

December 18, 2011 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

The Readings from Scripture

Please be seated.

The Old Testament

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Instead of David building a house (temple) for the Lord, the Lord promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the messiah, the Lord's anointed.

A reading from the second book of Samuel:

Now when the king was settled in his house,
and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him,
²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar,
but the ark of God stays in a tent." ³Nathan said to the king,
"Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."
⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan:
⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD:
Are you the one to build me a house to live in?
⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from
Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.
⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel,
did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel,
whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying,
"Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"
⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David:
Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture,
from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel;
⁹and I have been with you wherever you went,
and have cut off all your enemies from before you;
and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones
of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel
and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place,
and be disturbed no more;
and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly,
¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel;
and I will give you rest from all your enemies.
Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.
¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me;
your throne shall be established forever.

Reader: The word of the Lord. ALL: Thanks be to God.



The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

The Fourth Candle

The fourth candle that we light today is the candle of angels. The word angel means “my messenger.” The first messengers about Christmas were angels from God. First one angel appeared to the shepherds and then there were a multitude of these heavenly messengers.

The lighting of the fourth candle.

The first angel appeared to the shepherds announced the birth of the Christ child. And suddenly there was with that angel a multitude of these heavenly messengers praising God and saying: peace on earth and good will to all people.

The Verse - *Please stand*

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

Green Book # 54, v1 & 4 | copied with ownership of sufficient copies CCLI#1083898

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

For lo! The days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876, alt.



The Holy Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

The Holy Gospel according to St. _____ the _____ chapter



In this annunciation, Luke makes clear that God comes with good news for ordinary people (Mary) from little-known places (Nazareth). This king will not be born to royalty in a palace, but to common folk in a stall. Here Luke highlights the role of the Spirit, a special emphasis in his gospel.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.

³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.

³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren.

³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God."

³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you , O Christ.



The Prayers of Intercession

Walking in the light of the coming Savior, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who await God's justice.

A brief silence.

Pour out your Spirit on the church, that its leaders and all the baptized may answer your call to be bearers of the revelation of your love for the world.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Restore wetlands and forests, waterways and the vast sky, mountains and canyons, and enable us to live in harmony with the natural world.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Unseat from their thrones those who use their power to exploit others, and raise up leaders in our nation and throughout the world who will work for justice and peace.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Look with favor on the sick (*especially*), the lonely, victims of war and of domestic violence, the homeless, and those living in poverty. Fill them all with good things.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Remember with mercy the children of our congregation, that their excitement and anticipation during this season matures into joy and lasting peace in the revelation of the gift of your Son.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For what else do the people of God pray?

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

With thanksgiving for the faithful witness of Mary and all the saints who have responded to your steadfast love, inspire us also to be servants of your will.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your steadfast love and faithfulness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

St. Paul's Prayer List ❖ Weekly update to the December Vision

Jean Croisette – *having surgery*
Alma Leister – *Genesis - Phoenixville*
Shelby Thomas – *Recovering at home*
Betty Treffinger – *Recovering at home*
Barbara Woehr - *Recovering at home*

Wyatt Kilheffner
Bill Gredicek – *nephew of Bonnie Thomas*
Dick Frederick – *Friend of the Grims*
Frank Grim
Calvin Miller

Please look in the current edition of the Vision Newsletter for other names on our prayer list. The Sunday bulletins only list updates to the complete list in the Vision.

The Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Floyd and Penny Hersh, and Ernest Leister presented by Joanne Hersh and Family.

Capital Improvement Fund ~ We have currently received a total of \$67,454. in our Capital Improvement fund toward our goal of \$225,000. Pledges amount to \$64,914.

Elevator Fund ~	Project Cost	\$170,000.00
	Total Gifts Received as of 11.11	\$73,310.00

ASP at St. Paul's will celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary of home repairs with an ASP reunion picnic on July 28, 2012. A combined worship hour will be held at 9:15 on July 29 with Pastor Bill Bixby as the guest preacher. Pastor Bixby was associate pastor during the initial years of ASP.

Victory House ~ Is a wonderful opportunity to help people in the community while sharing fellowship with your family of faith. Please volunteer and join us in January. For more information please contact Laura Foreman at 267-923-8895.

