

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
"People of Christ Making a Difference"
119 N Church Street
Lexington, SC

1st Sunday in Advent
November 29, 2020

WELCOME TO OUR VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICE!

During this time of social distancing here are a few things to remember:

We are back to regular office hours Monday through Friday. Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can help! The pastors are available by calling the church (359-6562), calling the Crisis Care Line after hours (808-6471), or emailing them (pat@sslc.org and/or jasonantley@earthlink.net)

If you visit our website (www.sslc.org) you will see additions to the main page. On your phone, please make sure you are on the full website (just scroll down and click the icon that says full website). At the top you will see SIX RED BOXES. Here are the details:

Box 1) **"Weekly Bulletins"** – which will correspond to the services on YouTube.

Box 2) **"Virtual Communion"** – explanation and instructions for communing at home during virtual worship.

Box 3) **"Click Here For Our YouTube"** – where you can click to participate in our virtual worship services, or you can copy and paste tinyurl.com/SSLCWorship into your browser to take you there directly. Services will be livestreamed at 12:30 PM on Wednesdays and 8:30 AM on Sundays.

Box 4) **"Latest Church Update"** – where we will post the latest COVID-19 church update.

Box 5) **"Online Giving"** – Don't forget to support our ministry during this time apart by either mailing your donations to the church (119 N Church Street, Lexington, SC 29072), giving online, or giving through the Givelify app. This may also be a time to consider direct deposit giving. For more details please call the church office to contact our Parish Administrator, Mrs. Tonya Reynolds.

Box 6) **"Green Sheet Announcements"** – this is the green bulletin insert you would normally get on Sunday.

If you need any sort of assistance (ie needing food, getting groceries or prescriptions, going to medical appointments, anything at all), please call the church office or one of the pastors. We have folks who are willing to help in any way they can! Please take time to call folks who may not have a strong network and may be in need. Neighbors helping neighbors is one way we can be "People of Christ Making a Difference!"

We will continue sending out emails but you can also check out our website and our Facebook page for updates. God bless you! We love you! Stay safe out there!

GATHERING MUSIC

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A MOMENT FOR PEACE

PRELUDE

BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace.

Amen.

Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

God of all time,

we confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us. We ignore our neighbors in need and fail in the labor of spreading your love and peace. In your mercy forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. In + Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and all things are made new. Rejoice in this good news!

Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

And also with you.

RESPONSIVE LITURGY

Christ, God's gift to the world, shall come:

For those who feel despair will know hope.

For those who are oppressed will know freedom

For those who are lonely will know love.

For those who are suffering will know inner peace.

O Christ, Lord of the world, your time is now! Fill our hearts with joy!

THE SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence ²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! ³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. ⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. ⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. ⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. ⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ADVENT WREATH CANDLELIGHTING REFLECTION

But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Keep alert, for you do not know when the time will come...in the evening, or at midnight, or at dawn. Keep awake. (*Mark 13:24-26, 32, 33, 35, 37*).

Such amazing things happen in the sky to herald the return of the Son of Man:

...Jesus, coming in the clouds
 ...the sun grows dark
 ...the moon doesn't shine
 ...and stars fall from the heavens

So different from that first coming more than 2000 years ago:

...with angels singing of God's glory and peace on earth
 ...with the single star guiding the way to the manger
 ...with shepherds and wise men -- rich and poor -- coming to worship

And so we watch, and wait, and stay alert, waiting again for the coming of Jesus.
 And we light a single candle in preparation for that glorious day.

[Light the first candle on the Advent wreath]

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 and ransom captive Israel,
 that mourns in lonely exile here
 until the Son of God appear.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
 shall come to you, O Israel.*

...And even if the sun should grow dark
...even if the moon refuses to shine
...even if the stars should fall from the sky

...we will have Jesus, the Light of the World, to shine brightly in our hearts, lighting our way.

Let us pray,

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. You call all nations to walk in your light and to seek your ways of justice and peace, for the night is past, and the dawn of your coming is near. Bless us as we light the first candle of this wreath. Rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes and welcome him into our hearts and homes, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jesus Christ is the firstborn of the dead; to him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 13:24-37

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 13th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ²⁴"In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. ²⁸"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ³²"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Jason

SERMON

Pastor Jason

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

ELW 244

Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;
the evening is advancing, and darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.

Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, 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, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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 OF THE FAITHFUL

OFFERING

It is during times like these that we notice an even greater purpose for our ministry and life together in Christ as we love and support each other and the world around us. Don't forget to support our ministry by mailing your offering to the church, giving online (www.sslc.org) or through the Givelify app. This may also be a time to consider direct deposit giving. For more details please contact our Parish Administrator, Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, at (803) 359-6562.

