

# 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](mailto:jjtrev1@verizon.net)

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

**Second Sunday of Advent ✕ December 6, 2020**

PRELUDE — "THE FIRST NOEL" — 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 #254 COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS

## ADVENT CANDLE LITURGY & LIGHTING 2<sup>ND</sup> CANDLE

We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit, that we may be light shining in the darkness. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near

*Second candle is lit.*

## HYMN #240 "LIGHT ONE CANDLE TO WATCH FOR MESSIAH" (STANZA 2)

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...Stir up our hearts, LORD God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and LORD, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON:

ISAIAH 40:1-11

## PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13

<sup>1</sup>You have been gracious to your land, O LORD;  
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup>**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people  
and blotted out all their sins.**

<sup>8</sup>I will listen to what the LORD God is saying,  
for you speak peace to your faithful people  
and to those who turn their hearts to you.

<sup>9</sup>**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,  
that your glory may dwell in our land.**

<sup>10</sup>Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

<sup>11</sup>**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,  
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

<sup>12</sup>The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,  
and our land will yield its increase.

<sup>13</sup>**Righteousness shall go before the LORD  
and peace shall prepare for God a pathway.**

SECOND LESSON:

2 PETER 3:8-15A

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter.  
Glory to you, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL:

MARK 1:1-8

The Gospel of the LORD.

Praise to you, O Christ.

## SERMON

HYMN — #269 ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

## 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 #264 *PREPARE THE ROYAL HIGHWAY*

### DISMISSAL

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

### POSTLUDE – “GOOD CHRISTIAN MEN, REJOICE!” – TRADITIONAL

✠ ✠ ✠

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permission.

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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

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### THE DAY IN THE CHURCH YEAR: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE READINGS.....***John called people to repent, to clear  
the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing would get in the way  
of the Lord’s coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical  
call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise  
that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be  
heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, “See, your God is  
coming!” We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in  
a world in need of justice and peace.*

**ISAIAH 40:1-11:** *In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. The Lord will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for his sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of the Lord.*

**2 PETER 3:8-15A:** *This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promise coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.*

**MARK 1:1-8:** *The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.*

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**PRAYER FOR THE DAY...**Prepare the way of the Lord. *(Mark 1:3)*

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK...**God our shepherd, gather us as lambs in your arms. Forgive our sins so that we may rejoice in your coming. Amen.

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

**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.*

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

**ALTAR FLOWERS...**by Lois and Warren Adams in honor of son's Birthday.

**SANCTUARY LAMP...**by Bill and Kathy Exner.

**COMMUNION BREAD & WINE...**

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*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.*

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**LEADING OUR WORSHIP**

<b>CELEBRANT</b>	The Rev. James Hammond
<b>ORGANIST</b>	Dr. Jennifer Dodd
<b>ASSISTING MINISTER</b>	Amy Ortwein
<b>LECTOR</b>	Amy Ortwein
<b>GREETERS</b>	John & Marcy Sumoski
<b>CHURCH COUNCIL REP</b>	Paula Clark

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**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.

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**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. The deadline has passed but if you forgot, you can just give it to Deb Stover before December 9<sup>th</sup> and she'll get it to them. Thanks, in advance!

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**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.
- **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.*

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**THE CHARTS TO SPONSOR ALTAR FLOWERS, BULLETINS, SANTUARY CANDLE AND WINE FOR 2021 ARE NOW ON THE BULLETIN BOARDS IN THE NARTHEX.** Please check the appropriate charts.

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**LOOKING AHEAD**

**MONDAY, DEC. 7 – 7-8 PM Girl Scouts.**

**THURSDAY, DEC. 10 – 6:30 – 7:30 Cub Pack #364 Meeting.**

**SUNDAY, DEC. 13 – 10:30 AM Worship – 3<sup>RD</sup> Sunday in Advent.**

**MONDAY, DEC. 14 – 7 PM Church Council Meeting.**

**SUNDAY, DEC. 20 – 10:30 AM Worship – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent.**

**MONDAY, DEC. 21 – 7 – 8 PM Girl Scouts.**

**THURSDAY – DEC. 24 – 7 PM CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP.**

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**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. 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!

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### Stewardship Snippets

**December 6, 2020** (Second Sunday of Advent)

*“A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” --*

**Isaiah 40:3**

2020 has certainly upended our worship and community life. Christmas will be much different from what we’ve known. As faithful stewards, we prepare to welcome Jesus, even if circumstances are not what we expect or desire. Remember: God is faithful and Christ is with us.

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### WE REMEMBER THIS WEEK...

**December 6 – Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, died around 342**

Though Nicholas is one of the church’s most beloved saints, little is known about his life. In the fourth century he was a bishop in what is now Turkey. Legends that surround Nicholas tell of his love for God and neighbor, especially the poor. One famous story tells of Nicholas secretly giving bags of gold to the three daughters of a father who was going to sell them into prostitution because he could not provide dowries for them. Nicolas has become a symbol of anonymous gift giving.

## LESSONS

### Isaiah 40:1-11 – 1<sup>ST</sup> Lesson

- 40 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 for ever.  
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!'

<sup>10</sup> See, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.

<sup>11</sup> 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.

## 2 Peter 3:8-15a – 2<sup>nd</sup> Lesson

<sup>8</sup> But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you,\*- not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.\*-

<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup>waiting for and hastening\*- the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? <sup>13</sup>But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; <sup>15</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him,

## Mark 1:1-8 - Gospel

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news\*- of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.\*-

<sup>2</sup> As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,\*-

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,\*-  
who will prepare your way;

<sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
"Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight" ',

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared\*- in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with\*- water; but he will baptize you with\*- the Holy Spirit.'

**St. Paul's Lutheran "Blue" Church**  
**Prayers ✘ Second Sunday of Advent ✘**  
**December 6, 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: Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission. Hear us, O God.

**"Your mercy is great."**

*A brief silence*

A: Loving God, you set the stars in the sky and breathe life into the earth. Renew the face of creation where it is in need of your healing touch. Mend the wounds of environmental damage and restore balance to ecosystems so that all creation can declare your praise. Hear us, O God.

**"Your mercy is great."**

A: Steadfast God, you never tire of seeking justice. Where people suffer from discrimination, judgment, and injustice, speak words of truth and comfort. Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above. Hear us, O God.

**"Your mercy is great."**

A: Leading God, you ask us to make uneven ground smooth. Make even the disparities between your people. Sustain and support people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Accompany disability advocates who work for a world accessible to all. Teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst. Hear us, O God.

**"Your mercy is great."**

A: Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families and Blue Church who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or

struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace. Today we pray especially for: Bill, Ron, Jerry, Hattie, Bob, Sue, Dean, 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: Eternal God, we give thanks for the saints who have prepared your way in the wilderness and taught us to continue their faithful work. Make their generous lives an example for all. 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.**

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