

ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 6, 2020

"A faithful family reaching out to serve Christ"

Second Sunday of Advent

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP AND THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

The Fritz Family

(L) Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,
cries a voice from the wilderness.

(P) Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain be made low.

(L) Prepare the way of the Lord; make your paths straight.

**(P) And the crooked shall be made straight and the rough ways made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.**

(L) As we light this candle of peace, we prepare the way of the Messiah.

(Light the second blue candle)

***OPENING PRAYER**

(L) Holy One, you sent your messenger, John, to prepare the way for your son.
Help us O God, to bear fruit worthy of repentance so that we may prepare our
hearts for the advent of Christ and his reign of peace. **AMEN**

***OPENING HYMN**

Advent Hymn

*And come Thou long awaited One in the fullness of Your love.
And loose this heart bound up by shame and I will never be the same.
So here I wait in hope of You. All my soul's longing through and through.
And Dayspring from on high, be near. And Daystar in my heart appear.*

*And dark and cheerless is the morn until Your love in me is born.
And joyless is the evening song until Emmanuel has come.
So here I wait in hope of You. All my soul's longing through and through.
And Dayspring from on high, be near. And Daystar in my heart appear.*

*So here I wait in hope of You. All my soul's longing through and through.
And Dayspring from on high, be near. And Daystar in my heart appear.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Eternal God, you promise to reveal your glory to us,
but we are distracted and preoccupied.**

**You promise your peace,
but we do not trust your promise and we despair.**

**Forgive our lack of faith O God.
Sing your songs of good tidings to us from on high.
lift our eyes, give us ears to hear,
so that we may sing to the world: Here is our God.**

MOMENT OF SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ACT OF PRAISE #198

*Good Christian friends rejoice with heart and soul and voice.
Now ye need not fear the grave, Jesus Christ was born to save.
Calls you one and calls you all to gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Staci Gower

THE READING OF SCRIPTURE

The Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 40: 1-11

Katie Fritz

1 Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. **2** Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. **3** A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. **4** Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. **5** Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

6 A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. **7** The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. **8** The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

9 Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" 10 See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

The Gloria Tibi: *Glory be to thee, O Lord

***The Gospel Lesson: Mark 1: 1-8**

1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," " 4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

7 He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8 I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Laus Tibi: *Praise be to thee, O Christ

SERMON "Comfort My People" The Rev. Suzanne Brooks-Cope

***HYMN** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

*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 thee, O Israel!*

*O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

*O come, Desire of nations, bind All peoples in one heart and mind.
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease; Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!
Shall come to thee, O Israel! Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

***THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** The Nicene Creed

(L) Do you believe in God?

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

(L) Do you believe in Jesus the son?

(P) 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, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. 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.

(L) Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

(P) We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

(L) God be with you.

(P) And also with you.

(L) Let us open our hearts.

(P) We open them to our God.

(L) Let us give thanks to the Holy One our God.

(P) It is right to lift up thanks and praise.

...for we are eagerly awaiting our Savior to come again from heaven

***Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord, God of Saboath
Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of your glory.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.***

***CLOSING HYMN** *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

*Angels, from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story Now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship. Worship Christ, the newborn King.*

*Shepherds, in the field abiding, Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing; Yonder shines the Infant Light:
Come and worship, come and worship. Worship Christ, the newborn King.*

*Come and worship the newborn King. Come and worship the Lamb,
For the Child has been born this day. Come and worship His holy name.
Come and worship His holy name.*

*Saints before the altar bending, Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending in His temple shall appear:
Come and worship, come and worship. Worship Christ, the newborn King.*

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #152**

*Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.
Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.*

***POSTLUDE**

*(*Please stand in body or spirit.)*

St. Matthews United Church of Christ

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Pastor: The Rev. Suzanne Brooks-Cope

Office Manager: Mrs. Rose Arace

Coordinator of Spiritual Formation: Mrs. Staci Gower

Music Director: Mr. Daniel Smale

Council President: Mr. George Huber

Sunday Worship, 9 AM; AM, Adult Sunday School, 10:30 am

Children's Sunday School is virtual on our website

www.stmattsucckunkletown.com





In this Advent time of waiting, I wait now to hear a word from you, dear Lord.

