December 17, 2023

SALEM-ZION MENNONITE CHURCH

Salem-Zion Mennonite Church

Advent 3: "How will we know….What now?"
December 17, 2023

GATHERING TO WORSHIP

Prelude – *Of the Father's Love Begotten*
Anne Waltner, piano; Rolf Olson, trumpet

Welcome — Stacey Waltner

Call to Worship

Leader: Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with God one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.

High Voices: God is not slow, as some think of slowness,

Low Voices: but is patient with us,

People: not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

Leader: The word of our God will stand forever.

People: How shall we live while we wait for salvation?

(*pause*)

All*: *Together we wait.

Song – *Wait for the Lord* (sing 3 times) — VT #228

Opening Prayer

* Hymn – *Bless'd Be the God of Israel* — VT #223

* Greeting each other

Children's Story — Sheila Epp

Sharing our Offerings – Mennonite Church USA; MCC Kits: 1 nail clipper

Offertory – *In The Bleak Midwinter* (Holst, arr. Bulla)

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Hearing the New Testament — II Peter 3:8-15a

Drama — Josh Hofer, Marnette Hofer

* Hearing the Gospel — Mark 1:1-8

* Song – *Prepare the Way! the Prophet Called* — VT #220

Sermon – "How do we wait?" — Nathan Epp

RESPONDING TO GOD

Hymn – *O Little Town of Bethlehem* — VT #245

Sharing and Congregational Prayer — Corey Miller

* Sending Song – *Go, Tell It on the Mountain* — VT #252

* Advent candle lighting/Benediction — Rosella Schwartz

L: Together we wait.

Candlelighter: God is patient with us, but how do we prepare while we're waiting?

L: Go beloved, and while you wait for these things, strive to be found by God at peace. Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

Postlude – *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (traditional)

Church Calendar

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

TODAY

While we may sometimes feel discouraged or uncertain about when or how God will act, we are called to live and move in the world as God's people. Even as we wonder "How long?," we begin to ask "What shall we do while we wait?" Welcome to our time of worship! We are so glad that you are here.

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

Guided thought that all are invited to write about: **"One thing you will do while you wait this week."**

All the Advent bulletin covers are illustrated by Rachel Miller.

9:30am – Sunday School for all ages
10:30am – Worship Service
Children's Choir rehearsal following the worship service
7:00pm – Christmas Choirs Program to celebrate the
Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love of Christ's birth

THIS WEEK

Dec. 20 (Wed) – Christmas caroling at 5:30pm; meet at the church
Dec. 21 (Thurs) – Longest Night Service at 7:00pm
Dec. 22 (Fri) – Fuente de Vida church service at 7:00pm
Dec. 23 (Sat) – Ladies' gathering at 9:00am for Advent scripture reading
Dec. 23 (Sat) – Children's Choir dress rehearsal TBD; Parents please check email

NEXT SUNDAY – Dec. 24

Next Sunday continues our season of Advent. The theme is "*How will we know….Why me?*" The texts will be II Samuel 7:1-11,16, Romans 16:25-27, and Luke 1:26-38. Pastor Corey will be preaching and we will be receiving "1 hand towel (medium weight, dark or bright colors preferred); approx. 40 cm x 65 cm (16 in x 26 in)" for MCC Hygiene Kits.

Next week the offering is for the SD Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault.

COMING EVENTS

Dec. 24 – Children's Christmas Eve program at 6:00pm
Dec. 25 – No Christmas Day worship service
Dec. 31 – Worship service and Communion
Dec. 31 – Bridal shower for Hannah Miller at 1:30pm

Salem-Zion Prayer Requests & News

Remember to pray for:

- those who cannot be here today: Eva Goosen.
- courage to find our own voices crying out in the wilderness as we prepare the way for the Lord.

- students in school, college, and technical training as they finish up their semester and travel home.
- ceasefire in the war with Israel and Gaza. Lord, help us pray and act for peace so the killing can stop!
- moments of calm, quiet, and comfort in the midst of a busy season.
- our sister churches in Southeastern Iowa: Washington, Wayland, Sugar Creek, Pleasant View, and Zion Mennonite Churches.

Longest Night Service: December 21 is the shortest day of the year, or the longest night. We recognize that the Advent season can be a time of loss, loneliness, and discouragement and so this service allows time and space to reflect on these losses and also speaks about the Light that has come. All are welcome to this service of music, scripture, candles, and reflections. The service begins at 7:00pm and will be held in the sanctuary.

The Cemetery Committee would like to thank Duane Tieszen for his tireless work on replacing the Swiss Memorial Monument after it was destroyed in the 2022 derecho and windstorm. Duane and Marlys have spent countless hours on projects such as the online and cemetery directories, including marking the rows and sections, making it easy to find loved ones. They have updated shrubbery, sprayed fence lines, and ordered and replaced many missing gravestones. **The cemetery committee is very grateful for all the Tieszens have done through the years.** - Kevin Albrecht, Clayton Kaufman, David Kaufman

Christmas caroling: We will meet at the church at 5:30pm on Wednesday, Dec. 20 for caroling and divide to go to Marion and Freeman. Children, youth and parents are welcome. A light meal is being organized following the caroling. If you would like to attend the meal, talk to Charity about bringing a side dish.

New Membership Class: Starting in January (January 7th), Pastor Corey will be leading a **membership class** for those who are interested in joining Salem-Zion. Our class will run for 4 weeks and it will include hearing each other's faith stories, a session on Anabaptist/Mennonite Church tradition, a session on the history of Salem-Zion and how we work, and a session on gifts and how we share in the ministries within our church. Contact Corey if you are interested.

All ladies are invited to a **bridal shower for Hannah Miller**, engaged to Silas Driver, on Sunday, December 31 at 1:30 pm. You may bring a gift for Hannah (registry information at https://www.target.com/gift-registry/gift/silas-and-hannah) or there will be a money basket and card available, if you prefer that option. If you have any questions please talk with Digna Miller or Elizabeth Janssen.

This morning is the last opportunity to sign the **Christmas cards** on the table in the narthex.

Menno Snapshots:
- Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, climate justice coordinator for MC USA, reflects on how to respond to climate doom with resistance and resilience, after attending AMBS's Rooted and Grounded conference. Read her reflection here: mennoniteusa.org/path-through-climate-doom
- Beryl Jantzi, Everence director of stewardship education, explores what "mammon" might mean in the New Testament and why Jesus states that a person cannot serve both God and mammon. Read more here: mennoniteusa.org/god-and-mammon

Praying God's Peace in Advent: "Christ has no body now, but yours. No hands, but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ looks compassion into the world. Yours are the feet with which Christ walks to do good. Yours are the hands with which Christ blesses the world."- St. Teresa of Avila

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