

Advent at Massanutten

December 15: Advent Studies (9 am), Worship (10:30 am)

December 19: A Gathering of Comfort and Hope (11:30 am—1 pm)

December 22: Advent Studies (9 am), Cantata (10:30 am) and Reception

Christmas Eve at Massanutten

Candlelight Family Service & Pageant ~ 4:30 pm

Candlelight Communion Service ~7:00 pm

Sunday, December 29

Worship ~ 10:30 am

No before worship or evening programming.

Massanutten Presbyterian Church Session

Class of 2025

Jan Arnold
Ben Craig
Bill Frazier
Chris Hamilton
Julia Sensabaugh

Class of 2026

Erin Basgier
Ashley Gordon-Becker
Jennifer Coffelt
Deidre Lenderking
Beth Smith

Class of 2027

David Allen
Kathy Frakes
Pam French
Lindsey Harvell-Bowman
Ric Leobold

Clerk: Ron Matthews

Moderators: Rev. Ann Pettit and Rev. Keith Phillips

Massanutten Presbyterian Church Staff

Rev. Ann Pettit, Co-Pastor (apettit@massanuttenchurch.org)

Rev. Keith Phillips, Co-Pastor (kphillips@massanuttenchurch.org)

Bob Jerome, Director of Music (bjerome@massanuttenchurch.org)

Carol Lown, Organist (clown@massanuttenchurch.org)

Hannah Altman, Children and Youth Program Director (haltman@massanuttenchurch.org)

Karen Leecy, Office Manager (kleecy@massanuttenchurch.org)

Danielle Cunningham, Digital Media Communications Coord. (dcunningham@massanuttenchurch.org)

Katie Rodgers, Nursery Caregiver; **Greg Trobaugh**, Treasurer (gtrobaugh@comcast.net)

Dick Leecy and Cindy Grimes, Custodians

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Our mission:

to nurture disciples of Jesus Christ
who join boldly with the Spirit's work
in the world.

A Service for the Lord's Day
Third Sunday in Advent

December 15, 2024

10:30 a.m.

We Gather at God's Call

Greeting

Introit

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Fun with Handbells

Words for Reflection as the Third Advent Candle is Lit and the Water is Poured

God's messy plan of salvation requires Joseph –

a quiet, cautious, status quo kind of guy –

to choose precisely what he fears and dreads the most.

The fraught, the complicated, the suspicious, and the inexplicable. (Debie Thomas)

How does God's plan of salvation call us into the messiness of our world?

Where is God showing us the work to be done and equipping us to do it?

*Hymn

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

82

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.*

*Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.*

Life at Massanutten

*By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.*

*Call to Confession

Sarah Rimer, Worship Leader

*Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

**O God of presence and promised return,
We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.
In fact, we have rebelled against your love.
We have not followed the paths you have given us,
choosing instead to follow our own.
We chase consumer desires and spend our time and money
on gifts for those who give us gifts.
We have failed to fulfill your desire for us to love one another.
We have broken relationships,
and turned away from our neighbor.
We have not heard the cry of the needy.
The mouth of the poor is still hungry for mercy,
The cause of the oppressed is still thirsty for justice.
Forgive us, O God.
Free us for joyful obedience, through the Advent of Christ,
our Lord, our Messiah and our hope. Amen.**

*Assurance of Forgiveness (*responsively*)

Good News! Good News! Good News!
God so loved the world that he gave sinful and broken humanity a gift:
Emmanuel, God with us.
This shows God's love toward us - we are forgiven!
Through Jesus Christ, we are forgiven - thanks be to God!

*Response of Praise

My Soul Gives Glory to My God (v. 1)

99

*My soul gives glory to my God;
my heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness
in many marvelous ways.*

*Sharing the Peace of Christ (*responsively*)

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

- **If you ordered Shirley's Popcorn from Massanutten Preschool**—your order is here and ready to be picked up! Stop at the table in the Narthex to get your tasty treat! Many thanks to all who placed an order—approximately \$2,000.00 was raised to support education of these three and four year olds.
- We're all invited to the **Open Doors Navigation Center Ribbon Cutting—Wednesday, Dec. 18th 2-4 pm** at 1111 North Main Street (*former Presbytery Office*). Join the staff, board and City of Harrisonburg as we celebrate this long anticipated opening.
- **Come to the Table this Wednesday, December 18th at 5:30 pm** for *dinner and fellowship*. The evening will be a festive affair of caroling and Christmas fun! It's 'cook's night off,' but a meal including a variety of pizzas from Vito's will be served! Write table by your name on the Connection Folder to let us know you'll be there!
- **A Gathering of Comfort and Hope**—Thursday, December 19th at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. This gathering will include lunch, space to step away from the noise of the season, and an opportunity to honor what we're experiencing. Please let us know you'll be there by writing Dec. 19th on the connection folder or contact the church office by noon tomorrow (Monday).
- **Many thanks...**to all who attended and/or donated to this year's Youth Christmas Market. The youth set a \$4000.00 goal—and surpassed it! Your participation in this event will support youth mission trips, conferences and special events in 2025. AND **Many thanks...**to MPC's youth, volunteers and their families! The gathering last Sunday provided a wonderful, festive time to get ready for Christmas and enjoy fellowship with one another.
- **Congregational Nominating Committee**—The congregation's nominating committee has started the work of seeking nominees to serve in the next class of Ruling Elders for the MPC Session. The Session sets the vision and leads the ministry of the congregation, equipping us all to take part in carrying it out. If you would like to talk about your own sense of call to this service, or suggest someone who you feel would serve well, please contact Ric Leobold, chair of MPC's Nominating Committee @ ricleobold@gmail.com. Nominees must be members of the congregation.
- **The Shenandoah Valley Choral Society** presents its 54th annual Christmas concert, *Hark!*, this afternoon, December 15th, at 3:00 p.m. The concert take place at Bridgewater Church of the Brethren. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$12 for seniors and students.
- **Open Doors Service Opportunity**. While the Navigation Center will be available to guests beginning December 23, there is still a need for 1 volunteer each night to transport meals from Sentara RMH to the shelter location. Please write Open Doors on the Connection Folder if you are interested in volunteering.
- Looking ahead! **MPC Brunch Groups** (*a winter version of Dinner Groups*) will meet for food and fellowship around the table Jan. 23-25, at the home of a host...sign-ups will begin at the end December.

