

**As We Gather**

As the 500th anniversary of the Reformation approaches, through the course of the year we will be singing the hymns of Martin Luther. For this final Sunday in Advent we will sing a portion of his hymn, "Savior of the Nations, Come" as our opening hymn each week.

We join with the people of God in finding peace through the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let the words, Scripture verses, hymns, litanies and prayers of this worship experience inspire you to "unwrap" the Gift of Peace from Christ by sharing that peace with all the world.

**Holy Communion**

Holy Communion is being celebrated today. It is the belief of the Lutheran Church, based on Jesus' own words, that in this Sacrament His body and blood are really present and that forgiveness of sins and the assurance of salvation are offered to all who come confessing their sins and believing in Him. Communion is therefore offered to those who share this confession of faith. Children who are not yet confirmed are invited to come forward with their parents to receive a blessing. Guests who may have questions about Communion at Mt. Calvary are encouraged to talk to Pastor Brighton.

**PRELUDE****ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GREETING****OPENING HYMN:**

*"Savior of the Nations, Come"*

**Savior of the nations, come,  
Virgin's Son, make here Your home!  
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth,  
That the Lord chose such a birth.**

**From the manger newborn light  
Shines in glory through the night.  
Darkness there no more resides;  
In this light faith now abides.**

**Glory to the Father Sing,  
Glory to the Son, our King,  
Glory to the Spirit be  
Now and through eternity.**

## THE INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Every good and perfect gift is from heaven above,

**Coming down from the Father of lights.**

We gather to celebrate the good and perfect gift of peace.

**How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news,**

Who proclaim peace,

**Who bring good tidings,**

Who proclaim salvation,

**Who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"**

The LORD will lay bare His holy arm in the sight of all the nations

**And all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.**

We trust in this promise

**And we trust in Christ's promise:**

"Peace I leave with you."

**"My peace I give you."**

## THE CONFESSION OF SINS AND ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Let us confess our sins to our heavenly Father.

*(please kneel)*

We confess to You, O Lord—

**The poverty of our prayers, the weakness of our faith and the restlessness of our souls.**

We acknowledge before You, O Lord—

**All of our worries, fears and anxieties that rob us of Your peace.**

We lay before You, O Lord—

**The way our eyes have become blind, our ears deaf, and our hearts callous to Your promise of peace.**

We declare to You, O Lord—

**That too often we search for peace in something else or someone else.**

Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, grant us your peace. It is my joy to announce the grace of God to all of you! Jesus reconciles you to the Father by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross. He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure, and with the treasures of His grace to enrich the humble poor. We trust in this promise.

**And we trust in Christ's promise:**

"Peace I leave with you."

**"My peace I give you." Amen.**

## **THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: THE PEACE CANDLE**

On this fourth Sunday in Advent we light a candle and call it peace. Christ is the image of the invisible God.

**By Him all things were created.**

God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him

**And through Him to reconcile to Himself all things.**

By making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.

**We trust in this promise. And we trust in Christ's promise:**

"Peace I leave with you."

**"My peace I give you."**

### **THE HYMN:**

*"Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People"*

**"Comfort, comfort, ye My people,  
Speak ye peace," thus saith our God;  
"Comfort those who sit in darkness,  
Mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.  
Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;  
Tell her that her sins I cover  
And her warfare now is over."**

**Yea, her sins our God will pardon,  
Blotting our each dark misdeed;  
All that well deserved His anger  
He no more will see or heed.  
She hath suffered many a day  
Now her griefs have passed away;  
God will change her pining sadness  
Into everspringing gladness.**

(As the hymn stanzas are sung, Roger, Tian and Autumn Foss will light the candles on the Advent wreath at the 8:00 am service. Samie & Hiltraud Culpepper will light the candles at the 10:45 am service.)

### **THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*(Please be seated.)*

**THE OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 52:7-10** *(How beautiful are those who bring good news and proclaim peace!)*

<sup>7</sup> How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

<sup>8</sup> The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. <sup>9</sup> Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**THE EPISTLE READING: Colossians 1:15-20** (*Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God and in Him all creation is held together.*)

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. <sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**THE ALLELUIA VERSE:**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

**THE HOLY GOSPEL IS ANNOUNCED:**

The Holy Gospel according to St John the fourteenth chapter.

Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

**THE HOLY GOSPEL: John 14:25-27** (*Jesus' gift to the Church: His peace!*)

<sup>25</sup> "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. <sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

### THE CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:

Pete LeBorious  
Director of Christian Education

### THE HYMN OF THE DAY:

***"Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring"***  
(Hymn tune: "Angels from the Realms of Glory")

**Hymn #353**

### THE MESSAGE

Vicar Aaron Sterling

### THE NICENE CREED:

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**THE PRAYERS:** After each petition, the Worship Leader will say, *"Lord in Your mercy,"* and the congregation will respond, ***"Hear our prayer."***

### THE GATHERING OF THE TITHES AND OFFERINGS

#### **++ The Stewardship Thought ++**

Advent brings the start of a brand new church year—a time of expectation and hope  
As we look forward to celebrating the birth of our Savior! Think about the ways  
You will prepare your heart this year to celebrate Jesus' birth!

