

SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
4856 WAYNE ROAD
CHAMBERSBURG, PA 17202
(717) 267-2266

EMAIL: info@solomonslutheran.org
WEB SITE: www.solomonslutheran.org
FACEBOOK SEARCH: Solomon's Lutheran Facebook

THE GRASS WITHERS.
THE FLOWER FADES.
BUT THE WORD
OF THE LORD
STANDS FOREVER.



I S A I A H 4 0 : 8

"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 6, 2020

December 6, 2020
Second Sunday of Advent

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets 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.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Silence for the lighting of the altar candles

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

ADVENT WREATH PRAYER: ADVENT 2

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Light two candles.

PRAYER BELL RINGS (*Pastor rings the pulpit bell twice.*)

P: The voice of one crying in the wilderness says:

C: “Prepare the way for the Lord, make his paths straightt.”

Please stand as you are able for the . . .

CONFESSION AND 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.

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.

GATHERING SONG *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* (JEFFERSON) (ELW 254)

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev-'ry na-tion, joy of ev-'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer-it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

ADVENT PRAYER

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 READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

A reading from Isaiah.

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

¹Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

²Speak 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.

³A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every 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.

⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get 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!"

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

¹¹He 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 word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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

(Read responsively between men and women, beginning with the men)

¹You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD;
you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.

²**You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people
and blotted out | all their sins.**

⁸I 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.

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

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have | met together;
righteousness and peace have | kissed each other.

¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up | from the earth,
and righteousness shall look | down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed | grant prosperity,
and our land will | yield its increase.

¹³**Righteousness shall go be- | fore the LORD
and shall prepare for | God a pathway.**

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

A reading from 2 Peter.

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 promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

⁸Do 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. ⁹The 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. ¹⁰But 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.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting 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? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

The first line of musical notation consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a bass clef staff. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

The second line of musical notation consists of a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a bass clef staff. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Text: Taizé Community
Music: WAIT FOR THE LORD, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994
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GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’ ”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And 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. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷He 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. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Pastor Bill

HYMN OF THE DAY *Prepare the Royal Highway* (ELW 264)

Prepare the Royal Highway



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing; your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

Refrain



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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Please stand as you are able

Please join me as we confirm our faith together in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH *(Please respond.)*

P: Hear us, O God. C: Your mercy is great.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Please remain standing.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



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

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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 COMMUNION

Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here.
Come, eat and drink.

COMMUNION

Continuous – Please continue down center aisle at direction of the usher, maintaining your distance and keeping your mask on. Move your mask to eat the bread and drink the wine. Please place your empty communion cup in the basket. Return to your seat with your mask on.

COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING SONG *He Came Down* (ELW 253)

He Came Down



- 1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
- 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
- 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have joy;

Text: Cameroon traditional
Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional

DISMISSAL

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

SILENT PRAYER

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SERVING TODAY

Pastor – Rev. Bill Nienstedt

Home Phone Number: 717-264-3757

Email Address: Pastor@solomonslutheran.org

Church Office Email Address: office@solomonslutheran.org

Organist – Doug Mummert

Head Usher – Bonney Coldsmith

Acolyte – Katy Nienstedt

Lector – Sam Mull

Communion Bread – Margie Dale

Communion Set up – Sam & Becky Mull

Communion Assistant – Ron Coldsmith

Attendance last Sunday – 28

Stewardship Thought - December 6, 2020 (Second Sunday of Advent, Year B)

“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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The altar flowers this morning are placed to the Glory of God in memory of Bud & Esther Reichard given by Children, Grandchildren, & Great Grand Children.

Welcome Visitors! We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

2021 Altar Flowers Chart—Kimberly will **not** be posting the new altar flowers chart as usual. INSTEAD, please call her to reserve your special Sunday! The price remains the same as last year: \$30. Flowers are purchased from the local florist shop, Everlasting Love. For the price of two flower arrangements, you can give glory to God with the beauty of His creation on the altar; commemorate a loved one; and if you choose, have your flowers given to someone who is homebound or recovering from surgery or illness.

Prayer requests for the following persons: *Amos Egolf, Dee Dee Fox, the family and friends of Gus Rice who died this past week, the family and friends of Michael Douglas who also died this past week, Jody Swartz, Quentin, Joan and David Likeness, Linda Small Naus, Nancy Marshall, Lee Locke, Barbara Socks, Darrell Veilleux, Denise Bowen, Jack Hess, Sylvia Wenger, Patsy Wagner, Anne English, Bill Sellers, Millie Kulkusky, Karen Sanders, Jackson, Bonnie Hudson.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Note:** At the beginning of each month, the Prayer Request List will start anew. If you would like to remain listed on the next month's list, or if you would like to have your name removed from the list before the end of the month, please call the office.

Many Thanks--A big THANK YOU to all who volunteered to help with the Salvation Army bell ringing. Our help in these trying times was very much appreciated by the Salvation Army.

Please welcome Kimberly Wiley, Solomon's new office administrator, who will be assuming the duties of Sally Gayman, who retired on Friday. Kimberly most recently worked in the bookstore at Penn State, Mont Alto and is eager to use her skills at Solomon's.

Every January a new church directory listing the names, phone numbers, and addresses of all Solomon's members is published by the church office. If your contact information has changed since publication of the 2020 directory, please let Kimberly know by December 13th.

If you do NOT want to receive offering envelopes in 2021, please contact Janice McEntire.

