

# Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren

Long Green and Kanés Rds., near Glen Arm, MD

December 4, 2016

Worship 10:00 am                      Sunday School 11:10 am

**Large print hymnals are available                      see an usher**

This room is equipped with a sound loop for the hearing impaired

## Second Sunday of Advent

“...and a little child shall lead them.” (Isaiah 11:6d)

Beginning with Praise (9:50 am) “Comfort, comfort, O my people” 176

Announcements

Prelude                      “Ave Verum”                      Mozart

\*Call to Worship                      (back of bulletin)

\*Hymn                      “O come, O come, Immanuel”                      172  
*(verses 1-3, and 6)*

\*Lighting the Advent candles – Hope and Peace

\*Opening Prayer

Children’s Time                      (refers to Matthew 3:1-12)

Response                      “The Lord is coming” *(vs. 2)*                      (insert)

Unison Prayer of Confession                      696

Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Video                      “Advent. slow down. take time. open up”  
(Please sign the attendance pad and pass it on)

\*Offertory Response                      (back of bulletin)

\*Prayer

Dedication of a child and his parents

Congregational Blessing                      791

From the Prophets                      Isaiah 11:1-10

Sharing a joy, a concern, a word of testimony or praise  
(please be brief, and aware of God’s listening presence)

Hymn                      “Infant holy, infant lowly”                      206

Pastoral Prayer

From the Epistles                      Romans 15:4-13

Message                      “*Living in harmony*”

\*Hymn                      “Bless’d be the God of Israel”                      174

\*Benediction

\*Postlude                      “Postlude”                      Rinck

*\*Rise in body or in spirit*

\* \* \* \* \*

message to be posted at

[www.lgvcob.org/sermons/2016/16-12-04.mp3](http://www.lgvcob.org/sermons/2016/16-12-04.mp3)

# Call to Worship

Please rise and join in the Call to Worship.

One: John the Baptist cries out to us:

**Many: *Prepare the way for Christ.***

One: Prepare your cluttered minds.. .

**Many: *to be swept clean and filled with wisdom.***

One: Prepare your wounded hearts ...

**Many: *to be cleansed of hatred and filled with love.***

One: Prepare your tired spirits ...

**Many: *to be refreshed with words of hope.***

**All: Ready us, Holy Spirit. Baptize us with the fire.  
Refine us and clear away anything that keeps  
us from receiving Christ into our midst.**

by Connie Burkholder, pastoral team  
Monitor Church of the Brethren, McPherson, Kansas  
from Church of the Brethren *Living Word* bulletin  
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Remain standing and let us sing

“O come, O come, Immanuel,”

#172 in your hymnal, verses 1-3, and 6.

# Lighting the Advent candles: Hope and Peace

*(a young family comes forward with a lit candle while we sing)*

1 - A voice cries out in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

2 - A voice cries out with a vision of a new and transformed world.

1 - A world where all creatures live together in harmony and peace.

2 - We wait with hope for this vision to become reality.

1 - Our God of hope fills us with joy and peace in believing... We re-light the candle of

3 - hope. *(a child – or 1 could speak this word)*

*(The first purple candle -in front and center - is relit)*

2 - We believe in God’s faithfulness in keeping promises... We light the candle of

3 - peace. *(a child – or 2 could speak this word)*

*(A second purple candle – on the right side - is lit)*

*(family returns to their seat after Opening Prayer)*

## Opening Prayer

O God, who sent Jesus to us as the Shoot of Jesse, open us to a new vision of what it means to be grasped by the spirit of such a one. With complete openness to your Spirit and reverence to your way, may we seek insight by undertaking serious discussion with both our friends and our enemies. Help us to be sensitive and courageous as we seek to guide with judgments so righteous and just that the lamb will not fear to lie down with the lion. Amen.

by Bob W. Dell  
retired pastor residing in McPherson, KS  
originally written (12/5/2004) for  
the Church of the Brethren Living Word Bulletin  
Anchor/Wallace, Sleepy Eye MN 56085, "The Living Word Series"

Please be seated.

→  
The seed for the Children's Time  
came from Carolyn C. Brown,  
a retired minister of Christian Education  
in the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA),  
from her blog, "Worshipping With Children"

## Children's Time

*(ahead of time, arrange for one of the youth to wear a burlap vest with a belt and, at the appropriate time below, walk onto the baptismal – a board should be over it – and speak the 2 lines below loudly.)*

Invite any children to come forward. Have a hands-on talk with them about all the characters in the nativity crèche. Ask, "Who is this?" and see what they know, and fill in the blanks ***simply*** (we are expecting several young children - 5 years old and younger - here for the baby dedication). Then:

You know there is one person who is never in Nativity sets, but really ought to be. He probably looked most like the shepherds. However, his clothes were made of camel's hair (pick up one of the camel's). I think that might kind of itchy. He ate locusts and wild honey. Eeeww! The Bible says that he had a message for everyone:

*"Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for him."*

He wanted people to admit that they were doing what they shouldn't be doing.

