

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN "BLUE" CHURCH

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Pastor: Rev. James Hammond 610-437-1960; jitrev1@verizon.net

Blue Church Cemetery – 484-201-5048; e-mail: bluechurchcemetery@gmail.com

Fourth Sunday of Advent ❖ December 23, 2018

**PRELUDE — "SEE AMID THE WINTER'S SNOW" — ANTHONY
GIANANCO**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity ❖ one God, the LORD of Israel who comes to set us free, the mighty Savior who comes to show mercy, the Dawn from on high who guides us into peace. **Amen.**

Let us come before God in confession.

Silence for reflection

To you, O God,

We lift up our souls. You know us through and through; we confess our sins to you. Remember not our sins; remember us with your steadfast love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Children of God, come with joy and draw water from the well of salvation. Remember the gift of baptism: your sin is washed away in the name of ❖ Jesus; you belong to Christ; you are anointed to serve. Stand up and raise your heads! The reign of God is near. **Amen.**

HYMN #240 "LIGHT ONE CANDLE TO WATCH FOR MESSIAH"

ADVENT WREATH BLESSING & LIGHTING 4TH CANDLE

P: God our Savior, nothing is impossible for you.

**C: Prepare our hearts to rejoice in your glorious advent.
Amen.**

Fourth candle is lit.

HYMN #244 "REJOICE, REJOICE, BELIEVERS" (STANZA 4)

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.

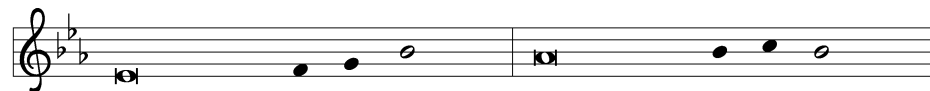
PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...Stir up your power, LORD Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON:

MICAH 5:2-5A

PSALMODY: LUKE 1:46B-55 (*Sung responsively*) **Tone 4**



My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord,
⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,
**⁴⁸for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant.
From this day all generations will | call me blessed:**
⁴⁹you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me
and holy | is your name.
**⁵⁰You have mercy on | those who fear you,
from generation to | generation.**
⁵¹You have shown strength | with your arm
and scattered the proud in | their conceit,
**⁵²casting down the mighty | from their thrones
and lifting | up the lowly.**
⁵³You have filled the hungry | with good things
and sent the rich | away empty.
**⁵⁴You have come to the aid of your | servant Israel,
to remember the prom- | ise of mercy,**
⁵⁵the promise made | to our forebears,
to Abraham and his chil- | dren forever.

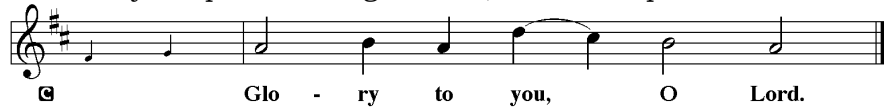
SECOND LESSON:

HEBREWS 10:5-10

VERSE

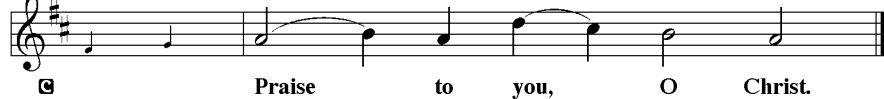


P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 1st Chapter.



HOLY GOSPEL: LUKE 1:39-45 (46-55)

P: The Gospel of the LORD.



SERMON

HYMN #296 "WHAT CHILD IS THIS"

NICENE CREED

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 *Response: "Your mercy is great."*

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the LORD be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERING – "SHEPHERDS MEDLEY" – ED KEE

Offering is gathered for the poor and those with needs in our community and world.

