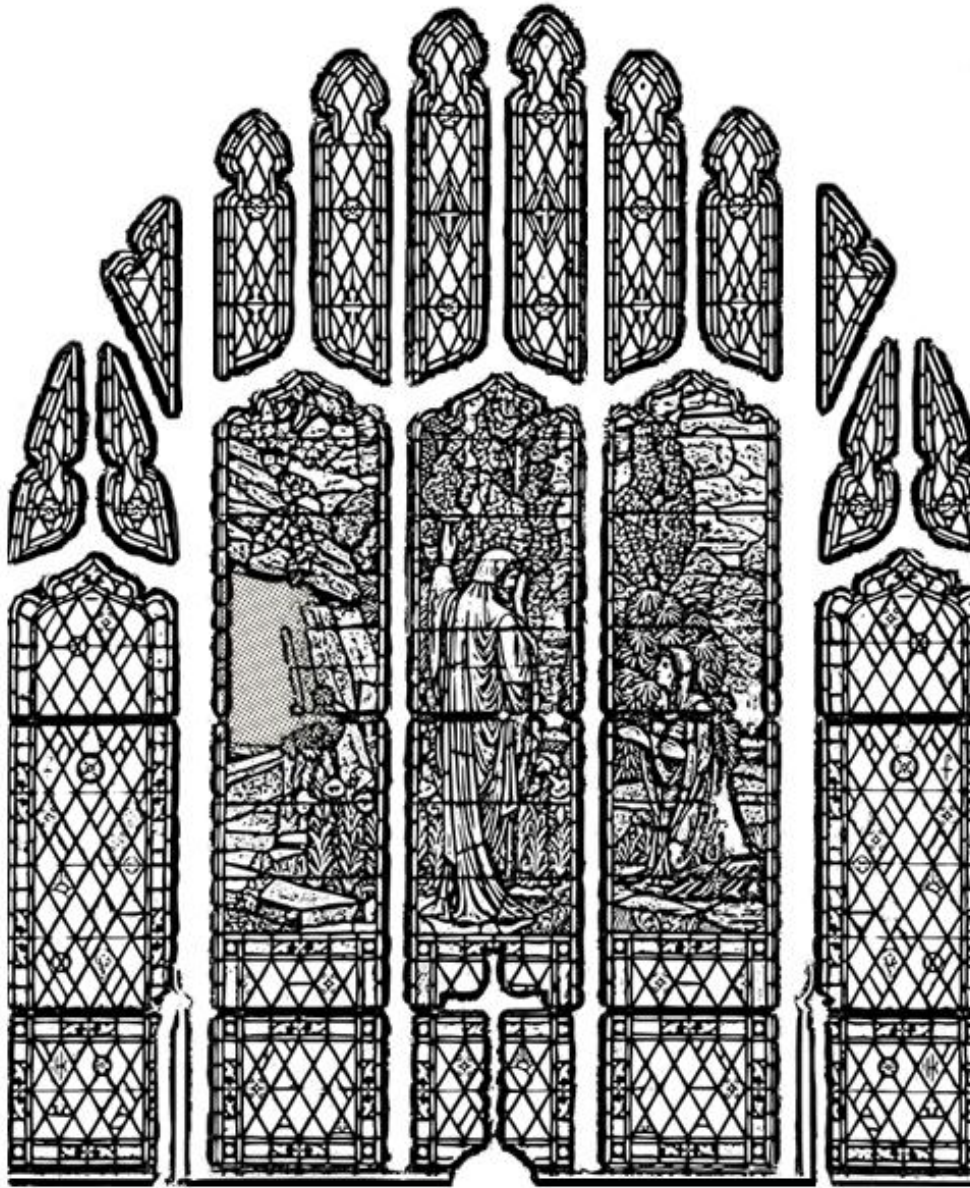


MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday, November 30, 2025, 8:30AM & 10:45AM

The First Sunday of Advent

3319 WEST LIBERTY AVENUE ... PITTSBURGH, PA 15216 ... 412-531-7131

THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, PASTOR ... tstrandburg@mlumc.org



Sunday, November 30, 2025 – Advent I

The Lectionary has a message for us this week: "hold on, not so fast." Yes, we are at the beginning of Advent and there is much to be excited about but the lighting of that first candle suggests that there is something else going on and it's not on December 25th.

**Indicates an invitation to stand in spirit or posture, as able.*

The Prelude "My soul hath a desire and longing to enter the courts of the Lord" George Oldroyd (1886-1956)
(No. 1 from *Three Liturgical Improvisations*)

The Introit (10:45) *The Lord shall Come and not be Slow* Zebulon Highben (b.1979)

The Lord shall come and not be slow, his light is soon appearing.

Prepare, you sinners here below who are these tidings hearing.

*Arise, O Sleepers, trim your lamps! Their flames so swiftly burning
reveal the path to hope and peace, the dawn for which you're yearning.*

Come forth you weary, meek and poor! Forget your strife and labor.

Messiah comes to those who toil, bestowing God's own favor.

*Your king eternal, Lord on high, in humble form and lowly
transforms a simple oxen stall into a form most holy.*

For Christ shall come and not be slow, his light is now appearing.

Rejoice, you saints on earth below! His reign of love is nearing.

All rise, in body or spirit, at the sound of the chimes.

***Opening Hymn** "People, look east" **UMH 202**

*** The Greeting & Call to Worship**

✠ The Lord be with you.

✠ **And also with you.**

✠ Beloved, once again, we embark on the Advent path that points us to the coming of Jesus.

✠ **We journey together toward the day that all the earth awaits.**

✠ We remember the signs and the times that heralded the arrival of the baby Jesus, God Incarnate.

