

ST.MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

PENNSBURG, PA

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Church Council

WELCOME

CANDLE READING

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the first candle on this wreath, rouse us from sleep that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes with all the saints and angels. Enlighten us with your grace and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy. Grant this through Christ our Lord whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

The first Advent Candle is lit

NATIVITY SCENE

As we begin the Advent Season, we display the stable and manger – the place where Jesus was born. It reminds us to prepare a place for Jesus in our lives.

ADVENT HYMN

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

257 v. 1

v.1: O come, O come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit
whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

Amen.

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Loving and forgiving God,

We confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.

We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free - free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, ✠ comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

***GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

SCRIPTURES

FIRST READING: Isaiah 64:1-9

This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40-55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
²as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
⁴From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
⁵You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
⁶We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,

and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

⁷There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

[Jesus said:] ²⁴“In those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends

of heaven.

²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON

Pastor David

SPECIAL MUSIC

My Lord, What A Morning

R. Billingham

***APOSTLES’ CREED**

Together, with the whole church, let us confess our faith with the words of the Apostles’ Creed:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

We pray for the ministry we share in Christ's name. Open our hearts to your call for justice, peace, and healing. Attune us to the needs of the world as you draw near. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for this planet in need of restoration: for devastated habitats, polluted waters, thawing ice, blazing fires, swelling floods, and long-lasting droughts. Renew the face of the earth and our relationship to it. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for all people who care for others in our community and around the world. Fill them with compassion and the power to respond with justice for those who are oppressed, with welcome for those who are excluded, and with relief for those who suffer. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for the people in our families and congregation who live with depression, anxiety, chronic pain, and other illnesses. We pray especially for **Lillie, Lisa, Jack, Marilyn, Randy, Andrew, Renae, Marie, Catherine, David, Paul, Harold, Marie, Dennis, Merle, Barbara, Kenneth, Deb, Barbara, Lenny and Harold.** Ease their suffering and support them when they struggle.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for people who are in crisis as the seasons change: for those without homes facing severe weather, for those who are unemployed or underemployed, and for those in poverty or facing food insecurity. Relieve their burdens, sustain their bodies, and ease their minds. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We give thanks for the lives and witness of those who died while waiting for justice, peace, or healing, those whose names we know, especially Maude Schultz, and those whose names are known only to you. Sustain all who still yearn for the completion of your redeeming work. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you
And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

Generous God,
you have created all that is,
and you provide for us in every season.
Bless all that we offer,
that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing.
In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray.
Amen.

***WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples saying: Take and eat, this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, He took the cup, gave thanks and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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 and ever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Prepare the banquet table
where Christ gives himself as food and drink.

COMMUNION

Gathered together in your homes or wherever you are, you may now offer communion to each other (or to yourself) by saying: "This is the body of Christ, given for you" when you offer the wafer/bread. Then in a similar manner with the juice/wine say, "This is the blood of Christ, shed for you." Each of those receiving the bread and the wine may respond with, "**Amen.**"

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Gracious and abundant God,
you have done great things for us, and we rejoice.

In this bread and cup you give us life forever.

In your boundless mercy, strengthen us
and open our hearts to the world's needs,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

***BLESSING**

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,
✠ now and forever.
Amen.

HYMN

Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying

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v.1: Wake, awake, for night is flying, the watchmen on the heights are crying; awake, Jerusalem, at last. Midnight hears the welcome voices, and at the thrilling cry rejoices: "Come forth, you maidens! Night is past. The bridegroom comes! Awake, your lamps with gladness take!" Alleluia! Rise and prepare the feast to share; go, meet the bridegroom, who draws near.

v.2: Zion hears the watchmen singing and all her heart with joy is springing. She wakes, she rises from her gloom. Her dear friend comes down, all glorious, the strong in grace, in truth victorious: her star is risen, her light is come. Now come, O Blessed One, Lord Jesus, God's own Son. Sing hosanna! Oh, hear the call! Come on, come all and follow to the banquet hall.

v.3: Gloria! Let heaven adore you! Let saints and angels sing before you, with harp and cymbal's clearest tone. Gates of pear, twelve portals gleaming, lead us to bliss beyond all dreaming, with angel choirs around your throne. No eye has caught the light, no ear the thundering might of such glory. There we will go; what joy we'll know! There sweet delight will ever flow.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

We welcome everyone to worship today.

