

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN "BLUE" CHURCH

5900 Applebutter Hill Rd. Coopersburg, Pa 18036

610-965-9500 e-mail: bluechch@ptd.net Website: stpaulscoopersburg.com

Pastor: Rev. James Hammond 610-437-1960; jjtrev1@verizon.net

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

First Sunday of Advent ✦ November 29, 2020

PRELUDE – “WHAT CHILD IS THIS?” – HUGH LIVINGSTON, JR.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be God, Father, ✦ Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

Amen.

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence for reflection

Loving and forgiving God,

we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God. Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ.

Amen.

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love ✦ comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

HYMN #257 O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

ADVENT CANDLE LITURGY & LIGHTING 1ST CANDLE

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the first candle on this wreath, rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our LORD when he comes with all the saints and angels. Enlighten us with your grace, and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy. Grant this through Christ our LORD, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

First candle is lit.

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

(STANZA 1)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...Stir up your power, LORD Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST LESSON:

ISAIAH 64:1-9

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

**²In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

³Restore us, O God;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴O LORD God of hosts,

how long will your anger fume when your people pray?

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears;

you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

**⁶You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

**¹⁷Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you;

give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

SECOND LESSON:

1 CORINTHIANS 1:3-9

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 13th Chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL:

MATTHEW 13:24-37

The Gospel of the LORD.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN – #244 REJOICE, REJOICE, BELIEVERS

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

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER *The pastor offers the 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**

HOLY COMMUNION

BLESSING

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

PRAYER

A: Let us pray...Gracious and abundant God, you have done great
things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life
forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts
to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected
Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ✠
now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN #439 *SOON AND VERY SOON*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE – “SING WE NOW OF CHRISTMAS MEDLEY” – CAROL TORNQUIST

✠ ✠ ✠

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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. Blank envelopes in the pews are for visitors.
“God’s 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. –Blue Church Mission Statement, adopted 2012

THE DAY IN THE CHURCH YEAR: FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE READINGS.....*Stir up your power and come! The psalmist’s plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.*

ISAIAH 64:1-9: *This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40-55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.*

1 CORINTHIANS 1:3-9: *As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the LORD has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the LORD.*

MARK 13:24-37: *In today's reading, Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.*

PRAYER FOR THE DAY...Let your face shine on us, O Lord, and we shall be saved
(Psalm 80:3)

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK...Lord Jesus, we do not lack any spiritual gift as we wait for your coming. Keep us awake and help us use our gifts to serve those who look for the dawn of your justice and mercy. Amen.

BLUE CHURCH PRAYS FOR...Bill Exner, Ron Fried, Jerry Smith, Hattie Smith, Bob Storat, Sue Storat

Other concerns: Kevin Jones, deployment.

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.

WEEKLY GIFTS, PRESENTED TO THE GLORY OF GOD...

ALTAR FLOWERS...by Shirley Hildebrand in memory of Harley Wagner.

SANCTUARY LAMP...by Dean & Deb Stover for Veronica Zadnik's 11th Birthday.

COMMUNION BREAD & WINE...by Sandra Denora

Many thanks to the Storat Family for directing monies from the Keith Storat Memorial Fund to update and install the new sound system at Blue Church.

LEADING OUR WORSHIP

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| CELEBRANT | The Rev. James Hammond |
| ORGANIST | Dr. Jennifer Dodd |
| ASSISTING MINISTER | Maggie Fried |
| LECTOR | Maggie Fried |

GREETERS Ron & Carol Stoudt
CHURCH COUNCIL REP John Sumoski

THE ANNUAL COAT DRIVE IS NOW UNDER WAY. Blue Church is collecting gently used coats for the winter season to help those who can use them. You can bring in coats and drop them in the bin in the narthex. They are greatly appreciated.

DETERGENT DONATIONS: Our church family did a great job in 2020! We actually collected 93 bottles! Thankfully, too, because we needed more this year. So, we will continue collecting from now until next September (or until we reach at least 80 count) and store them til then. That way we can pick some up when it's on sale. They can be left at the side entrance to the church (red door) and someone will put them inside. Thanks again for being so generous with all your donations and volunteering to help those in need in our community!

