ADVENT VESPERS

Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Advent

Book of Common Prayer

L - Leader **C** – Congregational Response ☩ - make the sign of the cross

Please be aware that worship is being filmed, photographed, and live streamed on our Facebook/YouTube channel. Your likeness and/or voice may be captured by our equipment. It is best to sit in the balcony or in the last four pews to not be seen on camera. Please alert an usher at the entrance if you have any concerns. Selections from this live stream may be used on our website and in our public relations materials.

***SENTENCES FROM SCRIPTURE**

L: Let my prayer be set forth in your sight as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. *Psalm 141:2*

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. *Philippians 1:2*

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth tremble before him. *Psalm 96:9*

Yours is the day, O God, yours also the night; you established the moon and the sun. You fixed all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter. *Psalm 74:15,16*

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel; my heart teaches me, night after night. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not fall. *Psalm 16:7,8*

Seek him who made the Pleiades and Orion, and turns deep darkness into the morning, and darkens the day into night; who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the surface of the earth: The Lord is his name. *Amos 5:8*

If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, and the light around me turn to night," darkness is not dark to you, O Lord; the night is as bright as the day; darkness and light to you are both alike. *Psalm 139:10,11*

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." *John 8:12*

***CONFESSION OF SIN**

L: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

L: Almighty God have mercy ☩ on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

C: Amen.

INVIVATORY

L: O God, make speed to save us

C: O Lord, make haste to help us. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

O GRACIOUS LIGHT

O gracious light, pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven, O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed! Now as we come to the setting of the sun, and our eyes behold the vesper light, we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices, O Son of God, O Giver of Life, and to be glorified through all the worlds.

Please be seated.

PSALM 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14 *(spoken responsively)*

L: Lift up your heads and see; your redemption is near at hand.

C: Lift up your heads and see; your redemption is near at hand.

L: Your ways, O LORD, make known to me; teach me your paths, Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my savior.

C: Lift up your heads and see; your redemption is near at hand.

L: Good and upright is the LORD; thus he shows sinners the way. He guides the humble to justice, he teaches the humble his way.

C: Lift up your heads and see; your redemption is near at hand.

L: All the paths of the LORD are kindness and constancy toward those who keep his covenant and his decrees. The friendship of the LORD is with those who fear him, and his covenant, for their instruction.

C: Lift up your heads and see; your redemption is near at hand.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24

Thus says the Lord GOD: Lo, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me; And suddenly there will come to the temple the LORD whom you seek, And the messenger of the covenant whom you desire. Yes, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who will endure the day of his coming? And who can stand when he appears? For he is like the refiner's fire, or like the fuller's lye. He will sit refining and purifying silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi, Refining them like gold or like silver that they may offer due sacrifice to the LORD. Then the sacrifice of Judah and Jerusalem will please the LORD, as in the days of old, as in years gone by. Lo, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, Before the day of the LORD comes, the great and terrible day, To turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the land with doom.

Luke 1:57-66

When the time arrived for Elizabeth to have her child she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her. When they came on the eighth day to circumcise the child, they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said in reply, "No. He will be called John." But they answered her, "There is no one among your relatives who has this name." So they made signs, asking his father what he wished him to be called. He asked for a tablet and wrote, "John is his name," and all were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God. Then fear came upon all their neighbors, and all these matters were discussed throughout the hill country of Judea. All who heard these things took them to heart, saying, "What, then, will this child be? For surely the hand of the Lord was with him."

Silence is kept.

Please stand as you are able.

***SONG OF MARY**

L: My soul proclaims the greatness of the ☩ Lord,

C: my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy, The promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

***SONG OF SIMEON**

L: Lord ✢, you now have set your servant free

C: to go in peace as you have promised; For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, whom you have prepared for all the world to see: A Light to enlighten the nations, and the glory of your people Israel. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

***APOSTLES CREED**

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

L: The Lord be with you

C: And also with you.

L: Let us pray

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.

L: Show us your mercy, O Lord;
C: And grant us your salvation.
L: Clothe your ministers with righteousness;
C: Let your people sing with joy.
L: Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;
C: For only in you can we live in safety.
L: Lord, keep this nation under your care;
C: And guide us in the way of justice and truth.
L: Let your way be known upon earth;
C: Your saving health among all nations.
L: Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
C: Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
L: Create in us clean hearts, O God;
C: And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.
L: Be our light in the darkness, O Lord, and in your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of your only Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.
C: Amen.
L: Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.
C: Amen.

***GENERAL THANKSGIVING**

L: Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
C: we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

***PRAYER OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM**

L: Almighty God,
C: you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.

***CLOSING**

L: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

L: Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

We invite you to remain and engage in a time of silent prayer and then join us in the Social Hall for food and fellowship.



Sun., November 29 (Advent 1)
9am Holy Eucharist

Wed., December 2
7pm Vespers

Sun., December 6 (Advent 2)
9am Holy Eucharist

Wed., December 9
7pm Vespers at Zion Union Deposit

Sun., December 13 (Advent 3)
9am Holy Eucharist
3pm Christmas Caroling

Wed., December 16
7pm Vespers at St. John Hoernerstown

Sun., December 20 (Advent 4)
9am Holy Eucharist

Wed., December 23
7pm Vespers

Thu., December 24 (Christmas Eve)
2pm Worship at Zion Union Deposit
4pm Worship at St. John Hoernerstown
7pm Family Worship
9:30pm Traditional Worship

Fri., December 25 (Christmas Day)
10am Worship w/Brunch

SHELLS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

"We are a community of the Triune God, nourished by Word and Sacrament, sent forth by the Holy Spirit into the Grantville community and beyond to share the life-changing news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed."

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