✠ **We journey together toward the day that all the earth awaits.**

✠ We tell the stories once again as we learn how to discern the signs and the times,
watching for glimpses of God's here-and-not-yet kingdom among us.

✠ **We journey together toward the day that all the earth awaits.**

✠ Come, let us worship God who shines a light to guide us on the path to peace and flourishing for all creation.

✠ Come, let us worship as we journey together toward the day that all the earth awaits.

***Opening Prayer**

Said by all, with one voice.

In the hushed anticipation of your coming, O Lord, kindle in us the desire to remain awake; that we might be ready for your coming and eager to pray. O God, in days to come, the mountain of your house will be established, and your joy shall reign.

We pray for the church, that you might teach us your ways and that we might walk in your paths. Come, Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

Out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and you, O God, shall judge between the nations. We pray for our nation, and all nations, that your peace would be manifest in every corner of the earth. Come, Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

In your Kingdom, O Lord, wolves lie down with lambs and children play with serpents without fear. We pray for the sick, the suffering, and those in distress of any kind; that you would heal all injuries, comfort all grief, and settle all wrongs. Come, Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

In your Kingdom, O Lord, even the wilderness and dry land are glad and rejoice. We pray for those who rejoice this week as they celebrate their birthday; that they might obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing might flee away. Come, Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

In the fullness of time, O God, you sent your son to be born of our sister Mary. And his name was Emmanuel: God with Us. We thank you for your Presence with us, and we pray that you might be always present with those whom we love but see no longer. Come, Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

Come among us, O God, and hear our prayers; so that when your Son Jesus comes among us with great might, and in manger mild, we might recognize his face and his voice, and come to adore him. Amen.

***Silent Prayer**

***Response**

"Come, we that love the Lord"

UMH 732

Advent Wreath Candle Lighting Liturgy

First Reader: The prophet Isaiah calls to us from years past to imagine a future when God's reign will be fully realized and recognized throughout creation. When that time comes, God "shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more." (Is. 2:4)

Congregation: Today, we choose to live in hope, believing that the time of God's reign has already come, and is still coming among us.

Reader Two: We light this candle of hope as a sign of our promise to follow the Light as we answer God's calling: the calling to transform our hope into reality, now and in time to come.

As the first candle is lit, all sing:

"All earth is waiting" (v.1)

UMH 210

A Message for Young Disciples (10:45 am)

As the young disciples gather at the front of the church, all sing:

**This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshipping throng.
Water, God's word, bread and cup, prayer and song: This is where children belong.**

The young disciples (3 yr. - 3rd grade) then depart the sanctuary for Kids Praise.

Teachers will lead them back to the sanctuary prior to the conclusion of the service.

The First Lesson

A Reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

Is. 2: 1-5

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Lector: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Second Lesson*A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew**

MT. 24: 36-44

Jesus said to his disciples, "But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so, too, will be the coming of the Son of Man.

"Then two will be in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken, and one will be left. Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

Lector: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Said by all, with one voice.

**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, the power, and the glory forever.
Amen.**

The Sermon**"Already and Not Yet"****Mr. Seitz*****The Affirmation of Faith****UMH 882**

All are invited to stand, in spirit or in posture, and to face the altar as the affirmation of faith is recited.

Pastor: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is the one true church, apostolic and universal, whose holy faith let us now declare:

All: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.
 I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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,
 is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and 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.

***The Sign of Peace**

℣. The peace of Christ be with you.
 ℟. And also with you.

Announcements

At the Offertory

The Offertory Hymn (8:30 am) “We gather together” UMH 131

The Anthem (10:45 am) *Come now, O Prince of Peace* trad. S. Korean, arr. J. Bankson

*Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one body; come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.
 Come now, O God of love, make us one body; come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.
 Come now and set us free, O God, our Saviour; come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.
 Come, Hope of unity, make us one body; Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.*

***The Doxology & Prayer of Dedication UMH 94**

***The Dismissal**

℣. Let us bless the Lord.

℟. Thanks be to God.

***The Benediction & Recessional**

The people remain in place until the altar party has retired.

The Postlude

Grand Chorus in March Form, in Gregorian Tonality (Op.52 No.2) Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)

Prayer Concerns

Clark Remington, *struggling with illness.*

The Rev'd **Deborah Ackley-Killian**, *undergoing cancer treatment.*

Norma Buhrman, *enduring serious illness.*

For those serving their country or community as first responders or in the armed forces, especially:

SPC **Russell Dale** - CPT **Shaun Hay** - LTC **Azizi Wesmiller** - LTC **Matthew Wesmiller**

2LT **Keith Cable** - LTC **Zachary Allen Finch** - CPL **Wyatt Hoover**

*This week, we remember and pray for Christ's body throughout the world, especially remembering this week the church in **Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore.** (Prayer Cycle of the World Council of Churches).*

Please remember the special concerns of those in our community and throughout our world in your personal prayer life throughout the week. If you wish to solicit prayers from the congregation for any matter (health, travel, special concerns, etc.), please contact the church office to have your concern added to the prayer list.

Leaders in Worship this Morning

ABBY PURTILL AND EMMA PURTILL, ACOLYTES

ALAN CHESLEIGH, CROSS BEARER

LIZZIE DILLER (10:45AM), LECTORS

THE CHOIR OF THE MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MR. KIRBY DILWORTH, TENOR

MR. A. MITCHELL V. STECKER, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & LITURGY

MR. DAVID SEITZ, PASTORAL ASSOCIATE AND PREACHER

THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, SENIOR PASTOR

The altar flowers this morning given by
Jean Groves Boyer & Family
in loving memory of
Dale Boyer and
Edgar S. Groves,
Jean's brother.

*For information about furnishing altar flowers for future services,
contact Lizzie Diller at 412-860-3614. The cost is \$45 per arrangement.*