*"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."*

And lots of people came to him, because they knew they needed God to forgive them, and they wanted to do what was right. John baptized them to show them that God forgave them and would give them another chance. He also told them that God was sending someone very special. And that someone was ?? ... Jesus.

*(thank and send the children back to their families)*

Song: "The Lord is coming" (vs. 2)

## The Lord is coming

A voice cries out, a wil-der-ness shout, to all those who are  
wan-d'ring in dark-ness and doubt. Do not de - spair, just turn, if you  
dare, to the One who is call-ing you, come and pre - pare.

*refrain:*  
The Lord is com - ing, lift up your voice. Let all God's  
peo - ple sing and re - joice. His ad - vent is what we cel - e -  
brate. God's king-dom comes, for which we a - wait.

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## Unison Prayer of Confession

Please turn to #696 in the back of your hymnal and join me in this prayer which connects the desire of our hearts with a confession of how far we are from where God desires us to be. Let's speak it together.

God of love and justice

we long for peace within and peace without.

We long for harmony in our families,

for serenity in the midst of struggle,

and for commitment to each other's growth.

We long for the day when our homes

will be a dwelling place for your love.

Yet we confess that we are often anxious;

we do not trust each other,

and we harbor violence.

We are not willing to take the risks

and make the sacrifices that love requires.

Look upon us with kindness and grace.

Rule in our homes and in all the world;

show us how to walk in your paths,

through the mercy of our Savior. AMEN

by Ruth C. Duck, *Flames of the Spirit*, ed. Ruth C. Duck,  
© 1985, The Pilgrim Press, altered as found in *The Hymnal*, #696.

# Returning our Tithes and Offerings

Through our giving, we seek to prepare the way of the Lord, a path for God not only to affect the lives of others, but also for the Lord to walk with us along the way of our own daily decisions.

As the ushers receive our offerings, please sign and pass the attendance pads found on the center aisle side of each pew. Ushers?

## Offertory Video

“Advent. slow down. take time. open up”

<https://youtu.be/WcravEG2ATE>

## Offertory Response

(sing to OLD HUNDREDTH, *Hymnal* #119)

With longing we await the birth  
Of Christ who comes to reign on earth.  
And with our offerings we adore  
And praise you, God, forever more. Amen.

by Connie Burkholder, pastoral team  
Monitor Church of the Brethren, McPherson, Kansas  
from Church of the Brethren *Living Word* bulletin  
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# Prayer

Holy One of Israel, you have said that: “*in returning and rest (we) shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be (our) strength*” (Isaiah 30:15). Open our ears to your voice, calling us to turn to you, to repent, and to become aware every day how incredibly near your kingdom has come. With these offerings we seek to prepare your way ... today. AMEN

Please be seated.

# Dedication of a child and his parents

On this second Sunday of Advent, as we prepare for Christmas and the celebration of the birth of Jesus, we rejoice in the birth of another mother's child. Not long ago within our fellowship, a husband and a wife (with their young daughter), were waiting for their second child to come into this world. Pregnancy can be a very uncomfortable time, indeed - especially for the mother. However, among the many blessings of this nine-month wait is the reorienting of time.

While what happens inside a mother before birth has a somewhat predictable timing, the truth of the matter is - a baby will not be born until the time is right (unless, of course, we take matters into our own hands). In the Bible, time is defined in two different ways. There is "chronos" or "chronological" time, which is governed by the clock or the calendar. Then there is "kairos" time, which is governed by God. It is, if you will, "pregnant time." Things happen when they are ready, not one minute before or after.

The birth of a child, and the days which follow, reorients our sense of time. An infant is fed when she is hungry. A diaper is changed when it needs to be. A cry brings a response, no matter when it happens. For parents, these days can be very tiring, and very rewarding. Eventually, routines do develop (thank God!) and chronos time gradually takes over. However, it's important that we not lose a sense of the kairos timing that needs to be a part of the nurturing of a growing child.

Yes, there is a somewhat predictable path that the development of a young person takes on the journey to adulthood and beyond. However, things happen when the time is right. Each child develops in her own way, in his own time, or should we say - in God's time (kairos). We need to remember this - as parents, as family, as church - and "wait upon the Lord" as we help our children to grow.

