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FIRST SUNDAY OF *Advent*

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**St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran – Nov. 28, 2021**

120 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Upper Sandusky, Ohio 43351

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday 8am-12pm, 1-5pm

Phone: 419-294-2831, Fax: 419-294-5542

Pastor Barry Halter, Jr.: 419-852-9823

Listen live on WYNT 95.9 FM or on demand at [www.stpaulupper.org](http://www.stpaulupper.org)

\*=stand as you are able

Assistive listening devices are available. Ask an usher.

## Introduction to the day

Advent is about the “coming days.” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks. The ancients anticipated a “righteous Branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Jesus’ contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, a second coming, and the advent of Christ in word and supper.

# + GATHERING +

PRELUDE      *"Come, Though Long Expected Jesus"* Hutson

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

ADVENT HYMN:
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<i>"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"</i> vs. 1      Hymn 240
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## \*CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who alone does wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God for whom we wait, **in the presence of one another, we confess our sin before you. We fail in believing that your good news is for us. We falter in our call to tend your creation. We find our sense of self in material wealth. We fear those different from ourselves. We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love. Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.**

God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, † your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace. **Amen.**

\*GATHERING SONG:

*"Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying"*

Hymn 436

\*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.**

\*KYRIE & CANTICLE OF PRAISE

p. 138-141

\*PRAYER OF THE DAY

CHOIR ANTHEM (recorded in 2018)

## + WORD +

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 33:14-16

...The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

...The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

p. 142

\*GOSPEL: Luke 21:25-36

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

...This is the Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Pastor Barry Halter, Jr.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *"Rejoice, Rejoice Believers"*

Hymn 244

THE APOSTLES' CREED

p. 105

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Following each petition: ...Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.***

COVID-FRIENDLY SHARING OF THE PEACE

# + MEAL +

## OFFERING

*Please fill out the registration form in the red pew pad and pass it along in your row.*

OFFERING MUSIC *"I Will Walk before the Lord" Groom*

## OFFERING PRAYER

## COMMUNION LITURGY

p. 144-145

*"LAMB OF GOD..."*

p. 146

## DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

*Invitation to the Lord's table – All baptized persons are welcome at the table. If you do not desire to receive communion, you may come forward for a blessing. Your wish to receive the Sacrament is indicated by your upturned hands. Those with an aversion to wine may receive grape juice (in the center of the ring) or commune in one kind (bread only). Those with a wheat allergy may commune in one kind (wine only) or request a piece of rice cake. If you're not comfortable to receive communion from servers, you may come forward to get a packaged kit. The Lord has prepared the welcome table. Come and eat.*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

# + SENDING +

## SENDING

SENDING SONG: *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"* vs. 1-4 Hymn 257

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## \*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is near. **Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE BY KATIE CLARK

*"Morning Song" Scott*

PRAYER CONCERNS: Carol Roszman, Virginia Berberick, Marge Forry, Tim & Karen Koehler, Shannyn Swinehart, Shirley Johns, Emma Dilley, the Eisenhower family, Deb Passet, Barry & Colleen Halter, Traci Treon, all first responders & frontline workers

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given by the Smalley Family to the glory of God and in loving memory of Jane's mom, Pat Bardon.

A HUGE THANK YOU to the small, but mighty, group who showed up to help beautify our church!

YOU'RE IN LUCK.....there are 2 pumpkin pies still available for purchase. See Nancy Ross if you would like to purchase one of them for \$10.

NEWSLETER DEADLINE is Tuesday!

DON'T FORGET to check out the Christmas trees at the crosswalk to pick your paper ornament to donate to ELCA's Good Gifts program. Details are posted near the trees.

CALLING ALL KIDS THROUGH MIDDLE SCHOOL...we need you for the annual Kids' Christmas program! We will practice during Jr. Church so please come down when the dismissal happens each Sunday! The kids can't drive themselves; so if you are a parent or grandparent please bring them!

CONTINUING EACH TUESDAY at 7:30 we will be having a choir rehearsal for a choir to sing Christmas Eve. If Tuesday evenings don't work for you and you would like to sing, a Sunday morning 9:15 rehearsal is also available. It looks like it will be an SAB choir. Men PLEASE join us!!!

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES will take place starting Wednesday, December 1 at 7pm in The Family Space. We will kick this series off with a light supper of soup (vegetable & loaded baked potato), bread, & dessert at 6:15pm in Fellowship Hall. The message for each evening will be based on the devotional "Heaven and Nature Sing." This daily devotional for Advent and Christmas is available at the crosswalk.

