

Myerstown United Church of Christ

The First Sunday in Advent

December 1, 2019

Worship Time 8:00 am

“Prepare Him Room:” Hopeful Joy

EXPANSION OF OUR HEARTS

A Time of Reflection to Prepare for Worship

We gather together to worship the One Who Is Joy and as we come together, our hearts are expanded. We remember that the heavens declare God’s praise as the sun rises and light multiplies. And we witness that all of nature (including us) yearns to reach and expand toward the Light so that all might know joy.

Prelude

Wake, Awake for Night Is Flying

Johann Sebastian Bach

Welcome & Announcements

[will all who are able please stand]

*Advent Hymn

#160 *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn*

REJOICE, REJOICE

Hopeful Joy

Advent Prayer [Leader/All]

Let us pray together.

O sing to the Beloved a new song, for Love has done marvelous things! By the strength of your indwelling Presence, we, too, are called to do great things: we are set free through Love’s forgiveness and truth. Yes, your steadfast Love and faithfulness are ever-present gifts in our lives. All the ends of the earth have seen the glory of Love’s Eternal Flame. Amen.

The Wreath

Candle Lighting Prayer

Holy God, you are our joy. You are the joy that runs deep and wide underneath all of life. This is our hope, that You are ever-present and constantly shifting our fear to compassion, and grinding our swords into plows.

Let us prepare him room in our hearts this day.

Let us prepare him room in our church this day.

Let us prepare him room in the world this day for Hope. Amen.

Excerpts Psalm 98

O sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, With trumpets and the sound of the horn

Make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord.

Let the sea roar; let the floods clap their hands;

Let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the Lord, for he is coming.

*Hymn #179 Joy to the World

[verse 1 only]

Reception of God’s Word

As we open to receive the Word and interpret its meaning for our lives, we connect to the depths of our being where the River of Joy is always flowing. We have only to dip into it for, we have the “joy, joy, joy, joy, down in our hearts.”

Scripture

Isaiah 2: 1-5 (CEB)

God will judge between the nations, and settle disputes of mighty nations. Then they will beat their swords into iron plows and their spears into pruning tools.

Nation will not take up sword against nation; they will no longer learn how to make war. Come, house of Jacob, let’s walk by the Lord’s light.”

Message

TRANSFORMATION OF OUR LIVES

A Time of Reflection to Prepare for Prayer

[This is not read aloud. It is for quiet reflection.]

Connecting with our deepest selves, we are able to accept that all of life resides within joy’s possibilities—not only the happy moments, but also the sorrows and difficulties of life. Like the work of our hearts, all that flows in can be given new life and pumped back out with renewed oxygen, giving us strength and courage for all circumstances.

***Service of the Sacrament**

[will those who are able please stand]

Greeting

May the Approaching God be with you.

And also with you.

In the days to come, People of God, offer your hearts to the One who comes near.

We will lay aside all that keeps us from opening ourselves to God.

Now is the time to sing praises to the One who loves us.

We offer our thanksgiving to God, as we find ourselves standing within the gates of Advent.

Confession

You sent the prophets to us, urging us to lay aside our foolishness, but we continued to put on the armor of apathy and anger so, we could rebel against you.

Forgive us, God of holy seasons, and have mercy. In the days to come, may we discover the grace which has always been ours, so we can share it with others. May we taste the sweet goodness of your love, and feed those around us. May we be filled with the peace of your Spirit, so we may expect you to come in those we least expect, in places which surprise us, in moments we overlook, just as you did in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy

With those who worry about your return, with those who have forgotten to tell time, we sing of your praises:

Holy, holy, holy are you, God of the welcoming heart. All creation sings of your great love. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who comes when we least expect. Hosanna in the highest!

The Mystery of Our Faith

As we begin our journey to Bethlehem, as we seek to be alert and awake, we would proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ died, seeking the good for all; Christ was raised, putting on resurrection's love; Christ will come, precisely when we least expect him.

Prayer of Consecration

Invitation to the Table

Communion of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ

**Responding to the Sacrament*

[will those who are able please stand]

Let us express our thanks to God.

As we await the celebration of his coming once again, we are thankful that Jesus died for us so that we experience your grace, God of all times. We especially are grateful that Jesus came into the world like us, as a child, and was able to encounter life as we know it with joy and sadness. Today we claim a perspective of Hopeful Joy. Amen.