**"Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight." (Matthew 3:3)**

**OFFERTORY HYMN:**

***"Praise and Thanksgiving"***

**Praise and thanksgiving, Father, we offer  
For all things living, created good:  
Harvest of sown fields, fruits of the orchard,  
Hay from the mown fields, blossom and wood.**

**Father, providing food for Your children,  
By Your wise guiding teach us to share  
One with another, so that, rejoicing  
With us, all others may know Your care.**

**THE ORDER OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**THE PREFACE**

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 Him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should praise Your holy name, O Lord, our God, for You were born to us, Immanuel, to be God with us. You are God with us, who are the Body of Christ gathered in worship, and You are God with us in Your Word and Sacrament. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:



**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo-ry. 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 in the high - est.

## THE 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.

## THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**



☐ 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.

**THE DISTRIBUTION** *(The center cup in each tray is white grape juice for pregnant moms or those allergic to alcohol.)*

### DISTRIBUTION HYMNS:

**"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"**

**Hymn #357**

**"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"**

**Hymn #344**

**"Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come"**

**Hymn #350**

### THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We give You thanks, Immanuel, that You have refreshed us through the gift of Your presence. You are God with us in worship and in our daily lives as we depart from this place. Empower us with the peace of Your eternal presence. Increase our joy as we receive and welcome You born for us and with us as Savior and King; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **THE BENEDICTION**

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine on us and be gracious to us. The Lord look upon us with favor and give us peace.

**Amen.**

**THE CLOSING HYMN:**     *"The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns"*     **Hymn #348**

## **A MOMENT FOR SILENT PRAYER**

## **THE POSTLUDE**

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Christmas Eve Worship Schedule:**

- 5:00 pm = Service geared toward families with young children, who will be invited by Pastor Brighton to dress up in costumes to help tell the Christmas story!
- 7:00 pm = Candlelight service
- 10:00 pm = Candlelight service with Holy Communion

**Christmas Day Worship Schedule:** We will have one worship service on Christmas Day, which falls on Sunday this year. The worship service, with Holy Communion, will be at 10:00 am. There will be no Sunday School classes this weekend. Those helping with the Christmas Day Dinner will have time to worship and then go to First United Methodist on North David Drive to assist with the Christmas dinner.

**Our New Year's worship schedule** will follow the regular schedule with a New Year's Eve service on Saturday, December 31<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 pm and New Year's Day worship services on Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:00 and 10:45 am. There will be no Sunday School classes on New Year's weekend.

**Our Altar Flowers were provided this week** by Laura & Brian Harper, in honor of their wedding anniversary, and by Eugene & Lois O'Neal, in honor of Joel's birthday.

**Newsletter Deadline:** Please have all items for the January Newsletter to the office by December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Mt. Calvary has received a gift in memory of Josie Kong**, Evy Keyes' mom, from Bruce & Barbara Bauman.

**Mt. Calvary has received a gift in memory of Bobby Wolfe**, from Bruce & Barbara Bauman.

**Mt. Calvary has received a gift in memory of Letha Russ**, Riley Hood's sister, from Bruce & Barbara Bauman.

**2017 Offering envelopes are ready.** You can pick yours up on the tables near the information desk. If you want offering envelopes and don't find yours on the table, please call Jack in the office.

**Once again we will be collecting "Freebies"** to give away at the Christmas Day dinner. There is a box under the table in the entryway to put items. These items could include calendars, notepads, pens, warm things like mittens or hats or whatever you think would be appropriate.

**Thank you to everybody who has taken an Angel** and brought the gift back to church. We just received notice of a real need in the Salvation Army's Safe House, so we have a few more Angels that have been placed on the tree and we are asking for your help to support other families. If you could help this organization that helps those in desperate need we would appreciate it. If you have any questions, please call Liz Hunter at 478-714-9506. Thank You!



**The Flower Chart for 2017 is posted. Now would be a good time to get the weekend that you want reserved. Note: When you pay for flowers, please indicate this on your check or envelope.**

**Helping Hands Christmas Dinner:** Our 12<sup>th</sup> annual Helping Hands Christmas Dinner is coming up! The dinner will take place on Christmas Day from 12 – 2 PM. We will need plenty of volunteers to help in the kitchen, serving, greeting, and delivering food during that time. We will also need a handful of people for a morning shift to help set up and prepare most of our food in the kitchen. Lastly we will need at least a small crew for take down and clean up after the meal is finished. However, if you cannot make it to help on Christmas there are many other things we need help with! We still need a lot of people willing to prepare a turkey or ham ahead of time (drop off times TBD on the 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> or another time coordinated with me). Also I will need a crew of people willing to help me set up and decorate the gym at First Methodist on the afternoon of the 23<sup>rd</sup>. This dinner truly is a wonderful opportunity to serve our community and share the love of Christ, but I need all of you to make it a successful one! If you have any questions feel free to contact me anytime!