WORD ON WEDNESDAY is on hiatus until after the New Year. If you would like to study the lessons on your own, they are Malachi 3:1-4, Philippians 1:3-11, and Luke 3:1-6.

POINSETTIA ORDER FORMS are on the table at the crosswalk. The last day to order is December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

IN DISCUSSING THE BUDGET FOR NEXT YEAR, it was determined by council that as of right now we have a projected \$20,000 deficit for 2021. Please prayerfully consider your giving these next few weeks so that we might make our budget for this year. Thank you in advance!

BUSY BAGS for the kids are available at the crosswalk. The orange bags are for toddlers. All other colors are for older kids. Please return them after worship.

THE MISSION OUTREACH line on your offering envelope for November will go to Lutheran Disaster Relief and to our local Good Samaritan Fund during December.

CHRISTIAN FOOD CENTER: We are collecting cleaning supplies during November and toiletries during December. Please put your donations in the shopping cart at the crosswalk.

## **DECEMBER DUTIES:**

**Assisting Ministers:** 5 – Sheryl Clinger  
12 – Katie Clark  
19 – Jenn Ruhlen  
24 – Jim Ruhlen  
26 – Beth Collins

**Ushers:** BJ Ford, Mike & Missy Breidenbach, Ben & Gary Ault

**Greeters:** Nancy Ross & Robbi Sigler (south)  
Sally Stansbery & Barbara Stief (west)

**Readers:** 5 – June Eier  
12 – Emily Ruhlen  
19 – Darlene Mooney  
24 – Rosie Craig  
26 – Paula Brown, Bruce Decker, Jim Gatchell, BJ & Angie Ford, Russ Lee, and Jane Smalley

**Communion Assistants:** Rick & Rinda Kraus

**Bread Baker:** Nancy Ross

**Deliver Food Pantry donations:** Bonnie Menningen

**Host in The Gathering Place:** 5 – Tim & Shannon Ray  
12 – Michelle Ohler  
19 – Jane Bricely  
26 – Jean Hollanshead



## **Today**

11:30am – Solo bell practice

## **Monday, November 29**

7:30pm – Dartball @ Jenera Jr.

## **Tuesday, November 30**

8:30am – Staff meeting

12-2pm – Wyandot Cares class

6pm – Bell Group 1 practice

6:30pm – Cub Scout Den meetings

6:45pm – Bell Group 2 practice

7:30pm – Choir practice

## **Wednesday, December 1**

8am-2pm – Wyandot Cares classes

5pm – Organ lesson

6:15pm – Soup Supper

7pm – Midweek Advent worship

## **Thursday, December 2**

1:30-2:15pm – Wyandot Cares classes

## **Friday, December 3**

1:30-2:15pm – Wyandot Cares classes

## **Sunday, December 5**

9am – Adult Sunday School

9:15am – Choir practice

10am – Worship

11:30am – Solo bell practice

## **Expectant Waiting**

A pastor once summarized the way God answers prayers with three categories: yes, no, and not yet. To his young audience, these categories made sense and served as a simple way to think about their prayer life. But having clear categories does not dismiss the fact that it is often easier to receive the answer “yes” or “no,” compared to the answer “not yet.” After all, the answer “not yet” often involves waiting. And waiting can be exhausting!

Whether it be waiting for a medical diagnosis, longing for healing in a relationship, expecting a child, or enduring another situation beyond our complete control, it can be challenging to be patient, accept the unknown, and trust God’s promises in the meantime.

This is a reality Jesus understood, and one that is at the heart of his parable of the fig tree in today’s reading. The early believers needed encouragement as they waited for the coming of the Lord. Patience, endurance, and trust did not come any easier to them than they do to many of us today. Yet that is precisely what followers of Christ are invited to do during the season of Advent: to remain prayerful and expectant as they await the birth of Jesus.

Perhaps that is why Jesus gives his followers something to do in their waiting. Jesus’ words urge us to be on the lookout for signs of God’s kingdom, even as we await the fulfillment of God’s promises in the future. The sign you see may be a neighbor helping another in need, a child growing and thriving, or a card received from a friend. God’s promise is that even as we wait for the fulfillment of God’s kingdom, it is drawing near—and is, in fact, already among us.