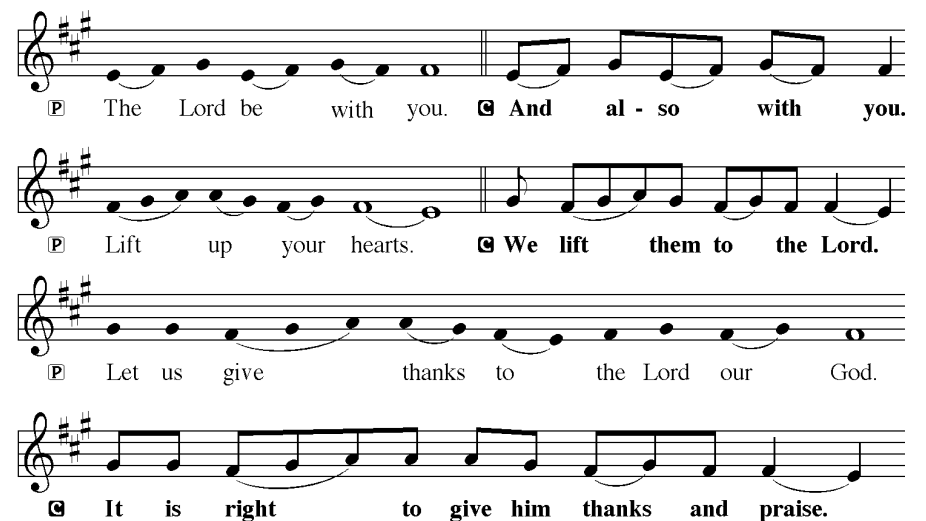
OFFERTORY RESPONSE #884

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray...God of abundance,
**we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation,
and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as
we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son,
our Savior and LORD. Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is indeed right and salutary...we praise your name and join unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The pastor offers the prayer. The congregation joins in praying the LORD's Prayer.

LORD'S PRAYER

**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**

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

God fills the hungry with good things. Taste and see that the LORD is good.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace.

HOLY COMMUNION

HYMN #295 - "OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN"

BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our LORD Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER

A: Let us pray...Holy One, we give you thanks that in this bread and cup we have feasted again on your endless love. Let that love overflow more and more in our lives, that we may be messengers to prepare your way, harvesters of justice and righteousness, and bearers of your eternal Word, our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

May God direct your ways in peace, make you abound in love for one another and for all, and strengthen your hearts until the coming of our LORD Jesus. Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN #267 "JOY TO THE WORLD"

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE – "WATCHMAN, TELL US OF THE NIGHT" – LYNDELL LEATHERMAN

☩ ☩ ☩

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WELCOME TO ALL IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST! We especially welcome those who are visiting. We invite you to sign our guest register in the narthex.

“Gods purpose for St. Paul’s Lutheran “Blue” Church is to spread the Good News of Christ’s love for all people in the Southern Lehigh community and beyond.”
—Mission Statement adopted, February 2012

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT: ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE

READINGS....

Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and the blessed virgin Mary’s magnificent song of praise the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ’s advent is for “the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in the holy communion—with high delight—“we proclaim the Lord’s death.”

MICAH 5:2-5A: *The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.*

HEBREWS 10:5-10: *The author of Hebrews uses the image of religious sacrifice to convey the significance of Christ’s coming. Through obedient acceptance of God’s will, Christ allows his own body to become the greatest sacrifice of all, one through which we are made a holy people.*

LUKE 1:39-45 (46-55): *We are presented with Elizabeth, John’s mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth’s inspired greeting and Mary’s song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.*

PRAYER FOR THE DAY: My spirit magnifies the Lord.
(Luke 1:46)

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK: Come to us, faithful and loving God. Fill us with the treasure of Christ’s life and bless us with faith, hope, and love. Amen.

PLEASE NOTE: - For those people wishing to take Holy Communion without wine, there are four cups in the center of the Communion tray with grape juice.