This Week Ahead

Sunday, December 6	Worship Annual Congregational Meeting Second Sunday of Advent	-Sanctuary, 9 am -Sanctuary, 10 am -CIA Class, Stage 10:30 am
Monday, December 7	Exercise Group	-Office Open 9am-1 pm -Gathering Room, 1 pm
Wednesday, December 9	Exercise Group	-Office Open 9am-1pm -Gathering Room, 1 pm
Friday, December 11	Exercise Group	-Office Open 9am-1pm
Sunday, December 13	Worship Third Sunday of Advent	-Sanctuary, 9 am -CIA Class, Stage 10:30 am

Prayer Concerns

Doug Hawk, Bill Slawter, Eliza Dymond, Janet Gower, Alton and Lila Kleintop, Bruce Eckhart, Gladys Lindenmoyer, Erica Pozza, McCoy Rappa, Lee Sitler, Rosemarie Stranahan, Ralph Wunder, Lynda Edwards, Janet Fowler, Shirley Smith, Chapman and Mason Buskirk, Brayden Wunder, Kelly George, Kim Cope, Josh and Kevin Engler, Mae Borger, Gladys Meixsell, George Keller, and the Families of Bill Clausen, Scott Madden, Loretta Hawk, Marlene Prutzman, Bobbie Christman, Franklin Smith and Linda Strohl

Today's Ushers:

Norm Burger, Shirley Brotzman, Henry Krechel, Jennie Rose Serfass, George Huber

Next Week's Ushers:

Darryl Breinich and Diann Bittenbender

This Week's Acolyte: Katie Fritz

Next Week's Acolyte: Ally Pfancook



Our Annual Congregational Meeting will take place at the close of worship today. The purpose will be two-fold—to approve the proposed budget and to elect three new council members for the Class of 2023.

We will celebrate the Sacrament of Communion this morning. Please have your elements ready. If you did not bring them with you from home, prepackaged elements are available. (The top layer peels off to reveal the small wafer and the second layer peels off to reveal the juice). When the pastor eats the bread, please eat yours and when she drinks the cup, please do the same. This is the Lord's Table; all are welcome to join the feast.

Transmission of COVID19 is on the rise in our area. Don't forget to wear a mask at all times when inside the building and to keep 6 feet away from others not in your household! If you are not feeling well or running a fever, please stay home. Thank you for helping to keep each other safe.

We will have a "Blue Christmas" Service on Monday, December 14 at 7 pm for all those who are grieving or having a difficult time finding joy this Advent/Christmas season. It will be a service of prayer, candles, and communion. We will worship in the Gathering Room.

Christmas Eve Plans: Currently, we are planning on having four Christmas Eve Services—3, 5, 7, 10 pm. We hope everyone who would like to attend a Christmas Eve service will be able to come to one of those services and be able to be seated in the sanctuary. **We ask that you call the church office and make a reservation.** We can only allow a maximum of 57 people in the sanctuary for each service—and that includes all participants. By Christmas Eve, our TV's should all be able to live stream for overflow. We ask that you reserve your spot in the sanctuary for one service only. These are the current plans—if we have to go to online worship, we will have a virtual 5 pm (lessons, carols, and candlelight) and 7 pm (country gospel) service. All services will have communion so don't forget to bring bread and wine (juice).



2020 has been a difficult year. Many of us are ready to say goodbye and welcome in a New Year. Council is considering sponsoring a New Year's Eve Party in the Grove for our church family with campfires, a Watchnight Worship Service, refreshments, and possible line dancing. We would like to know if you would consider coming. Please let George Huber, Rose Arace, Diann Bittenbender, Renee Keiper, Randy Cramer, or Pastor Suzanne know if you would be interested.

Offering Envelopes for 2021 are available for pick up in the Social Hall.