



Advent 4 – December 18, 2022

Restoration is Near - Do Not Be Afraid

God has promised to restore us and has acted in Jesus to further God's plan of restoration. Because of God's promise, we can act by asking for what we need and by stepping out in faith.

GATHERING

Prelude

Opening Song

STS #3 *Come, Light of the World*

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

Leader: Behold! Do not be afraid; God is with us. God is our strength and our salvation!

People: *Lord, we stand in Your presence in faith, not fear.*

Leader: God will send angels to keep watch over you, to comfort you, to keep you.

People: *Lord, our strong hope is built on Your unfailing love.*

Our hearts yield to You and trust in Your transforming power.

ALL: *Praise ye the Lord!*

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Candle Lighting Song

HWB #172 *O Come, O Come, Immanuel* (Verses 1 & 6)

Candle Litany

Leader: We cry out for restoration, we call upon God to give us life.

People: *Do not be afraid, says the Lord. I have promised to be with you.*

Leader: As we hold fast to God's promise, we light this candle as a sign of our joy.

People: *Bring Your restoration to Your people, we pray.*

PRAISING

Praise Song

HWB #195 - *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*
(Verses 1, 3, 4 & 5)

Offering – Education Fund

O Come, All Ye Faithful
Christmas Choir

HEARING GOD'S WORD

A Shepherd Remembers

Scripture

Matthew 1:18–25 (NRSV)

Message

Do Not Be Afraid

RESPONDING

Song of Response

STS #49 *I Will Come to You in the Silence*

Congregational Sharing/Prayer

SENDING

Sending Song

HWB #189 *To Us a Child of Hope is Born*

Benediction/Blessing

Postlude



Message: Pastor Nathanael Hofstetter Ressler
Worship Leader: Paul Bontrager
Song Leader: Ruth Yoder
Offertory: Christmas Choir

A Shepherd Remembers: Michael Yoder
Candle Lighting: Julie Yoder & Kevin Graber

PERMISSION TO PHOTOCOPY
Subscribers to Leader are welcome to photocopy and adapt worship materials
Songs used with permission: CCLI 465314
HWB-Hymnal Worship Book (blue) TMH-The Mennonite Hymnal (red)
STJ-Sing the Journey (green) STS-Sing the Story (purple)
VT-Voces Together (purple)

The tapestry at the front represents our theme of Restoration as a process of assembling and bringing different pieces together as they should be to create a beautiful whole. Each week we will be adding a ribbon until the tapestry is complete.



Please join us on Christmas Eve for a service of singing and celebrating Jesus' birth.

The service will begin at 6:00 p.m.

Upcoming Services: No Sunday School – Worship Service 10:30am:

(We will not have coffee and donuts available on Christmas morning.)

December 25: *Christmas Day – Sing for Joy: Your God Reigns*

The long-anticipated restoration is here and now. The same Holy Spirit that birthed Jesus is available to us. This is how a small baby can be Good News for today's world.

January 1, 2023: Sunday after Christmas – New Year's Day



- ✝ Pray for Joe Yoder who was hospitalized due to complications with hemophilia at the end of last week. Praise that he was released from the hospital on Thursday.
- ✝ Pray for Rachel Weaver's brother, John Yoder, recovering from a car accident.
- ✝ Pray for Tom Johnson's sister, Brenda Richardson, recovering from a liver transplant.
- ✝ Pray for peace and justice throughout the world. Pray for those affected by violence and hate.



Offering Last Sunday, December 11

Attendance: 81

General Fund	\$ 5,485.00
Education Fund	600.00
Special Designation	2,000.00
100-Year Book	180.00
Total Offering	<u>\$ 8,265.00</u>

The third Sunday of each month is Education Sunday;

on December 18th, non-designated funds from the offering will go toward the Education Fund.