BLUE CHURCH PRAYS FOR....Sick/Recovering: Eileen Haddad, Joel Hammond, Ann G., Christine Robins, Hattie Smith, Maureen Swanson, Irmi, Dan, Deb

Note: This is a short-term list, for those who are in “acute care” situations—hospitalized or in recovery, dying, facing the recent death of a loved one, or presently facing a severe life crisis. The names of those for whom we pray will be kept on the list for one month. If you wish to have them placed back on the list please contact the church office.

LEADING OUR WORSHIP

CELEBRANT	The Rev. James Hammond
ORGANIST	Dr. Jennifer Dodd
GREETER	Bill Winkler
ASSISTING MINISTER	Dick Storat
LECTOR	Dick Storat
USHERS	Shirley Hildebrand, Maggie Fried
CHURCH COUNCIL REP	Pete Link
ALTAR FLOWER DELIVERY	Sherry Farrell

CONGREGATIONAL BULLETIN BOARD

TODAY: **9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal.**
9:30 AM Christian Education.
10:30 AM Worship.

MON.: **6:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Family Service with Holy Communion.**
9:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Holy Communion.

TUES.: **BLESSED CHRISTMAS!**

WED.: **9 AM Quilting.**

NEXT SUN.: **NO 9 AM Choir Rehearsal.**
NO 9:30 AM Christian Education.
10:30 AM WORSHIP – 1ST Sunday of Christmas.

C O M I N G E V E N T S – mark your calendar!

JAN. 14 – 7 PM Church Council Meeting.

JAN. 20 – ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING.

SAT. JAN. 26 “ROCK THE CROCK” FUN EVENT AT BLUE CHURCH WITH ENTERTAINMENT. STAY TUNED, MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW.

WEEKLY GIFTS, PRESENTED TO THE GLORY OF GOD:

ALTAR FLOWERS...by Anne Nichols in honor of Chase Coleman's Birthday.

BULLETINS...by Shirley Hildebrand in memory of mother Mary Weil's Birthday.

SANCTUARY LAMP...by Bill and Kathy Exner.

COMMUNION BREAD & WINE...by Roger and Edie Knappenberger

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE INVOLVED IN LUCIA FEST.

A special thanks to Helene Parnell, Anne Nichols, Pastor Jim Hammond, Dick Storat, Jennifer Dodd, members of St. Lucia Choir, Kathy Exner, and to the parents of the children who participated. Also, thanks to the Lucia Fest helpers, Sherry Farrell, Loraine Kline, Julianne Medina, and Wendy and Greg Storat.

THE COAT DRIVE IS ONCE AGAIN UNDER WAY. Don't throw out your old coats. Blue Church is collecting gently used coats to help those who can use them for the upcoming winter season. The collection of coats will continue through the Christmas season. You can bring in coats for drop off in the bin in the narthex.

The Sheets to sponsor Altar Flowers, Bulletins, the Sanctuary Candle, and the monthly Communion Wine for 2019 are on the bulletin boards in the Narthex. Please make sure to sign the appropriate chart.

HELP BLUE CHURCH BY SHOPPING AT AmazonSmile. Each time you do Amazon will donate 0.5% of the amount of the purchase. Each quarter Blue Church will then receive a check. Before shopping simply select **ST PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH COOPERSBURG PA** as your charitable choice to receive your donation. Pick up an information sheet on the table in the Narthex.

PLEASE NOTE – The last day to receive credit for your 2018 contribution is December 30. Any offerings received after that date will be credited to 2019. Thank you for your cooperation.

Stewardship Snippet

Dec. 23, 2018 (4th Sunday of Advent)

Micah 5:4 – And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

Peace is the theme for the fourth Sunday of Advent. We remember that Jesus is, as Micah says, "the one of peace," the shepherd who cares for us, his flock. Steward/disciples draw near to Jesus and find peace in

Please consider the Simply Giving Program in your stewardship giving to the Church. The program offers a secure electronic payment solution that allows you to make regular offerings. Sign up is easy. Simply fill out a form located in the narthex and return it to the church office. Any questions, contact Kathy Exner.
