

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 18, 2022 ~ 10:30am
Abiding Hope Lutheran Church

Pastor: Rev. Karen Parsh - 814.881.3266 – pastorparsh@gmail.com
2402 W. Grandview Blvd. Erie PA 16506 – ahadministrator@hotmail.com
814.868.8685 - www.abidinghopeerie.org – FB: [abidinghopelutheranchurch](https://www.facebook.com/abidinghopelutheranchurch)



Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

PRELUDE ~ Adult Choir: *Advent Hymn*

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS ~

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins, and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of new beginnings,

we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.

We have strayed from your paths.

We prepare for war instead of peace.

We dishonor one another and your creation.

Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us.

Amen.

People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on † Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord. **Amen.**

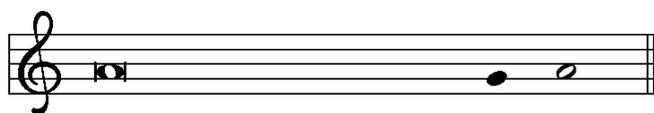
GATHERING SONG ~ ELW 723 *Canticle of the Turning*

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.

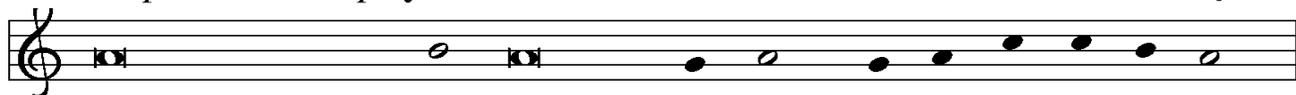
KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



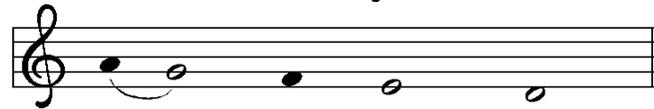
Lord, have mer - cy.



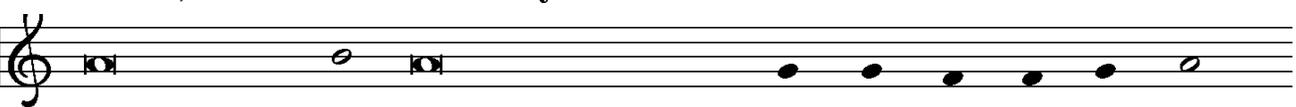
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. **A - men.**

ADVENT READING and CANDLE LIGHTING

FOURTH ADVENT ~ JOY

PASTOR: "A Very Matthew Christmas: Let Christ's Advent Disrupt You"

PASTOR: In a world of where so many, God lights a candle of love in our hearts. We wait together for a Savior, who will be Immanuel, Christ the Lord. Hear the word of the Lord:

ALL: "*The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him.*"

Romans 15:12

LIGHTING of the ADVENT CANDLE ~ ELW 240 v.4



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

PRAYER of the DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let's Pray Together.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹²But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. ¹³Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. cont'd

Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.” The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: 80:1-7,17-19 10:30a Sung Responsively
Tone 9



GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

The gospel according to St. Matthew Chapter 1. **Glory to You, O Lord**

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus. The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated

Children's Christmas Program ~ The First Christmas. A play in two acts.

Congregation joins children: **ELW 267** *Joy to the World* v.1

ELW 281 *Silent Night* all verses

Reception of New Members

We are here this morning to welcome Donald and Helen "Skip" Kleckner as new members into the community of Abiding Hope Lutheran Church. We are not a building, but the gathered family of God. We are brothers and sisters in Christ, given this new identity through our baptism into Jesus' death and resurrection. Today we welcome you as members of this family in the larger body of Christ.

And so we ask, do you desire to join the membership of Abiding Hope Lutheran Church? If so please answer: "We do."

I ask the congregation to stand and join in confessing our faith.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

All: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

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

Pastor:

Having together confessed our faith in the Triune God, we now welcome you into the family of our congregation and into the ministry of the church. As active followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to spread his Good News. We encourage you to accept that call through your involvement in the church.

Church Council:

We welcome you as fellow workers in God's kingdom, inviting you to grow with us in our faith, reaching out to others with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Musicians and Worship Leaders:

We welcome you as active participants in the arts: singing, praying, acting, painting, knitting and baking as your talents and interests lead you.

Congregation:

We welcome you as brothers and sisters in Christ, and thank God for this unique opportunity to serve God and one another. May the God to whom we belong equip us for every good work that we do together in his name.