Offering Envelope Numbers

In order to receive a year-end statement of your offerings, you must have an offering number. To obtain an offering number, please contact Kami Sommers. The offering envelopes are designed so you can designate your offering to specific funds. If funds are not designated on the envelope, they are included in the General Fund with the exception of the 3rd Sunday of each month which is Education Sunday and non-designated funds go to the Education Fund. For accurate recording, please mark the front of your envelope with your offering number as well as designation of funds. If you have any questions, please contact John Koshmider, the church treasurer.


Holiday Schedule

- Pastor Nathanael will be on vacation December 26-31. Please contact a member of Ministry of Congregational Care for any pastoral needs in his absence.
- The church office will be closed on Monday the week of Christmas & New Year's – December 26 and January 2. Cindy will be working Tuesday, Thursday & Friday both weeks.

As you shop for the holidays, don't forget to save your Acme grocery receipts.

Acme will give a percentage of the cash back amount printed on the bottom of each receipt to FISH. The program runs through December 24, 2022. A box is available under the mailboxes for the receipts – thanks for your support of this project! *Ministry of Outreach*

Family Ministry has freezer meals available for those in need.

These can be taken to someone in the church or a neighbor or a friend who could use some help. The meals are in the freezer in the church kitchen and labeled with heating instructions. There is frozen Rigatoni, Sausage & Potato Soup, Apple Crisp, and there are fruit slushes left as well. Please let Cindy in the church office know what you are taking and who it is going to. If you have any questions, please contact a member of Family Ministry
– Barb Dutcher, Marsha Miller, Vee Miller, Sheryl Weaver



Lighthouse Ministries has an exciting matching gift opportunity of \$19,600!

From now until December 31, every dollar given to the Lighthouse will be matched dollar-for-dollar (up to \$19,600), doubling your impact! Please prayerfully consider giving a gift to help us reach our goal of raising \$39,200. Your partnership in our work and your investment in the children living in our SE Canton neighborhood means the world to us. You can give a gift easily at www.cantonlighthouse.org/donate or by mailing a check to Lighthouse Ministries at 1931 3rd St SE, Canton, OH 44707.

Support Adriel’s Angel Tree Project: Each \$25 donation will sponsor a Christmas gift for an Adriel foster youth or Bridges young adult. Please help Adriel reach their \$5,000 goal to assure that each Adriel foster child and Bridges young adult receive a Christmas gift from their wish list in time for the holiday. Visit [Adriel Angel Tree](#) to make an online donation or mail a check with the memo “Angel Tree” to Adriel at PO Box 188 West Liberty, OH 43357.

Click [here](#) for the bi-monthly newsletter from Ohio Mennonite Conference.

Paper copies are available on the literature rack at the church.

To include something in the newsletter, please contact Cindy by Wednesday – thank you!

Church Information: 2121 Smith Kramer St. NE, Hartville, OH 44632 Phone: 330-877-2400
Website: www.mgmennonite.org
Facebook – Maple Grove Mennonite Church Group
(send updates to Pastor Nathanael, Jill Liechty or Julie Yoder)
Nathanael Hofstetter Ressler: Pastor (pastornathanael@maplegrovemennonite.org)
- Office Hours: Monday 9am-12pm; Tuesday thru Thursday-1-3pm; Friday-Sabbath
Cindy Fleming: Church Secretary (Secretary@maplegrovemennonite.org)
- Office Hours: Monday-Tuesday and Thursday-Friday – 8am-1pm
Ministry of Congregational Care: Paul Bontrager, Dan Dutcher, Clara Sommers, Gary Sommers
Prayer Chain Contacts: Jen Geiser and Kami Sommers

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES AVAILABLE

Adult Classes

Women’s Class: Room 1-Education Side
Mixed Intergenerational Class: Room 2-Education Side
Men’s Class: Room 9-Hallway
Mixed Post-High/20’s-40’s: Basement

Children/Youth Classes

PreK-4th Grade: Rooms 7-8
Jr. Youth (Grades 5-8): Rooms 3-4
Youth (Grades 9-12): Youth Room-Basement