Message from Church Council

Just a quick update, from your Treasurer, on how St. Mark's is doing financially, during the COVID environment we now live in. Overall, we are doing OK. This is a result of many factors. Our offerings are \$40K less than the budget accounted for. Having a limited attendance capacity is affecting our weekly contributions. Last year, we collected \$21K in loose plate offerings, this has all but

disappeared without guests attending our services. St. Mark's did apply and receive a PPP loan from the stimulus package the Government offered. This allowed us to pay our employees for 12 weeks at no cost to us. Our expenses are also down, due to the limited access to our building and the fact that we currently are not paying a full time Pastor. When everything is factored in, we are remarkably close to being on target for our budget. St. Mark's is extremely fortunate to be in this position but still needs the continued support of our members. Christmas season is coming and that is usually when we collect the greatest amount of donations. Please keep St. Mark's in your thoughts and hopefully we will finish the year fiscally strong

Sadly, we must inform you that Maude Schultz passed away at home on November 23rd. You may offer sympathy to the family through the Mann Slonaker website. Service will be private at this time.

Happenings This Week:

THE ADULT BIBLE STUDY invites you to join a Zoom meeting at 8:30AM Sundays. Please contact Deb Long for more information at debra.reed588@comcast.net A Zoom link will be sent to you.

TWELVE DAYS OF HOLIDAY DONATIONS

Outreach is also holding a 12 days of donations program. On the times listed for each date, you can drop off the corresponding donation (or all of them at once if you prefer) right here in the St. Mark's parking lot. On the Noisy Offering weekend days, bring your change!

All items will be donated to The Open Link, The Welcome Church, or the PJ Project. This is so much easier than bringing a partridge, or a turtle dove, or golden rings – and so much more practical!! I put the whole list here, but I will mention the dates and items as we go along.

Dec.1 (9am-11am) -- Open Link Gift Cards (Walmart, Target, Kohls and local eateries)

Dec. 2 (6pm-8pm) - Socks all kinds

Dec. 3 (6pm-8pm - Scarves, hats and gloves (new or gently used)

Dec. 4 (5pm-7pm) - Toiletries: travel size for the shelter, regular size for the Open Link

Dec. 5 (2pm-4pm) - Laundry items. Compact and light if possible. NOISY OFFERING!!

Dec. 6 (10am-12pm) - Coats/Jackets NOISY OFFERING!

Dec 7 (2pm-4pm) - Food donations (non perishable) for Open Link

Dec. 8 (9am-11am) - Items such as coffee, creamer and sugar for the homeless shelter outdoor worship time

Dec.9 (6pm-8pm) - Sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, tissues (regular and purse packs) and cough drops

Dec.10 (6pm-8pm) - \$5.00 Gift Cards from Target, Dunkin Donuts and CVS for the homeless shelter

Dec. 11(5pm-7pm) - Cereal Day (Hot/cold cereals, non- perishable breakfast items)

Dec. 12 (2pm-4pm) – PJ Project (new or gently used pajamas and/or Christmas book for children in need at women’s shelters). NOISY OFFERING!!!

LIFE LINE SCREENING will be returning here at St. Mark’s on Wednesday, December 16th. They will offer five screenings that scan for potential health problems: Carotid Artery – plaque build-up which can lead to stroke; Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms – which can lead to a ruptured aorta; Peripheral Arterial Disease– hardening of arteries in legs; Atrial Fibrillation – also tied to stroke; Bone Density Screenings – which assesses the risk of osteoporosis.

They adhere to strict safety protocols. If you would like to make an appointment for one or more of these screenings, please go to: www.lifelinescreening.com/communitycircle or if you want to call, the number is: 1-800-679-5609.

Preparing for next week:

Mon: John 1:35-42; Psalm 19:1-6; Ezekiel 3:16-21; Romans 10:10-18

Tues: Revelation 18:1-10; Psalm 79; Micah 4:6-13

Wed: Micah 5:1-5a; Luke 21:34-38

Thur: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Hosea 6:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10

Fri: Jeremiah 1:4-10; Acts 11:19-26

Sat: Ezekiel 36:24-28; Mark 11:27-33

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