- In Christ, Vicar Aaron

**Please return the Rough Wood and Rusty Nails yard signs and stands** to the Information Desk to be stored for future use. Thanks.

**Church Directory in PDF Format** – If you want a current to-the-minute church directory, just call or e-mail the church office. Our secretary can take 1 minute to create a PDF that's easy to use and up-to-date, then e-mail it to you.

## **PRAYER CONCERNS**

**Monika Reynolds**, who is battling pneumonia and is now living at "The Oakes" in Macon.

**Opal Key**, Dianne Damron's mother, who suffered a stroke.

**Laura Haas**, who is hospitalized and on a ventilator.

### **Keep In Your Prayers**

Ruth Brighton (Pastor's mother), Alyce Quillin, Margaret Jennings, Cameron Mastenbrook, Rosie Schulz, Erika Swaim (Marcia Brighton's mother), John White, Pastor Brighton, Bev Ellgass, Doris Snow, Deloris Denzine and Karen Johnson.

*(NOTE: Those listed under "Keep in your prayers" are removed from the list after eight weeks. If there is someone you would like to keep on the list for another eight weeks, please contact the church office.)*

### **Those Battling Cancer**

Those battling cancer: Barry Rice (Becky McVay's brother), Norma Young (Melinda Hopf's aunt), Kathy Grube, Mary Schwope (Michele Durbin's aunt), Jeannette Poniske (Fred Tamer's mom) and Bruce Oswalt (Krystal Ferguson's father).

### **Those Serving our Country in Dangerous Areas**

Aaron Gittner, Benjamin Brighton, Darrin Landis, Denver Yarbrough, Jonathan Fetchik and Christian Corbitt, for safety and good health as they serve our country in dangerous areas.

## SERVING US TODAY

**PREACHER:** Vicar Aaron Sterling. **LITURGIST:** Vicar Aaron Sterling/Rev. Mark Bowditch. **ELDERS:** Bob Yeager (8 am) and Mark Burnette (10:45 am). **ACOLYTES:** Sara Van Lannen (8 am) and Lynn Cook (10:45 am). **USHERS:** Early – Brian Harper, David Rossman, Bob Yeager & Richard Uitto. Late – Mike Hopf, Bruce Bauman, Dave Harter, Ed Bodony & Earl Bogardus. **ALTAR GUILD:** Lois Harter, Melinda Hopf, Ruth Miller, Suzanne O'Daniel & Maureen Young. **LAY READERS:** Debra Fingles (8 am) and Adam Beecher (10:45 am). **SLIDE PREPARER:** Gary Webb. **PROJECTIONISTS:** Early – Nick Jenkins. Late – Caleb & D. J. Nelson.

## SERVING US NEXT WEEK

**ELDERS:** Open (Sat 5 pm), Rob Crawford (Sat 7 pm), Mark Burnette (Sat 10 pm) and Bo;u Gragg (Sun 10 am) **ACOLYTES:** Open (Sat 5 pm), Chris Crawford & Lynn Cook (Sat 7 pm), Open (Sat 10 pm) and Open (Sun 10 am). **ALTAR GUILD:** Sue Glaser, Barb Mabee, Ginger Martin, Kathy Robinson & Sharon Suckow. **LAY READERS:** Bob Gerstenberger (Sat 7 pm), John Trichinotis (Sat 10 pm) and D. J. Nelson (Sun 10 am). **GREETERS:** Chet & Nancy Branscom (Sat 5 pm), Gary & Beverly Webb (Sat 7 pm), Dwight & Marlene Miller (Sat 10 pm) and Betty Cummings (Sun 10 am).

## NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

Isaiah 55:10-13 and 1 Peter 1:3-92

## ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK

**Saturday – 38 Early – 89 Late – 149 Total – 276**  
**Wednesday Advent Service - 98**

## THIS WEEK AT MOUNT CALVARY

|             |                  |  |
|-------------|------------------|--|
| Today       | 9:30-10:30 am    | Sunday School Christmas Party                              |
|             | 6:30 am          | TAG Night  |
| Monday      | 10 am-2 pm       | Annex Carpet Cleaning                                      |
|             | 6:20 pm          | Evangelism Callers   |
|             | 6:30 pm          | Women's Small Group  |
| Tuesday     | 10 am-2 pm       | Annex Carpet Cleaning                                      |
|             | 4:00 pm          | RG@MC Tutoring   |
| Wednesday   | 9:30 am          | Craft & Chat   |
| Thursday    | 10:00 am         | Ladies Bible Study   |
| Saturday    | 5:00 pm          | Christmas Eve Worship for Young Families                   |
|             | 7:00 pm          | Christmas Eve Worship – Candlelight                        |
|             | 10:00 pm         | Christmas Eve Worship – Candlelight<br>with Holy Communion |
| Next Sunday | No Sunday School |  |
|             | <b>10:00 am</b>  | <b>Worship</b>   |
|             | 12 am – 2 pm     | Helping Hands Christmas Dinner                             |