***COMPASSION FOR THE WORLD**

***A Time of Reflection to Go Out into the World**

Connecting to Joy can compel us to want this connection for all beings. We leave this place "with passion" (com-passion) for adding our love, peace, hope, and joy to the world.

***Going Forth**

***Benediction**

***Closing Hymn**

#153 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

HYFRYDOL

***Personal Reflection on Hopeful Joy**

***Postlude**

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

Johann Gottfried Walther

Acknowledgements

The flowers on the altar are given in memory of Herbert & Edna Hibshman Sr, Lt Richard Hibshman, Mr & Mrs Charles Netzley, and Mr & Mrs Howard Hibshman by Glenn & Jane Derr and family.

Liturgy and music for this service was reprinted with permission from Worship Design Studio [<http://www.worshipdesignstudio.com/landingpage.cfm>] and from Lectionary Liturgies Blogspot. Thom Shuman. <http://lectionarylitrugies.blogspot.com/2019/11/liturgy-with-communion-for-december-1.html>.

Prayer List

Nancy Brown	Russ Kahl	Rosene Duffy
Ellen Goodyear	Ruthann Snoke	Joyce Mitstifer
Ralph Woynarowski	Jewel Fessler	Linda Feaser
Bill Gracely	Rosalla Hollenbach	Joanne Frantz
David Mock	Heather & Elvin Perez	James Haines
Steve Norford	Family of Arlene Spangler	Suzanne Fritsch

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**Worship Assistants for December 8, 2019**

8:00 am Service **Open Church:** Mark Herr  
**Greeters:** Bill & Betty Arnold **Worship Leader:** Bill & Betty Arnold  
10:00 am Service **Worship Leader:** Margo McQuate  
**Greeters:** Ted & Carol Batdorff **Sound:** Paulie McQuate  
**Ushers:** Travis, Angie, Gabb, & Gavin Bicher, Kenny Patrick  
**Counting Team:** Marie Hibshman, Kathy Grose, Charlie & Carolyn Williams  
**Advent Wreath:** Travis, Angie, Gabb, & Gavin Bicher

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Announcements

EMILY FRANTZ will be on vacation through today.

JOY TO THE WORLD ORNAMENTS: Today is the last day to order one or more. Place your order form in an envelope and then deposit in any of the “trays” on the Information table. The ones on the table are **NOT** for sale.

POINSETTIA ORDERS are due today. Order forms on the Information Table.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS are still needed for the Christmas Eve, 6:30 pm service. If you will be attending that service and willing to participate, please contact Marie Hibshman as soon as you can.

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS are on the table at the entrance to the Gathering Area. There are two items to complete the entire season. **Please take both.**

THE PRAYER TEAM will meet each week in the prayer room from 8:45 until 9:45 starting next Sunday. Anyone is welcome to come and join Wanda Rabold and Sally Kulp to pray for the world, our community, members of our church family, and anyone whose needs come to our attention. A prayer box will be placed just

inside the prayer room if anyone would like to place a prayer request slip in the box. We will also welcome anyone who would like to stop by in person and receive prayer. We know that the Bible tells us that wherever two or three are gathered in God's name that He is present in the midst of them. Please pray for this special ministry.

DECEMBER GIFT CARDS: Several companies off dollar amounts during the holidays that are not available at other times. Please use the form on the Information Table. Today is the last day to request these amounts.

2019 CONTRIBUTIONS: The last day to submit church offering to be credited in 2019 is Friday, January 3, 2020. The church is upgrading to new software the first week in January. Financial statements will be produced from the old system.

MANUAL LABORER NEEDED: There is a project in the church office that can be done sitting at the table. The project is punching holes in folded paper. Only one person can help at a time. There is no urgency; at the same time, the sooner-the-better. If interested, put a note in the communication book on the Information Table. The church secretary will get in touch with you.

CHRISTMAS CARDS: We are grateful to Suzie Wartluft for taking the lead on this annual project. She has already begun to organize the process. Save your stamps again this year by using the in-house Christmas Card service. For those who may not remember, you can bring cards in for members of the congregation. Members of the congregation can bring cards in for you. Everyone can pick up their cards in the alphabetical-slot boxes in the Gathering Area. Coin envelopes will be provided in case you want to give a portion of what you saved by not mailing them!

