candles symbolizing we must be light in the darkness.  
We too must be hope for the hopeless and strength for the despairing.)

### CELEBRATION THROUGH COMMITMENT

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

THE LORD'S OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“Veni Emanue”

Charles Johnson

\*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

Pastor: Holy One, this Advent season we wait in hope.

**People: And we give in hope.**

Pastor: Hope for your coming reign;

**People: Hope because of your presence with us even now.**

Pastor: Receive these generous offerings,

**People: And use them for your work of healing and hope in our world.**

***Amen.***

## **CELEBRATION THROUGH SENDING**

\*BENEDICTION

Be people of hope.

Let hope live in our heart and share the hope of Christ with all you meet.

Share hope by noticing someone else’s humanity.

Share hope by listening to someone’s story.

Share hope by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share hope.

As you go out into the wonder of God’s creations, share hope with those you meet. Amen.

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

“The First Noel”

No. 245 (Refrain only)

\*RECESSIONAL HYMN

“Emmanuel, Emmanuel”

No. 204 (sing twice)

\*POSTLUDE

“Toccata on Savior of the nations come”

Paul Manx

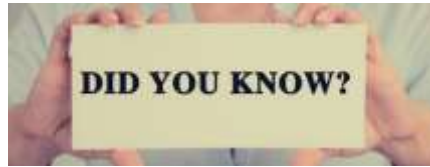
***WE TAKE THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD***



Fawn Sherwin - health concerns  
Prayers that the violence will stop  
Those affected by COVID  
Meglio Family & friends (Mary K's family) - passing of Holly  
Barbara (Mary K's family) - in hospice  
Choi Family & friends (friend of David Spencer) - premature passing of Jason  
Megan (Mary K's family) - prayers needed for upcoming tests  
Kristin (Sue's friend) - diagnosed with thyroid cancer  
Dorothy (Sue's cousin) - brain tumor  
Jim (Mary K's friend) - Chemo for lung cancer  
Liz Swartz (Carolyn's friend) - prayers needed  
Kathy Nestler (Carolyn's friend) - prayers needed  
Debbie Valera - recouping from surgery  
Beverly (Larry's sister/Kim's sister-in-law) - cancer treatments  
Don Donaldson (Ginnie's Friend) - heart issues  
People of Ukraine & Afghanistan  
Peacemakers  
Barbara Thaw -continued prayers  
Judy Spencer Baker - continued prayers  
Aubrie (Ginnie's granddaughter) - diagnosed with breast cancer  
Irene Chenot (Barbara's friend's mom) - cancer  
Joe (Ginnie & Sue's cousin) - diagnosed with myeloma cancer  
Gary (Ginnie's son) - continued good health  
Pastor Russel W. Shuluga  
Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi  
Rev. Deborah Ackley-Killian — Pittsburgh District Superintendent  
Those affected by the violence in our world  
People in African nations—let there be enough food for them  
Those who are traveling  
Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church  
Those in silence needing prayers  
Western PA Conference



Hanging of the Greens service will be held next Sunday, on December 4th. Anyone that would like to read, sing, play or participate in any way should contact Barbara (bcthaw@aol.com). Rehearsal is 12/4 starting promptly at 9:00 AM.



Adult Sunday School completed their study of *Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man* by Emmanuel Acho. Mr. Acho is the son of Nigerian parents who immigrated to the USA. They made their home in Dallas, Texas in an upper middle class suburban neighborhood. He attended a private school and explains in the book that his early introduction to American Black culture was only two times a week at church functions. When he went to college at the University of Texas, he was surrounded by more black culture than he had been exposed to before. After college, he played in the NFL and personally could see how his stable upbringing differed from many of his black teammates.

As he looks back at his personal experiences, he calls himself fluent in both white and black cultures as he has lived in both for large parts of his life. This has left him uniquely qualified to write this book. It is written in an easy conversational style, including footnoted history lessons, starting with the first black slaves brought to Virginia in 1619. He traces overt racism through 400 years of American history and brings a unique outlook on racism with well researched historical happenings to conflicts in present day America. The reader doesn't have to agree with every point he makes in order to appreciate the overall message of the book.

Each chapter covers a particular part of racism, and he ends each chapter with his suggestions for Americas journey on the road for true racial equality. It is too extensive a topic to cover completely in this brief summary. The book is well written and the overall topic, with its component parts, is well documented and current. Copyright date is 2020 and can be purchased on kindle for less than \$10.

In his final summary, Mr. Acho has a to-do list which suggests making intentional actions with people of color. These can include frequenting black-owned businesses, particularly bookstores and gyms. Suggestions also include investigating the principles for diversity at your workplace and exploring courses in black culture, history, and literature. Using many sports analogies, he suggests we need to now get out of the huddle and get in the game.



Pastor Russel will lead a 4-week Advent Bible Study beginning on Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 7:00PM via zoom. The following dates are December 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Zoom login information will be emailed out the day before each bible study.

**Sunday, December 4th - 11:15AM** - at Mifflin Avenue - “Hanging of the Greens” service at 11:15AM.  
Practice at 9:00AM on Dec. 4th.

**Sunday, December 11th – 11:15AM** - Following the service, there will be a meal and “Carols Around the Table” in the John Wesley Room. Everyone is invited. Barbara and Robert Thaw are our hosts. Please note that there will not be a Zoom Service from Mifflin Avenue. Join South Avenue UMC Zoom at 10:00AM.

**Sunday, December 18th - 10:30AM - Combined Christmas Cantata Service with South Avenue, at South Avenue. Reception following the service. South Avenue zoom will be available. No Service or Zoom Service at Mifflin Avenue**

**Saturday, December 24th** - Mifflin Avenue Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - **7:00PM at Mifflin Avenue. Mifflin Zoom will be available.**

**Sunday, December 25th - 10:30AM - Combined Christmas Day Service with South Avenue at South Avenue. South Avenue zoom will be available. No Service or Zoom Service at Mifflin Avenue**