Advent Materials—Be sure to check your church mailbox for the specially-themed Advent devotionals for both young and old.

Youth Christmas Party--Our youth are invited to join us on **Saturday, December 12th**, in the Fellowship Center. We will begin at 6 PM by enjoying a packaged meal together of a ham sandwich, potato chips, fruit cup, packaged drink, and cookies. Afterwards, we will do some crafts while social distancing and wearing masks. **Everyone attending must wear a mask!** Please email Janice McEntire if you plan to attend. E-mail is jannie.mac @[hotmail.com](mailto:jannie.mac@hotmail.com) or call 717-264-3702. Your RSVP helps us know how many children to prepare a meal for and purchase craft supplies.

Our new office administrator will now be taking on this responsibility. Kindly submit any information you would like included for the January 2021 edition to her by December 16th at office@solomonslutheran.org.

Power Packs: With school back in session, the Power Packs program has now resumed. Currently, eight families have been identified at New Franklin Elementary School in need of food assistance. You can donate vegetable or fruit cups like last year. Donations of cash are also welcome if you are unable to shop or attend church due to the pandemic.

Candy Fundraiser-- We do have some candy left to sell so please call Zoe at 717-267-1777 (home) or 717-264-9598 (work). You can also call Kimberly at the Church Office: 717-267-2266.

2020 Poinsettia Order Form – last date to order December 6

Anyone desiring to remember a loved one or honor someone with Christmas Poinsettias is asked to fill out the following form and mail it to the church office or put it in the collection plate along with a check made payable to Solomon’s Lutheran Church, marked “Poinsettia Order.” Cost is \$9.60 each. **Please note, the florist cannot guarantee color selection.**

*The Christmas Poinsettias in Memory and Honor of Family and Friends
have been donated by:*

(name)

Red _____ Marble _____

Total amount enclosed _____ Total Poinsettias ordered _____

In memory of _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

In honor of _____

Poinsettias will be in the church on December 24. If you will not be attending church on Dec 24, you can make arrangements to pick up your flowers by calling the church office.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service

Thursday, December 24th

Worship with Holy Communion at 7:30 p.m.

**Please note that while we are planning to hold Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship, the uncertainty of the pandemic means there is a possibility plans could change.

Pandemic Fatigue Are you feeling mentally and emotionally exhausted from all the disruptions to life brought on by the pandemic? Are you facing isolation, loneliness, anxiety, grief, health issues, financial strain, or job loss? Please know you don’t have to face these things alone. If you or someone you care about is experiencing difficulties like these, our Stephen Ministers are ready to listen, care, encourage, and be there to offer support. A Stephen Minister will meet with you privately—by phone or video chat—to focus on you and your needs. It’s free and completely confidential, and it offers real care, comfort, and hope. To learn more, please contact Stephen Ministry Leader, Linda Beaver at 717-264-0737 or lbeaver@spiritrustlutheran.org

DECEMBER 6, 2020
2nd Sunday of Advent

God has good news for all people.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 1:1-8	The beginning of the good news
Monday	Isaiah 40:1-11	Comfort my people
Tuesday	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Promise of the Lord's coming
Wednesday	Malachi 4:1-6	The great day of the Lord
Thursday	Matthew 3:1-10	The preaching of John the Baptist
Friday	1 Timothy 1:12-17	Gratitude for God's mercy
Saturday	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	A prayer for God's peace
Sunday	John 1:6-8, 19-28	John's witness to the light

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"[T]he voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Mark 1:3 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Eternal God, we thank you that through your Son, Jesus Christ, love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. Amen. (Psalm 85:10)

Mealtime Prayer:

Eternal God, we thank you that through your Son, Jesus Christ, love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. Amen. (Psalm 85:10)

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord God feed you like a shepherd and keep you safe. (Isaiah 40:11)

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group or use for personal reflections:

- What is some good news you have heard recently?
- What events in the news do people consider to be positive news or good news?
- The word gospel means good news. How is the coming of Christ into our world good news for you?

HYMN OF THE WEEK

There's a Voice in the Wilderness



DEVOTIONS

Read: Mark 1:1-8.

The beginning of a book helps set up what the book is about and where the story is going. This is true of the Gospel of Mark as well. Mark 1:1-8 is part of Mark's prologue (vv. 1-13) and was used in ancient writings with this very purpose in mind: to give information that helps people follow the story as it unfolds. Mark's point is that good news ("good tidings" in Isaiah 40:9), the gospel, is beginning to happen through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This good news is linked to John the baptizer who is himself reminiscent of Elijah. When Elijah comes again, God's people will encounter God's promised deliverance (Malachi 4:5). That future time is now present through John and through Jesus. John's message of repentance (v. 4) will be continued by Jesus when he says, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:14). Where do you see the good news of Jesus happening today?

Pray: Merciful God, we thank you for fulfilling your promise of hope and peace through the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.

SERVICE

Good news has a positive effect on people. Isaiah 40 gives prophetic comfort to God's people. What word of comfort or encouragement can you give to someone this week?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Set up a Christmas nativity set in your home. Place the wise men further away from the set for now. Wait to place Jesus in the manger until Christmas Eve. On your Advent wreath, light the first candle of hope and the second one of peace. Pause for a moment to sit in silence and look upon the nativity set and think about the coming of Jesus. Say this Bible verse: Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people. (Psalm 85:8a) Pray: Lord, help us to prepare the way of the Lord. Give us peace and hope. Amen.