

**The Third Sunday of Advent
December 11, 2022**

in the 169^h Year of the Parish

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

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Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452)

Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor

bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Welcome to Saint Mark's!

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

Our Mission: *“To know Christ and to make Christ known.”*



Our COVID-19 Guidelines:

Hand sanitizer is available for your use.

Face masks are optional.

Offerings may be received by way of baskets as you enter or leave.

Please continue to observe social distancing when passing the peace.

A guide to hymnal use: LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book

**Please stand as you are able.*

PRELUDE

People Look East

Wayne Wold

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.

P Blessed be the Lord ✠, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

C Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.

P Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep.

Let us confront our sins,

and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

The congregation may kneel. Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of new beginnings,

C we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.

We have strayed from your paths.

We prepare for war instead of peace.

We dishonor one another and your creation.

Purify us with your refining fire

and set us again on your way of love,

that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance,

and welcome your coming among us.

Amen.

The pastor stands and speaks the following:

P People of God,
a new thing is growing in our midst,
a tender branch,
a living sign.
By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder.
You have put on † Christ,
and your sins have been washed away.
Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

C Amen.

***HYMN Prepare the Royal Highway LBW, “Green”, 26**

***THE GREETING**

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

C And also with you.

***KYRIE**

The musical notation for the Kyrie consists of three systems of staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy." The notation includes labels for "Cantor" and "All" above the staves, and a measure number "3" above the second system.

*LIGHT ONE CANDLE (*stanza three*)

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
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*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray. Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S READINGS

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

THE FIRST LESSON.....Isaiah 35:1-10

1The 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.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 146:5-10

5Happy are they who have the God of Jacob | for their help,
whose hope is in the | LORD their God;

**6who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that | is in them;
who keeps promis- | es forever;**

7who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to | those who hunger.
The LORD sets the | captive free.

**8The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who | are
bowed down;
the LORD| loves the righteous.**

9The LORD cares | for the stranger;
the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way | of the
wicked.

**10The LORD shall | reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. | Hallelujah!**

THE SECOND LESSON.....James 5:7-10

7Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. 8You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! 10As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

All



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

2



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

*THE HOLY GOSPEL.....Matthew 11:2-11

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

All



Glo-ry to you, O _____ Lord.

2When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples 3and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” 4Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. 6And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

7As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? 8What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. 9What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

11Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The gospel of the Lord.

6 All



Praise to you, O _____ Christ.

THE SERMON

***HYMN**

All Earth Is Hopeful

WOV, "Blue" 629

***THE NICENE CREED**

P Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:

**C We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;**

**he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

After each petition, “Lord, in your mercy/Hear our prayer.”

***THE PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

The ministers and congregation greet one another with these or similar words, and/or gestures of peace, limiting physical touch and contact with one another.

ANTHEM

Gustav Holst’s (1874-1934) setting of this 4th-century tune is both haunting and majestic. *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* is one of the earliest Christian hymns still in use today. The text speaks of Mary and the coming of Jesus; it implores us to be silent and tremble at the coming of Jesus, who deserves “our full homage”. This piece of music gradually intensifies with each verse until we hear the full force of the choir and organ in the final moments of Holst’s setting.

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and ever-living God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world

in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

1 Cantor
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and God of might.

2 All
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and God of might.

3 Cantor
Heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.

4
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

5 All
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

6 Cantor
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

7
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

8 All
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

P Holy God, mighty Lord, Gracious Father:
Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.
You have filled all creation with light and life;
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Through Abraham you
promised to bless the nations.
Through the prophets you renewed your promise;
and, at this the end of all the ages, you sent your Son,
who in words and deeds proclaimed your kingdom
and was obedient to your will,
even to the giving of his life.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and 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.

As often as we eat this bread
and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death,
until he comes.

**C Christ has died, Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Therefore gracious Father,
with this bread and cup
we remember the life our Lord offered for us.
And, believing the witness of his resurrection,
we await his coming in power
to share with us the great and promised feast.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,
the spirit of our Lord and his resurrection,
that we who receive the Lord's body and blood
may live to the praise of your glory and receive
our inheritance with all your saints in light.

C Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

P Join our prayers with those of your servants
of every time and place, and unite them with

the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest
until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity
of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours,
almighty Father, now and forever.

C Amen.

***OUR LORD'S PRAYER**

P Let us pray in the words our Savior gave us:

C 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;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen

*LAMB OF GOD

Cantor

Je sus, wis - dom and might - y Lord, you take a way the sins___ of the
Je - sus, true branch of Jes - se's Tree
Key of Dav - id and Day - spring from on high.
De sire of na - tions, our Em - man - u - el,

2 | 1.2.3. **All**

world: have mer - cy on us. Have mer - cy on us.