Confirmation Class will meet on January 8. Please note the change in our monthly schedule.

Lunch Bunch ~ Lunch Bunch will meet Wednesday, January 11th at 11:30 AM in Church Fellowship Hall. Details to follow. Don't forget to save your Redners Tapes and us your Save-A-Tape Gas Card at Redners. Bring your tapes to Lunch Bunch.

Worship Schedule for Christmas Eve | Christmas Day

Christmas Eve Services - 7:30 PM and 11:00 PM with Candlelight, Carols and Holy Communion.

Christmas Day - One combined service with Holy Communion at 10:30 AM with no Sunday Church School.

Sunday, January 1 - all three worship services will be held. Sunday School will resume on January 8.

Annual Report- St. Paul's Annual Report will be presented on January 29, 2012 after each service. Please feel free to attend the presentations.

This Week at St. Paul's

Sunday	Early Service with Holy Communion	8:00 AM
	Contemporary Service with Holy Communion	9:15 AM
	Sunday Church School	9:15 AM
	Late Service with Holy Communion	10:30 AM
	Table Talk	4:30 PM
	Bell Choir	7:30 PM
	Narcotics Anonymous - <i>Fellowship Hall</i>	8:00 PM
Monday	Cub Scout Holiday Party	6:00 PM
	Cemetery Committee	7:00 PM
	Praise Team	<i>no rehearsal</i>
Tuesday	Robotics Team	6:30 PM
Wednesday	AA	8:00 PM
Friday	Frontier Girls & Daisies	6:30 PM
Saturday	Robotics Team	9:00 AM
	Musical Prelude	7:00 PM
	Christmas Eve Service	7:30 PM
	Musical Prelude	10:30 PM
	Christmas Eve Service	11:00 PM
Sunday	Combined Service with Holy Communion	10:30 AM
	Narcotics Anonymous - <i>Fellowship Hall</i>	8:00 PM

Today's Worship Assistants

Altar Guild:	8:00AM	Nicole Walter
Assistant:	8:00AM	Charles Shagg
	10:30AM	Jan Woertz
Ushers:	9:15AM	Ron Rodenberger
		George Bonekemper
	10:30AM	Brian Stever
		Frank Grim
		Chad Grim
Monday:		Leroy Stevens
		Robert Stevens
		Betty Treffinger

Next Sunday's Worship Assistants

7:30 PM	Barb Miller
11:00 PM	Alan & Diane Richard
Wash:	Pat Walter
7:30 PM	Henry Thomas
11:00 PM	Cheryl Weiss
7:30 PM	Bruce Bayer
	Laverne Keyser
	Nancy Yerger
	Pat Walter
11:00 PM	Alan Richard
	Don Dulin
	Charles Roth
Monday:	Sandy Bergey
	Claude Croisette
	Jeane Croisette

If you will be away over the holidays, please assist the congregational council in meeting our mission and operating expenses by bringing weekly offering envelopes to church, or please considering mailing weekly offerings to the church office or bringing them the following Sunday. The 2011 fiscal year will be kept open until Monday January 8. Thank you. This would be tremendous help at this time. We appreciate this prayerful support.

A letter from Open Line

Open Line - a non-profit social service agency serving the Upper Perk Valley could use your help.

Open Line has learned that the Montgomery County Commissioners have eliminated Open Line from the proposed General Fund Appropriations budget (in the amount of \$28,500). This funding stream underwrites expenses for the Information Center that has been a critical link to resources and information for residents in the northwest part of Montgomery County for over 25 years. This funding supports the reception staff at Open Line in overseeing the information center (ensuring we have adequate resources in the form of brochures, pamphlets, applications, etc.); providing information and referrals to walk in traffic, phone calls and more recently emails and faxing/copying documents for residents applying for county and state programs.

The Commissioners are expected to finalize the budget by December 21, so there is no time to lose. If you are interested in expressing support for Open Line and sharing how important the agency's service are to this part of the Montgomery County, you may contact the County Commissioners or email them.

Montgomery County Commissioners
Mr. Joe Hoeffel, Mr. Jim Matthews, and Mr. Bruce Castor
Deputy Director, Mr. Jim Maza
One Montgomery Plaza 8th Floor Suite 800 | Norristown, PA

or email

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