

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church  
The Third Sunday of Advent  
December 15, 20**

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701  
[stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org)  
Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452)  
Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor  
[bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org)



***A Veni Emmanuel Setting for Holy Communion***  
**8 am and 10:30 am**

**Please Note:**

**Hand sanitizer is available for your use. Offerings may be received by way of offering plates as you enter or leave.**

**Bold print indicates Congregation.**

***A GUIDE TO HYMNAL USE: Hymns are printed in the back of your bulletin and also in LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book***

***\*Please stand as you are able.***

**INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S WORSHIP**

*Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of One "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.*

**PRELUDE**

**WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.*  
Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
alive in the world,  
reviving creation,  
arriving soon.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God  
and of one another.

*Kneel/stand. A brief silence is observed.*

God of mercy,

**we confess that we have sinned.**

**We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.**

**We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.**

God of might,

**we confess that we have sinned.**

**We have turned away from our neighbors.**

**We have trusted false promises.**

God in our midst,

**we confess that we have sinned.**

**We plead: come to us.**

**Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

A righteous branch springs forth:

it is Christ the Lord, our Savior,

in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy.

By the power of the Holy Spirit,

receive the grace and forgiveness of God

through † Christ Jesus,

whose day draws near.

**Amen.**

**\*HYMN      Hark, the Glad Sound**

**LBW, “Green”, 35**

**\*THE GREETING**

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

**And also with you.**

## \*KYRIE

1 Cantor All

Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have\_ mer - cy. Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have\_ mer - cy.

3 Cantor All

Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy, \_\_\_\_\_ Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy, \_\_\_\_\_

5 Cantor All

Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have\_ mer - cy. Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have\_ mer - cy.

## \*LIGHTING OUR ADVENT WREATH

*(Please sing 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 VEI.DELE, Yiddish folk tune  
 Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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**\*THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray. Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**THE FIRST READING.....Zephaniah 3:14-20**

14 Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;  
shout, O Israel!  
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,  
O daughter Jerusalem!

15 The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,  
he has turned away your enemies.  
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;  
you shall fear disaster no more.

16 On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:  
Do not fear, O Zion;  
do not let your hands grow weak.

17 The LORD, your God, is in your midst,  
a warrior who gives victory;  
he will rejoice over you with gladness,  
he will renew you in his love;  
he will exult over you with loud singing  
18 as on a day of festival.  
I will remove disaster from you,  
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

19 I will deal with all your oppressors  
at that time.  
And I will save the lame  
and gather the outcast,

and I will change their shame into praise  
and renown in all the earth.

20 At that time I will bring you home,  
at the time when I gather you;  
for I will make you renowned and praised  
among all the peoples of the earth,  
when I restore your fortunes  
before your eyes, says the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**CANTICLE- THE FIRST SONG OF ISAIH**

**WOV, "Blue," 635**

*(No download available)*

**THE SECOND READING.....Philippians 4:4-7**

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*THE 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 GOSPEL.....Luke 21:25-36**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.

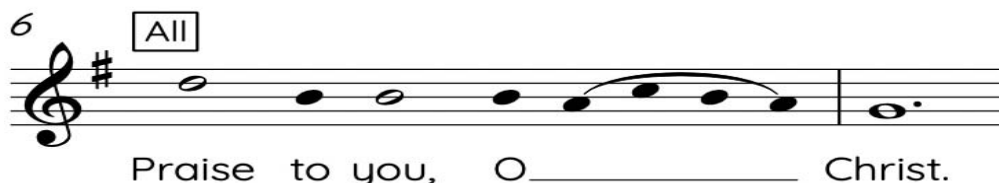


<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” <sup>11</sup> In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” <sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” <sup>13</sup> He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” <sup>14</sup> Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

<sup>18</sup> So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. The gospel of the Lord.



## THE SERMON

**\*HYMN On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry**

**LBW, "Green," 36**

### **\*THE NICENE CREED**

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**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.**

**\*THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:** *After each petition, “Lord, in your mercy/Receive our prayer”.*

**\*THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*All may greet one another with these or similar words and/or gestures of peace.*

**\*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. 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 to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the choirs of angels, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



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.