3 | 4. **All**

world: Grant us___ peace. Grant us___ peace.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Persons may come forward to the chancel to receive Holy Communion. This format will be more “continuous” noting the following procedure:

- *Communicants as directed by ushers are asked to come forward by way of the center aisle, take a cup from the tray provided and receive the bread.*
- *Once receiving the bread, communicants will proceed to one of two stations (left or right) to receive wine from the pouring chalice.*
- *After receiving wine, communicants will place the empty cup in the designated tray and return to their pew by way of the side aisles.*

Please do not kneel at the rail.

P Rejoice! Come to the feast of Emmanuel.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE COMMUNION

*AFTER COMMUNION

P The body and blood of Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C **Amen.**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Faithful God,
in this meal you have remembered your mercy,
bringing heaven and earth in the body and blood of Christ.
As we await the day when all your promises will be fulfilled,
sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.
Guide us toward your promised future,
coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

***THE BLESSING**

P Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

***HYMN Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus LBW, “Green”, 30**

***DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Christ is near.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE Veni, Veni Wayne Wold

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Prayer List: Victims of COVID-19 and their families, Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Diane Damaska, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Patricia Alexander, Diana Zeigler, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Lenny Sherlinski, Ruth Sherlinski, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Susan Kalabacas, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Roy and Gloria Meyer, Mary Lou Doebler, the people of Ukraine and Eastern Europe, Storm and Hurricane Victims, Ezra Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Connie Shiable.



Connie Shiable is recovering from her fall and intends to be back in her apartment at Grove Street Commons very soon. Should you wish to send her Christmas greetings, Connie's address is:

Connie Shiable
1290 Grove Street Commons, Apt. 116
Williamsport, PA 17701.



ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God:
+In Loving Memory of my Parents, Elias and Grace Lehman, Herbert Winters and son, Scott and sisters: Eva and Helen by Lois Winters Goldy
+In Loving Memory of Helen and F.B Troxel by Margie Levinson and her family. Also by Frank Troxel and his family.



READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? Faith and Fellowship has temporarily "moved some books" from our church library to the Front Lounge in order to make them more accessible. Stop by the Front Lounge and take a look!

WORSHIP LEADERS (December 11, 2022)

Lector	8:00 a.m.	Vicki Haussmann
	10:30 a.m.	Audrey Albright
Communion Assistants	8:00 a.m.	Becky Pryor/Drew Haussmann/ Jackie Kinney
	10:30 a.m.	
Organist	Sam Robinson	
Ushers	8:00 a.m.	Richard Miller / Herb Poff
	10:30 a.m.	Tim Maggs-Captain, Carl Hieber, Charlie Fortin
Altar Guild	December	Bev Hieber and Audrey Albright

OUR STEWARDSHIP (12/4/22)

Regular Offering	\$3,021.00
Plate Offerings	60.00
Christmas and Advent	45.00
Thanksgiving	1.00
Miscellaneous	10.00
Food Pantry	42.00
Christmas Flowers	40.00
Flower Memorials / Tributes	60.00
Synod Benevolence	5.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$3,284.00

UPDATE



Here is an unfortunate **update on Christmas poinsettia orders**. I gave our order to Mary Helminiak and she told me that the white poinsettias have been sold out for over three weeks. I know that some of you order them for specific reasons and I apologize. I asked her to substitute the red/white

poinsettias for the white ones, and pink if there were not enough red/white ones. If this is not to your liking, you may contact our administrative assistant, Joe Baur, for a refund. I wish you all the joy of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Blessings, Ray Huff



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Saturday, December 24, The Nativity of Our Lord

“Children's and Family Holy Communion”, 7 p.m.

“Traditional Candlelight Holy Communion”, 10 p.m.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Sunday, December 25, The Nativity of Our Lord (Holy Communion, 9:30 a.m.)

Only one worship time this Sunday. No Sunday Church School

Christmas Greetings for Special Concern Folks



The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee will provide Christmas cards today, Sunday, December 11, 2022 to congregation members to mail to our Special Concern Folks and others we do not see as often as we wish. Please consider taking a card or two from the table in the Narthex, write a brief message, sign your name, apply postage and send it in time for

Christmas. Thank you for helping us send more Christmas cheer.

MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES

Wednesdays in Advent - November 30 and concluding December 21.

Join us in our chapel from 12:15 - 12:45 p.m. as we explore the witness of “Advent Saints”.

December 14, John of the Cross, Renewer of the Church

December 21, Katharina von Bora Luther, Renewer of the Church

ALL ARE WELCOME!

COMMEMORATIONS



Lucy, martyr, died 304

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means "light") originally fell on the shortest day of the year.



John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

John was a member of the Carmelite monastic order, and worked to reform it. His writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation.



Las Posadas

Friday, December 16, 2022

This celebration, long popular in Mexico, takes its name from the "posadas," or lodgings, sought by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Their search is reenacted in a neighborhood, unsuccessfully, until finally they are welcomed in, and a party commences.