ANTHEM

"My Lord, What a Morning"

ELW 438

Refrain: My Lord, what a morning; my Lord, what a morning;
oh, my Lord, what a morning, when the stars begin to fall.

You will hear the trumpet sound, to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand, when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain*

You will hear the sinner cry, to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand, when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain*

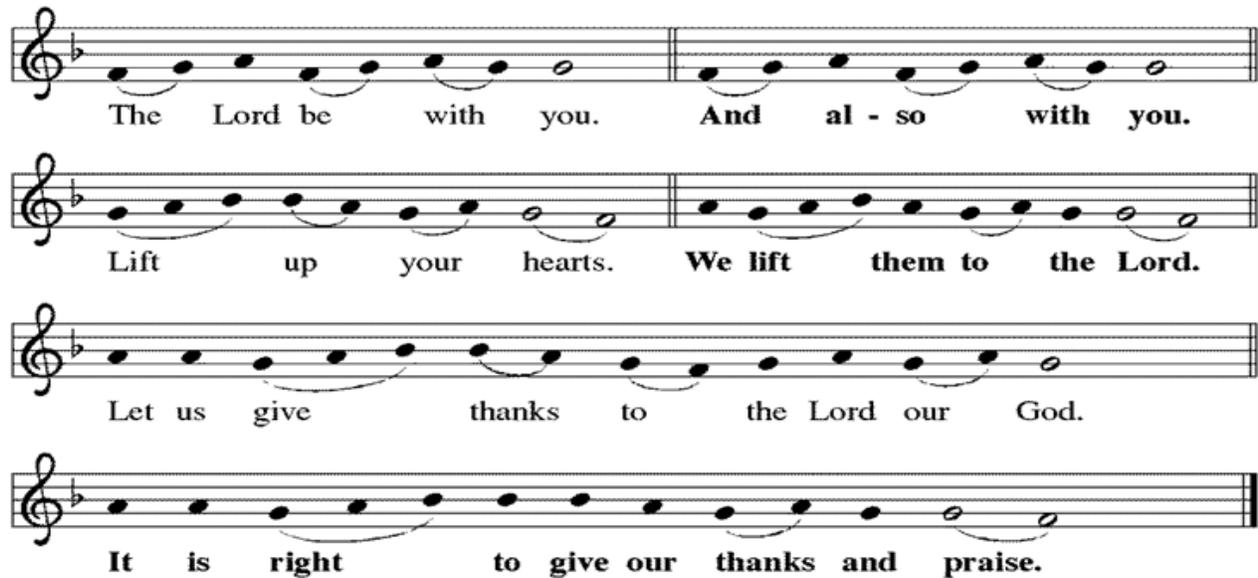
You will hear the Christian shout, to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand, when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain*

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together.

Savior of the nations, come. Make your home here in us. Feed us with your love, that our faith shine ever new and our lives reveal your light. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

RECEPTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Christ welcomes you to this Holy Meal of the Baptized! This Holy Sacrament is a fundamental part of how we participate in worship and receive Christ's body and blood, given and shed for us for the forgiveness of our sins. It is customary to use bread and wine for this meal, however with the given circumstances we invite you to find whatever is most appropriate in your context for your family to share. As you gather together to receive the real presence of Christ found in, with, and under the elements, be assured that the gifts we are given by God in the Holy Sacrament transcend space and time. May we be fed and nourished by God through this meal so that we may persevere and continue in discipleship this and every day.

(As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ shed for you.

The communicant may say: "Amen.")

BLESSING OF THE COMMUNICANTS

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. God for whom we wait, you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share. Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts, and send us forth to be your people in the world, announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

BENEDICTION

May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path, and almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

“Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn”

ELW 242

Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning.
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! the Child of our longing.
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,
he opens wide the heav'nly door and lives now inside us forever.

Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story;
may God fill ev'ry day we share and bring us at last into glory.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God and in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Redman by Jerry Redman.

The Church Staff

Crisis Care Line: 808-6471

Website: www.sslc.org

The Rev. Dr. Patrick W. Riddle
Mrs. Shannon Burnett, Director of Family Life
Mr. Stephen Abbott, Seminarian
Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, Parish Administrator

The Rev. Jason T. Antley
Mrs. Bailey Slice Parker, Music Director
Mrs. Beth Haggard, Preschool Director
Mr. Eric Abramson, Sexton

The Rev. Dr. Dennis Bolton, Pastor for Welcome and Visitation
Mrs. Sylvia Looney, Organist Emeritus