Betty Lou's Pantry requests Christmas donations for the children. Due to COVID, we will not be purchasing presents, (like Sherry so faithfully did!) other years, but our pantry Christmas chairperson will be purchasing gift cards for the families to buy their own gifts. So, if you can donate any amount, it will be appreciated. Please send a check made out to Betty Lou's Pantry with "BLP Christmas presents" in the memo line to Betty Lou's Pantry, PO Box 85, Coopersburg, Pa. 18036. Please send by Monday November 30th. (If you forget by that date, like I often do, just give it to me, Deb Stover, before 12/9 and I'll get it to them). Thanks, in advance!

BLUE CHURCH NOTES
IN-PERSON WORSHIP

- Masks must be worn at all times properly covering one's nose and mouth.
- There will be no formal collection of offering or passing of the peace. Receptacles will be provided in the narthex area for worshippers to deposit their offering envelopes (which may also be mailed in to the church office).
- In order to provide a sanitary and safe Holy Communion experience we are using pre-filled Communion chalices.
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PLEASE NOTE – *If you would like to help defray the extra expense of the Communion cups you can use your Communion envelope in your box of offering envelopes or a plain envelope marked "Communion" with your name.*

LOOKING AHEAD

MONDAY, NOV. 30 – 7-8 PM Girl Scouts.

THURSDAY, DEC. 3 – 6:30 – 7:30 Cub Pack #364 Meeting.

SUNDAY, DEC. 6 – 10:30 AM Worship – 2nd Sunday in Advent.

Stewardship Snippets

November 29, 2020 (1st Sunday of Advent)

“And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”– Mark 13:37
Advent calls us to pay attention and to look for signs of Christ in the world. As we enter a new season of the church year, we continue to give thanks and show gratitude. Pay attention. Look around. Opportunities to be a blessing to others abound!

WE REMEMBER THIS WEEK...

November 30 – Andrew, Apostle

Andrew was the first of the Twelve. He is known as a fisherman who left his net to follow Jesus. As a part of his calling, he brought other people, including Simon Peter, to meet Jesus. The Byzantine church honors Andrew as its patron and points out that because he was the first of Jesus’ followers, he was, in the words of John Chrysostom, “The Peter before Peter.” Together with Philip, Andrew leads a number of Greeks to speak with Jesus, and it is Andrew who shows Jesus a boy with five barley loaves and two fish. Andrew is said to have died on cross saltire, an X-shaped cross.

LESSONS

Isaiah 64:1-9 – 1st Lesson

64O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
2 **as when fire kindles brushwood*
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
3 When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
4 From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
5 You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.*
6 We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
7 There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered* us into the hand of our iniquity.
8 Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
9 Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

1 Corinthians 1:3-9 – 2nd Lesson

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I give thanks to my* God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— ⁶just as the testimony of* Christ has been strengthened among you— ⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Mark 13:24-37

24 'But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

28 'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he* is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will

not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

32 'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert;* for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

St. Paul's Lutheran "Blue" Church
Prayers ✕ First Sunday of Advent ✕
November 29, 2020

A: God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need, responding,

"Your mercy is great."

A brief silence

A: We pray for the ministry we share in Christ's name. Open our hearts to your call for justice, peace, and healing. Attune us to the needs of the world as you draw near. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A brief silence

A: We pray for this planet in need of restoration: for devastated habitats, polluted waters, thawing ice, blazing fires, swelling floods, and long-lasting droughts. Renew the face of the earth and our relationship to it. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: We pray for all people who care for others in our community and around the world. Fill them with compassion and the power to respond with justice for those who are oppressed, with welcome for those who are excluded, and with relief for those who suffer. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: We pray for people who are in crisis as the seasons change: for those without homes facing severe weather, for those who are unemployed or underemployed, and for those in poverty or facing food insecurity. Relieve their burdens, sustain their bodies, and ease their minds. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: We pray for the people in our families and congregation who live with depression, anxiety, chronic pain, addiction, and other invisible illnesses. Ease their suffering and support them when they struggle. Today we pray especially for: Bill, Ron, Jerry, Hattie, Bob, Sue, Kevin, and everyone who has

asked for our prayers or known only to the Lord. Hear us, O God.

Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

A: We give thanks for the lives and witness of those who died while waiting for justice, peace, or healing, those whose names we know and those whose names are known only to you. Sustain all who still yearn for the completion of your redeeming work. Hear us, O God.

"Your mercy is great."

Pastor: Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