New Members:

We welcome and accept your invitation and commit ourselves to using our time and talents for the good of the congregation. We will strive to live lives worthy of the title "Christian" and will work with you to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Pastor:

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as you called James and John, Simon and Andrew to fish for people, so you have called us to serve you with our own talents and resources. We thank you for bringing to us these new members of Abiding Hope Lutheran Church. You have told us that wherever two or more are gathered in your name, there you are with them. Help us, we pray, to see and feel that presence and that others may come to know you through their interactions with us.

All: Amen

PRAYERS of INTERCESSION

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope. *A brief silence.*

God our shepherd, let your Spirit move with power throughout the church. Give discernment and wisdom to our bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders. Take away our fear, so that we serve and love, confident that you are guiding us. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our source, awaken us to the beauty of the earth and the marvelous variety of life. Unite humankind in repairing and caring for your creation. Protect creatures and habitats in peril due to rising seas and warming temperatures. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our vision, raise up leaders in every nation who dream of freedom and justice for all people. We pray for the work of international organizations that promote peace and human rights, especially Amnesty International. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our helper, come to the aid of all who cry out to you. Shelter migrants, refugees, and those fleeing war and famine. Bring relief to individuals and families experiencing hunger, homelessness, or impoverishment. Comfort any who are isolated or lonely. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our Emmanuel, you are with us in our life together. We give you thanks for gathering us in worship and fellowship, and we remember those who cannot be present. Watch over those who travel. Heal the sick and speed their recovery, especially: Dave P, Judy, Karri, Donna, Sandy, Trudy & Christian, Jo, Karen, Sally & Matt, Sharron, Esther, John, Christine, Emily, Dick & Diana, Lew & Jane, Don & June, Norma, the Gresh Family, Nicole, Sam & Dorothy, Judi, Karen, Ruth, Don F, Carrie, Evelyn, Joyce, Jack & Marjorie, Roger & Irene. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God our hope, you bring life out of death, and you promise to be our God forever. Shine upon the faithful who now rest in the fulfillment of your promise and bring us also into your blessed reign of peace.

God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

PEACE

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

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Please stand.

PRESENTATION of GIFTS

OFFERTORY ~ Emmanuel

Em - man - u - el, Em - man - u - el, His name is
called Em - man - u - el: God with us,
re - vealed in us! His name is
called Em - man - u - el.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

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

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together.

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of
pow'r and might: Heav'n and earth are full of your
glo - ry. 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.

THANKSGIVING at the TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

At Abiding Hope all believers are welcome to share Holy Communion at the table of the Lord. After receiving the bread, (gluten free) you may receive wine from the chalice poured into individual glasses or you may choose pre-poured grape juice (in center of tray) as an alternative.

Please be seated

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen**

LAMB of GOD



☐ 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, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS ~ LBW 54 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*
ELW 265 *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

PASTORAL BLESSING

May the body and blood of our † Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMNS ~ ELW 248 *People Look East*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Remember the poor. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

GOSPEL MESSAGE ~ Messenger in the Night

What did you dream about last night? Is there really any meaning in these vivid storylines that our brains assemble while we sleep? If you think dreams are essentially random firings of our neurons, you might just laugh them off. If you think they do tap into something real, you might try to unpack them. But almost no one makes *important life decisions* based solely on their dreams, right? The stakes couldn't have been higher for Joseph and his dream, in which an angel tells him about Mary's unexpected pregnancy by the Holy Spirit. If he stays, he's got a story to tell that nobody is going to believe. But if he goes, if he "dismisses her quietly" as the gospel writer puts it, *what's going to happen to her?* What's going to happen to the baby?

It might seem that a message in a dream would be the *worst* possible way to make a decision as consequential as this. But if the purpose of our dreams is to put us in touch with what we already know, if it's to help us sort out our tangled-up emotions and give us some clarity, then perhaps a dream whose message is "Do not be afraid" is exactly what Joseph needs.

The dream-angel, in quoting the prophet Isaiah, helps Joseph connect his present reality with God's past faithfulness and promises. The angel reminds him that even in this terrifying situation, *God is with him*. We need such assurances as well when it feels like our world is falling apart: messengers to remind us who we really are and to whom we belong. Today we celebrate that Joseph trusted that message, and Mary before him. In them we see that God is faithful, and fear is cast out by the birth of this child.