Holy One,  
the beginning and the end,  
the giver of life:  
Blessed are you  
for the birth of creation.  
Blessed are you  
in the darkness and the light.  
Blessed are you

for your promise to your people.  
Blessed are you  
in the prophets' hopes and dreams.  
Blessed are you  
for Mary's openness to your will.  
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,  
the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ is died. Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup  
we remember your Word  
dwelling among us,  
full of grace and truth.  
We remember our new birth  
in his death and resurrection.  
We look with hope for his coming.  
**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God,  
we long for your Spirit.  
Come among us.

Bless this meal.  
May your Word take flesh in us.  
Awaken your people.  
Fill us with your light.  
Bring the gift of peace on earth.  
**Come Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours,  
Holy One of Israel  
Word of God incarnate  
Power of the Most High,  
one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

**\*OUR LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray,  
**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

God feeds us with tender mercy, come!

*All are welcome at the Lord's Table. Use the center aisle, pick up a small glass on the way. Receive the bread and then proceed to receive the wine by way of a pouring chalice. After communing return to your pew using a side aisle. Those not communing may come forward for a blessing.*

*Know that the crucified and risen Christ gives himself to you in his supper. If you cannot eat bread, drink only the wine. If you cannot drink wine, eat only the bread*

## \*AFTER COMMUNION

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

**\*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Generous God,  
we thank you for the gift of life in bread and wine,  
for coming among us, for leading us into peace.  
You shower us with mercy, and send us into the world,  
proclaiming the coming of the One who has come, is coming  
and has promised to come again,  
Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**\*BLESSING**

God of endings and beginnings,  
God in the darkness and the light,  
God, our hope for the journey,  
✠ bless and keep you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**\*HYMN     Prepare the Royal Highway**

**LBW, "Green," 26**

**\*DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**THE POSTLUDE**

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**OUR PRAYER LIST**

Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Ezra Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Deb Buckman, Linda Rosini, Walt Haussmann, Kristin Rehm, Yvonne and Gerry Myers, Ariel, John Bower, John Tartline, Carl Hieber, Donna Baker, Tom Waffenschmidt, George Poliska.

**OUR STEWARDSHIP**

Regular Offering	\$2,390.00
Plate Offerings	27.00

Christmas & Advent	110.00
Miscellaneous	225.00
Parish Life	25.00
Flower Memorials	665.00
Memorials	50.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$3,492.00</b>

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the glory of God and  
in loving memory of Alfred & Lois Johns, and in loving memory of Jack &  
Doris Fortin, by Matt & Wanda Fortin & family.

**WORSHIP LEADERS**

December 15, 2024

Lector	8 am Vicki Haussmann 10:30 am Linda Rosini
Communion Assistants	8 am Jackie Kinney 10:30 am Deb Buckman & Gary Weber
Ushers	8 am Herb Poff and Richard Miller 10:30 am Albright Team
Organist	Sam Robinson
Altar Guild (DECEMBER)	Connie Shaible, Sally Bjornstad, Sarah Young

**THIS WEEK AT ST. MARK'S:**

Sunday, December 15 Holy Communion 8 and 10:30 am  
Sunday School, 9:15 am

Monday, December 16 Office Hours, 9 am- 1 pm  
Little Lambs with pastor, 3:30 pm  
Council, 6 pm

Tuesday, December 17 Church Office Hours, 9 am-1 pm  
Little Lambs Christmas Program 10:45 am

Wednesday, December 18 Church Office Hours, 9 am-1 pm

Little Lambs Christmas program, 10:45 am  
Advent Word and Prayer Service, Chapel, 12:10 pm  
Holy Communion, Williamsport Home, Blg. A, 2 pm.

Thursday, December 19 Church Office Hours, 9 am- 1 pm

Friday, December 20 Church Office Hours, 9 am -1 pm.