This Week At MPC	
Sunday, December 15 - Advent 3	
9:00am	Adult Sunday School (117,119)
9:30am	Faith Village HS Breakfast Parent Fellowship
10:30am	Worship Godly Play
1:00pm	Recorder Rehearsal (200)
2:00pm	Cub Scouts (FH)
5:00pm	Fellowship Hall in use until 9 pm No Evening Youth Activities
Monday, December 16	
5:30pm	Cub Scouts (FH & Kitchen)
7:00pm	Boy Scouts (119)
Tuesday, December 17	
10:00am	Fellowship Hall in use until 12 noon
5:00pm	Fellowship Hall in use until 9 pm
Wednesday, December 18	
7:30am	Men's Prayer Group (FH)
5:30pm	Third Wednesday Dinner (FH)
7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, December 19	
11:30am	A Gathering of Hope (FH)
4:30pm	Mosaic Rehearsal (FH)
6:00pm	Cub Scouts (108, 117)
Friday, December 20 Church Office Closed	
Saturday, December 21 Church Office Closed	
Sunday, December 22 - Advent 4	
9:00am	Adult Sunday School (117,119)
9:30am	Faith Village HS Breakfast Parent Fellowship
10:30am	Worship Godly Play
1:00pm	Recorder Rehearsal (200)
2:00pm	Cub Scouts (FH) No Evening Youth Activities

Serving in Worship December 15th	Serving in Worship December 22nd
Door Monitor: Jack Rimer	Door Monitor: Barbara Palmer
Greeters: Tom & Gina Holden	Greeters: Karen Leecy & Doug Smith
Ushers & Water Pourers: Larry & Pam French	Ushers & Water Pourers:
Faith Village: Jennifer Coffelt	No Faith Village Today
Godly Play: Jean & Bill Kilby	No Godly Play Today
Nursery: Katie Rodgers & Erin Basgier	Nursery: Katie Rodgers (<i>Nursery in GA</i>)
<i>No Evening Youth Activities</i>	<i>No Evening Youth Activities</i>

We Gather Around God's Word

*Prayer for Illumination	<i>While We are Waiting, Come</i>	92
	<i>While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.</i>	
	Refrain: <i>Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.</i>	
	<i>With power and glory, come; with power and glory, come. (Refrain)</i>	
	<i>Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come. (Refrain)</i>	
Time with the Children		Pastor Keith Phillips
Anthem	<i>The Lord Shall Come and Not Be Slow</i>	-Highben
Scripture		Isaiah 40:4
Sermon	<i>'Into the Mess'</i>	Pastor Ann Pettit

We Respond to God's Word

*Affirmation of Faith (<i>unison</i>)	Adapted from <i>A Declaration of Faith</i>
God has not taken people out of the world, but has sent us into the world to serve. We worship God in the world by standing before the Lord on behalf of all people. Our cries for help and our songs of praise are never for ourselves alone. Worship is no retreat from the world; it is part of our mission. We serve humankind by discerning what God is doing in the world and joining in God's work. We risk disagreement and error	

when we try to say what God is doing here and now.
But we find guidance in God's deeds in the past
and promises for the future,
as they are witnessed to in Scripture.
We affirm that the Lord is at work,
especially in events and movements
that free people by the gospel
and advance justice, compassion and peace.

Invitation to the Offering

Song of Thanksgiving *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* (v. 2) 93

*Fling wide the portals of your heart;
make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.*

The Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

**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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen.**

We Are Sent to the World

*Hymn *The People Who Walked in Darkness* (v. 1, 3-5) 86

*The people who walked in darkness
awaken to see a great light.
The people who dwelt in the land of the shadow
rise to a star shining bright.*

*Refrain:
His name is Wonderful, Counselor, Almighty God,
Father forever, Prince of Peace.*

*The yoke of despair and bondage,
the chains of the slave master's rod
are shattered and scattered like dust in a windstorm,
loosed by the justice of God. (Refrain)*

*For us now a child is given,
for all the despised and forlorn.
The rule of compassion shall rest on his shoulder.
God's own Messiah is born! (Refrain)*

*How vast is our God's dominion!
How far truth and mercy extend.
The zeal of the Lord will accomplish its purpose:
justice shall reign without end. (Refrain)*

*Benediction

*Benediction Response *The People Who Walked in Darkness* (refrain) 86

*His name is Wonderful, Counselor, Almighty God,
Father forever, Prince of Peace.*