PARISH NOTES ~ December 18, 2022

Altar Candles are given to the Glory of God,
In Memory of Gordon and Mark Wunch,
from Carol Wunch

Please pray for: Ed Tropper, Dave Parsh, Judy Johnston, Karri Pacileo, Donna Klakamp, Sandy Pacileo, Trudy & Christian Mueller, Jo Critchfield, Sally & Matt Zill, Sharron Sontheimer, Esther Klakamp, John Litzel, Don & June Morey, Diana & Dick Stoker, Emily Stoker, Roger & Irene Owens, Norma Squire, the Gresh family, Nicole Woomer, Sam & Dorothy Elder, Karen Shick, Ruth Hinkson, Don Fuller, Judi Pacileo, Carrie Fiske, Evelyn Senger, Jack & Marjorie Wonner, and Joyce Hersperger.

Next Confirmation Class January 8 at Abiding Hope, 10:15a

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Christmas Eve Family Service, 4:30p

Traditional Candlelight Service, 9:00p.

No Christmas Day service.

Sunday, January 1 ~ Lessons & Carols, 9:30a

Wednesday's get-togethers will continue in January with the new **LUNCH & LISTEN SPEAKER SERIES**. Brown Bag Lunch @ 12:00n, guest speaker, 12:30p-1:30p. You're welcome to arrive at 12:30p for just the speaker. January 11 is Abiding Hope's Ed Whitbred. Ed will have an **entertaining talk** about the history of "Lower Parade Street - Erie's Ellis Island"

Wednesday, December 21: The Prayer Warrior group, led by Jerry Vogt and Pastor Karen, meets at 1:00pm in the sanctuary. Consider to join in to pray for our nation and the world in crisis, those affected by illness or are grieving the loss of someone, plus other concerns. Additional information, contact Jerry @ 814.504.3566 or Pr. Karen.

Friday, January 6: Erie Conference Epiphany Worship, 7:00 p.m. at Faith Lutheran Church, 5414 East Lake Road, Erie. The service will start indoors with a celebration of Holy Communion, then process to the lawn behind the church for the burning of our Christmas trees and greenery. You can also watch the bonfire from the comfort of the social hall. Everyone can take home a "Blessing of the Home" kit with chalk and a simple home blessing liturgy for the Epiphany season. All are welcome.

Choir Rehearsal: Wednesdays, 6:00p: Ability to READ MUSIC not NECESSARY!
Please join us! No Rehearsal December 28th

WINTER WORSHIP SCHEDULE: Offering two weekly Holy Communion services @ 8:30a & 10:30a. The 10:30a service will live-stream on Facebook and then post to the AHLC web page. Please check parish notes or our web site for any changes to times for worship or bible study. No bible study until January. Date TBA. Check newsletter, parish notes, weekly reminder email.

Bethany Outreach: Remember your gently used clothing, shoes, household items, toys, children's items can be donated. All items are given out without charge.
Donations to Heritage Room. Thank you for your continued support. Analee Cree - 814-397-6168.

KAFP Project Dignity: Items for Dec.-Dental products. There is a basket in the “cry room”.

Altar Flowers: Anyone who wishes to donate flowers for Sunday worship, weekly sign-up sheet and request forms on table in narthex. Arrangements-\$20.00 each. Place the completed form and payment in the offering plate, or to the office at least two weeks, no less than one, prior to your chosen Sunday.

Office Hours: Mon & Tue 9:30a-3:30p, Wed 9:30a-12:30p. If the office is not staffed, leave a message, your call will be returned. For immediate pastoral assistance, call Pastor Karen, 814-881-3266. Pastor is in the office on Tuesdays @ 10:00a or by appointment.

CURRENT FUND REPORT

November Income: \$5,401.00 Year to Date Income: \$100,849.26
 November Expenses: \$10,778.76 Year to Date Expenses: \$114,627.83
 November Difference: \$-5,377.76 Year to date Difference: \$-13,778.57
 Year to Date Budget: \$114,007.00

WORSHIP LEADERS ~ DECEMBER 18, 2022

	8:30a	10:30a
Videographer	X	Andy Saska
Greeter/Coffee	Mary Randall	Nancy Cunning
Lector/Prayers	Marcia Santabene	Penny Gresh
Comm Assist/cups	Analee Cree	Nancy Cunning
Comm. Assist/wine	Damion Santabene	Judi Pacileo
Communion tray	Lon Jenkins	Michele Rion
Presenter	Mary Randall	Jeanne Tropper
Presenter	Judy Johnston	Kayla Miller
Usher	Mike Paris	Andy Saska
Usher	volunteer	volunteer
Counters	Michele Rion & Lon Jenkins	