Saturday, December 21 Church Office Closed

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Derek Gilbert 12/17

Marlene Fullmer 12/17

Ryan Clokey 12/18

Michael Jensen 12/18

Martha Hopley 12/19

Zachary Zimmerman 12/19

**CHRISTMAS GREETINGS** With all the hustle and bustle of the Advent and Christmas season, the Evangelism and Fellowship Committee once again needs your help in spreading some Christmas cheer. Please see the table of addressed Christmas cards in the Narthex. Please take one or two, write a cheery message, add a stamp and place it in the mail for arrival by Christmas. Any assistance with our long list of Special Concern Folks is greatly appreciated.

**RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE** Our second blood drive of 2024 was held on December 6, 2024. Although our donors were down from this summer, the staff from the Red Cross were pleased with what was donated. At the end of the day 16 pints of blood were collected. The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee will again schedule two blood drives for 2025.

**MINI-DRIVE FOR HYGEINE PRODUCTS** The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee are grateful for the congregation's generosity with our many collections for people in need. From boxes of cereal to canned goods to hygiene items you have been generous every step of the way. Our hygiene drive collected 270 assorted items. The staff at the Shepherd's office were immensely grateful and so are we!

## PLEASE NOTE:

+When you or a family member are ill, have a crisis of faith, or have a personal concern of which you wish to make the pastor aware, please contact him directly by church office telephone (570-323-4619) email (bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org) or his cell phone (272-788-0161). Do not assume the pastor will know of your need any other way.

+ When you or a loved one has a change of address, telephone number or email, please contact the church office at 570-323-4619 or stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org. Please direct your intentions whether or not to share this information with our church family.

To keep members of the church update on new address, phone number, change in marital status or anything else that needs updated, you will see in the weekly bulletin and the "Lion", updates on the information. If you have any information that needs to be updated, please send an email to jbour@stmarkswilliamsport.org or call the church office at 570-323-4619, Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m.- 1 p.m. The office is working on an updated Church directory so please update any information ASAP to insure the directory is up to date.

## COMMEMORATIONS

### Las Posadas

*Monday, December 16, 2024*

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.



### Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552

*Friday, December 20, 2024*

Born to an impoverished nobleman, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age twenty-four she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent.

Eventually Katie married Martin and together they became parents to six children.





## Hark, the Glad Sound!



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior  
2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's  
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing  
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -  
bond - age held. The gates of brass be -  
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures  
shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.  
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.  
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.  
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751  
Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

## Canticle: Surely It Is God Who Saves Me

*(tune: Beach Spring)*

**Surely it is God who saves me;  
I shall trust and have no fear.  
For the Lord defends and shields me  
and his saving help is near.  
So rejoice as you draw water  
from salvation's healing spring;  
in the day of your deliv'rance  
thank the Lord, his mercies sing.**

**Make God's deeds known to the peoples;  
tell out his exalted name.**

**Praise the Lord, who has done great things;  
all his works God's might proclaim.  
Zion, lift your voice in singing;  
for with you has come to dwell,  
in your very midst, the great and  
Holy One of Israel.**

**On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry**



1 On Jor - dan's banks the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es  
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the  
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge  
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us  
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and hear - ken,  
way for God with - in, and let us all our  
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we  
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -  
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!  
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.  
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.  
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.  
we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite  
Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

## Prepare the Royal Highway



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!  
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!  
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!  
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!  
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!  
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.  
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:  
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*  
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.  
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**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES (December 24, 2024):**

7 pm: “A Children's Candlelight Eucharist”. This service is “family friendly” and will include the Christmas story according to Luke, Christmas Carols appropriate for children, candlelight and Holy Communion.

10 pm: “A Traditional Christmas Eucharist by Candlelight”. This service will include the traditional “Christmas Proclamation”, the Christmas story according to Luke, a Christmas liturgy of familiar Christmas Carols, Choir anthems and Holy Communion.

*Best wishes for a Blessed Christmas and a happy and healthy 2025!*

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 25 – SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28 TO CELEBRATE THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY! SHOULD YOU NEED A PASTOR DURING THIS TIME PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE (570-323-4619) OR PASTOR VASEY (272-788-0161).**

*Merry Christmas and Happy 2025!*

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