THE ANGEL TREE: Our annual Angel Tree in support of LCCM has been placed in the Gathering Area. Please refer to the November Vineyard for more information.

WILL YOU DONATE ONE HOUR?: Friedens Lutheran Church has invited us and Myerstown Church of the Brethren to participate in their Salvation Bell ringing at Smith Candies. MCOB has taken all of Saturday, Dec 14th. There is a sign-up form on the Information Table for sic shifts on Saturday, Dec 21st. This is a *no-cost-to-us* way of providing community support and helping people in need.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY: There is a revised membership directory on the Information Table. The Membership Committee is asking each person to check the information and either correct it or initial that it is correct. They would like this completed on or before Sunday, 24 November 19. When published, this will be the first complete listing of church members in two years.

CHOIR MEMBERS: The next choir rehearsals will be held on December 18, 22 and 24. They are to prepare for Sunday, December 22, and Tuesday, December 24th.

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Calendar for This Week

Today, Sunday, December 1      **The First Sunday in Advent**  
 8:00 am      Brief Worship Service with Holy Communion  
 8:45 am      Small group meetings.  
 10:00 am      Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion

Monday, December 2  
 8:30 am      Strong Bones [social hall]  
 9:00 am - 2:00 pm      Church Office Open  
 5:00 pm      Lebanon Choral Society Rehearsal  
 7:00 pm      Women's Club [Social Hall]

Tuesday, December 3  
 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm      Pastor Office Hours [preferably by appointment]  
 6:30 pm      Church Council [Library]

Wednesday, December 4  
 9:00 am - 2:00 pm      Church Office Open  
 6:30 pm      Scouts

Thursday, December 5  
 8:30 am      Strong Bones [social hall]  
 1:00 pm      Women's Bible Study [library]  
 2:00 pm      Endowment Committee—Larry Rabold's office

Friday, December 6  
 9:00 am - 2:00 pm      Church Office Open

Saturday, December 7

Sunday, December 8      **The Second Sunday in Advent**  
 8:00 am      Brief Worship Service  
 8:45 am      Small group meetings  
 10:00 am      Traditional Worship Service

**Welcome to Myerstown United Church of Christ**

Church Office: 304 West Main Avenue, Myerstown , PA 17067-1023  
 Phone: 717/866-5252    myerstownucc@comcast.net  
 website: [myerstownuccchurch.org](http://myerstownuccchurch.org)

Kory Leppo----- 717-269-6033 ----- Council President  
 Marie Hibshman 717-343-3247 ----- Elder  
 Jim Yoder----- 252-258-4268 ----- Bridge Pastor  
 Emily Frantz----- 717-383-1147 ----- Parish Administrator  
 Mark Herr----- 717-572-7734 -Family & Community Ministry Coordinator  
 Lindy Bennetch----- Financial Administrator  
 Jim Yoder----- Church Secretary  
 Elicia Frank----- Custodian

**Worship Assistants**

*Appreciation to the following who participated in today's service:*

**Organist**      Mark Herr

8:00 am Service

**Open Church:**      Cal Beamesderfer

**Greeter:**      Bill & Betty Arnold      **Worship Leader:**      Bill Arnold

10:00 am Service

**Greeter:**      Sara Zeller      **Sound:**      Paulie McQuate

**Worship Leaders**      Charles & Carolyn Williams

**Ushers**      Jeff, Holly & Hannah Rosen, Kenny Patrick

**Counting Team**      Ted & Carol Batdorff, Darryl Brown, Marie Hibshman

**Communion Servers:**      Ed & Candy Hibshman, Steve & Marianne Fritsch

**Advent Wreath Lighting:**      Jeff, Holly, Hannah, Jared, & Anna Rosen

Stewardship Report for Sunday, November 24, 2019

|                         |         |                   |       |
|-------------------------|---------|-------------------|-------|
| General Fund            | \$3,491 | OCWM              | \$340 |
| Church Improvement Fund |         |                   | \$75  |
| Attendance 8 am:        | 18      | Attendance 10 am: | 45    |