



St. James Lutheran Church
Fishersville, VA
December 3, 2023

INTRODUCTION

Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who opens the heavens
and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful,
desiring all to come to repentance.
Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,
you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.
We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.
We are complicit in systems of exploitation.
We choose comfort over courage.
We are careless with creation's bounty.
Look upon us with mercy.
Turn our hearts again to you.
Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world.

Amen.

Hear these words of assurance:
God clothes you with garments of salvation
and covers you with robes of righteousness.
In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.
God's covenant is eternal,
and God's blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

ENTRANCE HYMN: "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (LBW 34)

GREETING

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

KYRIE



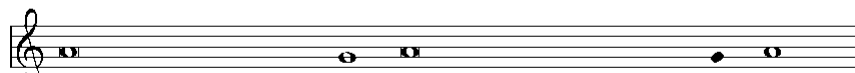
A) In peace, let us pray to the Lord. B) Lord, have mer - cy.



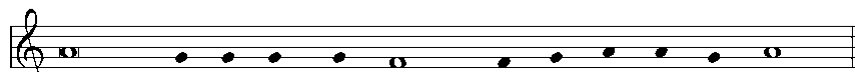
A) For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



B) Lord, have mer - cy.



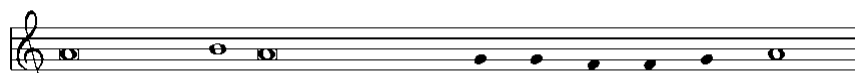
A) For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



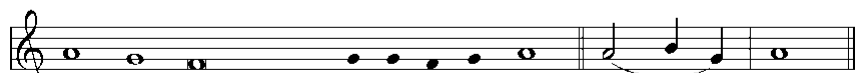
B) Lord, have mer - cy.



A) For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. B) Lord, have mer - cy.



A) Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord. B) A - - men

HYMN OF PRAISE



A This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



B Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and



strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

FIRST READING:

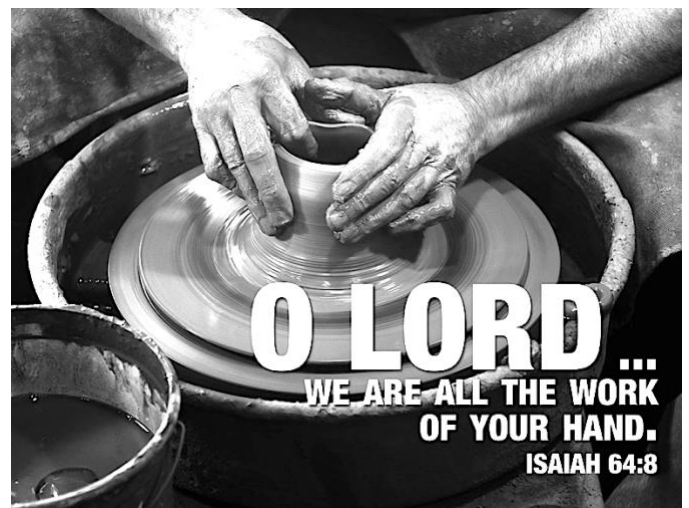
This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

Isaiah 64:1-9

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.

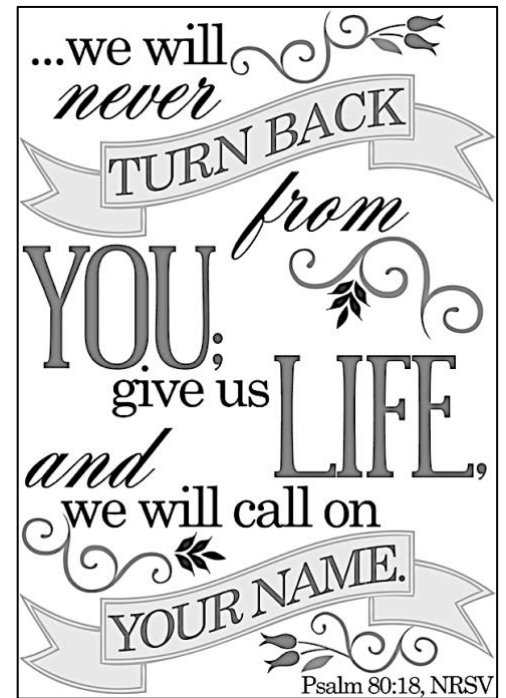
Here ends the reading.