It's time to dedicate a precious child to the Lord. Mitch and Mandy, would you bring Pierce forward?

When we dedicate a child, we also dedicate ourselves to the task of raising him, praying that God will protect, provide, and guide all along the way of his development as a man-to-be, a man of faith. Each child is a gift from God. Each one belongs to God, something we should never forget. Our children are not our possessions. God entrusts us with them for a season. All-too-soon, we will release them. But for now, we are blessed with their care.

Of course, parenting can have its uncomfortable times, and its moments when all you can do is watch and pray as a young person makes his own choices, trusting that he has been grounded in the example and teachings of his family and church. However, a blessing remains from the nine-months of waiting for him to first enter this world - the blessing of kairos. It is ultimately God's time-frame that governs his world and yours. Therein we find our hope. "Please be patient with me," a button upon each young person should read, "God is not finished with me yet."

## Family Commitment

Mandy and Mitch, God is not finished with you yet, either. With Pierce in your arms, I invite you now to speak your vows to the Lord.

Trusting in the Lord to protect, provide, and guide, do you promise to raise Pierce in a loving home where he may grow, as he is ready, into the unique person God has created him to be.

If so, say “We do.”

Through word and example, will you teach Pierce the way of Christ, and encourage him such that one day he may choose to follow Jesus as his Lord and Savior, being baptized, and fully participating in the life and work of the body of Christ.

If so, say “We will.”

Celeste, not long ago this was you in your parent’s arms, being dedicated to the Lord. You have grown so fast. We can hardly believe it. We’re proud of you, and we know you are and will be a great big sister to Pierce. I have just one question for you. Do you promise to keep loving your brother, and tell him about Jesus? ... I thought you would!

## Congregation Commitment

Please turn in your hymnal to #791, and let us as a people of God, add our blessing to this child and his family.

You have offered your child  
to the strong and tender providence of God.  
We rejoice with you and give thanks  
for the gift of your child.  
We promise, with humility and seriousness,  
to share in your child’s nurture and well-being.  
We will support, by our example and words,  
your efforts to provide a loving and caring home,  
where trust in God grows & Christ’s way is chosen.  
Our prayers will be with you and for you.  
May our shared life and witness  
help make your task both joyful and fruitful.

*Hymnal #791, attributed to John Mosemann,  
originally found in *The Mennonite Hymnal*, ©1969.*

## Consecration

(The child is held and introduced to the congregation, walking down the aisle.  
Then, the following dedication and prayer is then spoken.)

Pierce Randolph Roberts, you are dedicated to the Lord. May all the resources of home, family, and church nurture you and encourage toward your own decision for Jesus Christ.

Lord, thank you for Pierce. He is your child. Bless him all the days of his life. Give to his parents, his family, and his church what we need to raise him in the faith. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Consecration and Prayer from  
*Pastor’s Manual: Church of the Brethren*,  
©1978, Brethren Press, Elgin, IL, p. 202

This dedication service was written previously  
by Peter L Haynes, ©2003

From the Prophets  
**Isaiah 11:1-10**

1 - From the Prophet Isaiah, chapter 11

2 - verses 1-10, Listen!

*(pause)*

1 - A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,

2 - and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

1 - The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,

2 - the spirit of wisdom and understanding,

1 - the spirit of counsel and might,

2 - the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

1 - His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

2 - He shall not judge by what his eyes see,

1 - or decide by what his ears hear;

2 - but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,

1 - and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;

2 - he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,

1 - and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

2 - Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,

1 - and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

2 - The wolf shall live with the lamb,

1 - the leopard shall lie down with the kid,

2 - the calf and the lion and the fatling together,

1 - and a little child shall lead them.

2 - The cow and the bear shall graze,

1 - their young shall lie down together;

2 - and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

1 - The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,

2 - and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

1 - They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;

2 - for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

1 - On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples;

2 - the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

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## Romans 15:4-13

1 - From the apostle, in his letter to the Romans

2 - chapter 15, verses 4-15, Listen!

*(pause)*

1 - For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

2 - May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 - Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

2 - For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

1 - “Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name”;

2 - and again he says,

1 - “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”;

2 - and again,

1 - “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him”;

2 - and again Isaiah says,

1 - “The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

2 - May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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## Benediction

Go now and prepare the way of the Lord.

Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you,  
and bear fruits worthy of repentance.

And may God grant you harmony with one another;  
May Christ Jesus fill you with joy and peace in believing;  
And may the Holy Spirit empower you  
and fill you with hope.

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