



Salem-Zion Mennonite Church

December 19, 2021

Entering Love's Story: Shepherds

GATHERING TO WORSHIP

ENTERING *Love's* STORY



December 19, 2021

Advent Four

SALEM-ZION MENNONITE CHURCH

Prelude Ken Mannes

1. O Lord how shall I greet you?
2. How far is it to Bethlehem
3. Hark! The glad sound (Paul Manz)

The Prophetic Voice Ezekiel 34:11-16 Tim Eisenbeis

Welcome and Call to Worship Nathan Epp

L: The shepherds didn't expect anything out of the ordinary on that special night.

P: God's light and God's love shines into our lives!

L: With some fear and with some excitement, they went to Bethlehem to see.

P: God's light and God's love illuminates our path!

L: These common shepherds were the first to witness the newborn King.

P: God's light and God's love transforms our reality.

ALL: We glorify and praise God for all that we have heard and seen!

Opening Prayer

* Hymn – *Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light* VT #269

Greeting Each Other and "Passing the Peace"
"The Peace of Christ be with you. And also with you."

Advent Candle Lighting *Hope Is a Candle* vv.1-4 #211

Celebrating our Mission with *Mennonite Church USA*
MCC Infant Kits - 4 large, heavy-duty safety pins

Children's Story The Sheep Story Sheila Epp

Anthem – *Night of Silence* Children's Choir

PROCLAIMING

Hearing the Gospel Story – Luke 2:8-14 Orville Ortman

Song – *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks* #253

Hearing the Gospel – Luke 2:15-20 Mary Mannes

Meditation – "Up from the Fields" Corey Miller

RESPONDING

Testimony Kyle Waltner

Sharing and Congregational Prayer

* Sending Song - *Go Tell It on the Mountain* #252

Blessing

Postlude – *Adeste Fideles* (David Cherwien)

Church Calendar

Deadline for bulletin submissions is 8:30 p.m. Wednesday; salemzion@gwtc.net

TODAY

As we continue our journey of Entering Love's Story, we remember the shepherds. Though they represent the most common of folks, the shepherds were the first ones to see the Christ child in a manger. How and where is God calling us up from the fields in which we live? We are so glad that you have chosen to worship with us!

The offering that we are celebrating today is for **Mennonite Church USA**.

Items for the MCC Infant Kits: **4 large, heavy-duty safety pins**

9:00 a.m. – Zoom Adult Sunday School

9:30-10:15 a.m. – Jr. Dept. Sunday School

9:30 a.m. – Sunday School for adults

10:30 a.m. – Worship Service

Special thanks to Polly Waltner for the Advent bulletin cover picture, Gary Graber for the stable, and Nancy Miller for the animals in the stable.

TONIGHT – Christmas Worship Service

Tonight at 7 pm, you are invited to worship through music as several small ensembles share Advent and Christmas readings and hymns from *Voices Together*.

THIS WEEK

Dec. 21 (Tues) – Longest Night Prayer time, from 8am–8pm in the sanctuary

Dec. 24 (Fri) – Children's Christmas Eve Service at Salem-Zion at 7:00pm

Dec. 25 (Sat) – No Christmas Day service

NEXT SUNDAY – December 26

Next Sunday is the first Sunday of the Christmas season. The theme is “*Entering Love's Story*” and the focus of the morning is **Angels**. The texts are Isaiah 9:2-7, Luke 2:8-20 and Caley Ortman will be preaching.

Offering next Sunday will be for **MCC: Support a Shepherd Project**. After many years of war in Syria raising sheep provides opportunities for individuals and families to establish their own flocks. This project also provides business training for the shepherds.

Salem-Zion Prayer Requests & News

Happenings over the past week:

- Tammy Benjamin continues as a patient at Avera Hospital where she is still on the ventilator.

- Marcene Heeren, Krista Graber's mother, had surgery on Monday at the Methodist Hospital in Omaha and the family feels hopeful.

- Sharon Wollmann had a chemotherapy treatment on Tuesday.

- Hospitals have been filling up with Covid patients this past week. Prayers are needed for all who are feeling overwhelmed with the increased numbers.

Remember to pray for:

- those who cannot be here today: Ardelle Schrag.

- families that are grieving over loved ones during this holiday season. Pray for Christ's comforting love to surround everyone.

- health care workers that are once again feeling the strain of caring for those who are sick with Covid.

- compassionate responses from each of us that mirror the attitude and mindset of Christ.

- Tammy and Dan Benjamin as they continue their journey toward healing.

Covid Team Update: Recently the Covid task team has been condensed to include Janette Epp, Jay Penner and Pastor Corey. Our most recent word to the congregation was for people to be encouraged to sit in the designated pews (social distancing), wear masks in and out of the sanctuary for worship (and for congregational singing), and use the hand sanitizers when they come and leave worship. If people feel comfortable, they may remove them during the worship service. We suggest these practices to help prevent spreading the disease to others and as a gesture of love to others. As always, we will continue to monitor our situation and make adjustments accordingly. Thank you for your grace and patience in this time. - Covid Task Team

Infant Kits for MCC during Advent: As we have done recently, we will be receiving items needed for Infant Kits for MCC as a part of our offering.

The following is the schedule that we will follow:

Dec. 26 – **1 large bar mild soap (leave in wrapper)**

Jan. 2 – **1 pair of socks, 1 cap**

Today is the last day to sign the **Christmas cards** on the table in the narthex.

Longest Night: December 21 is the longest night of the year and so we invite anyone to come to the sanctuary on this shortest day of the year to pray, sit in silence, grieve or lament painful situations. Pastor Corey will be around during the day to pray with you if you would like, or you can use the self-guided prayer guide that will be available in the sanctuary. Take advantage of this time to sit near the stable and be found by Divine Love.

Community Connections

The December edition of On the Level is now available from **Mennonite Disaster Service** at <https://conta.cc/3GORUmS>. In our current issue: MDS responds to the deadly tornadoes in the Midwest and parts of the South, MDS Canada needs volunteers to help survivors recover from extensive flooding in British Columbia, and you can learn more about our Annual Celebration in Sarasota, Florida in January.

God's Peace is Good News: "The simple shepherds heard the voice of an angel and found their Lamb; the wise men saw the light of a star and found their Wisdom." - Fulton J. Sheen

"As followers of Jesus Christ, our purpose is to live and share the good news of Christ's Kingdom, welcoming all as we worship, study, fellowship and serve others together." - Salem-Zion Mennonite Mission Statement 2015

Zoom Adult Sunday School

<https://zoom.us/j/97667382194?pwd=NHNieHZ6a29ZMGpZSHJpczlibUxtdz09>; Meeting ID: 976 6738 2194; Passcode: 523139

Livestream link for Sunday morning worship

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX8KyFIZChK0Ef-rlBAaS3A>

Pastor Corey Miller

Office Hours:

Tues.-Fri. 8:00 a.m. - Noon
corey.miller@gwtc.net
Cell phone: 319-930-7320

5

Church Admin. Assistant:

Lisa Kaufman

(605) 951-1871 ~ salemzion@gwtc.net
Office hours: Thursdays 9:00 a.m. - 12:30
p.m. and by appointment as requested