Thanks be to God.



PSALM: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

- ¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph ¹ like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- ¹ on the cherubim.
- ²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, ¹ and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and ¹ come to help us.**
- ³Restore ¹ us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we ¹ shall be saved.
- ⁴**O LORD ¹ God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your ¹ people pray?**
- ⁵You have fed them with the ¹ bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of ¹ tears to drink.
- ⁶**You have made us the derision ¹ of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh ¹ us to scorn.**
- ⁷Restore us, O ¹ God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we ¹ shall be saved.
- ¹⁷**Let your hand be upon the one at ¹ your right hand,
the one you have made so strong ¹ for yourself.**
- ¹⁸And so will we never turn a- ¹ way from you;
give us life, that we may call up- ¹ on your name.
- ¹⁹**Restore us, O LORD ¹ God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we ¹ shall be saved.**



SECOND READING:

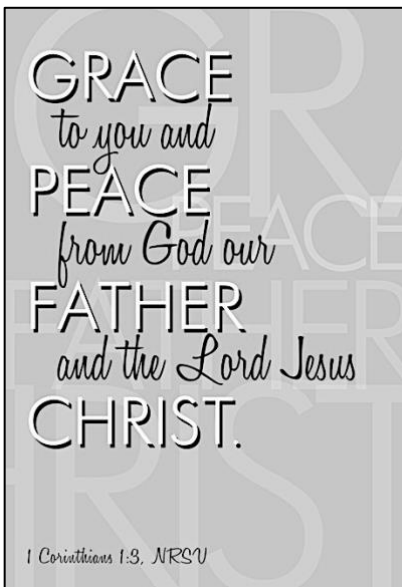
As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.

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.

Here ends the reading.

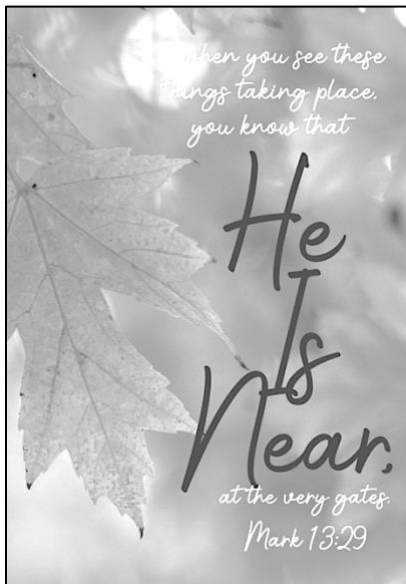
Thanks be to God.



GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37



Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.



[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.

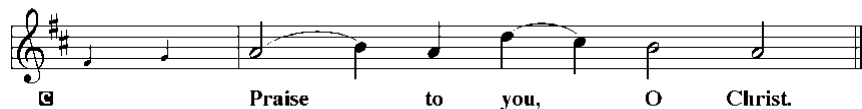
²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates.

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.



SERMON: Rev. Carl Trost

HYMN OF THE DAY: “The Advent of Our God” (LBW 22)

APOSTLE’S CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith by using the words of the Apostle’s Creed.

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.



**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He 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 PRAYERS

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

Call your church into holy fellowship as we await the restoration of all things. Reenergize your faithful people to live with hope and compassion, especially those who serve as missionaries near and far. Center us on your promise to come among us and make all things new. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

All creation signals your presence, O God: the vastness of the cosmos, the turn of the seasons, and living things that both rest and flourish. Rekindle our commitment to care for the earth. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Let the nations tremble at your holy presence, that justice and liberation prevail in all corners of the earth. Restore peace to nations in conflict, teach righteousness to corrupt leaders and systems, and bring stability to areas facing uncertain futures. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Be with those who keep awake at night: nurses working overnight shifts, caregivers of newborns and aging adults, stargazers, those who are anxious, or those who are traveling. Reveal to all that the dark can be a place of calm and comfort filled with your presence. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You have sent out your angels and gathered your faithful people from every time and place, calling them into one fellowship of saints. Bless the witness of those who dwell in your eternal presence. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Enrich the spirits of all who feel hopeless, fearful, or despairing. Stay close to those who await healing or relief especially Norma, Gillian, Cecilia, Jean, Betty, Inez, Charlotte, Zeby, Susan, Claire, Charles, and Ellen. Deliver all in any need. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

(For whom else and what else shall we pray...)

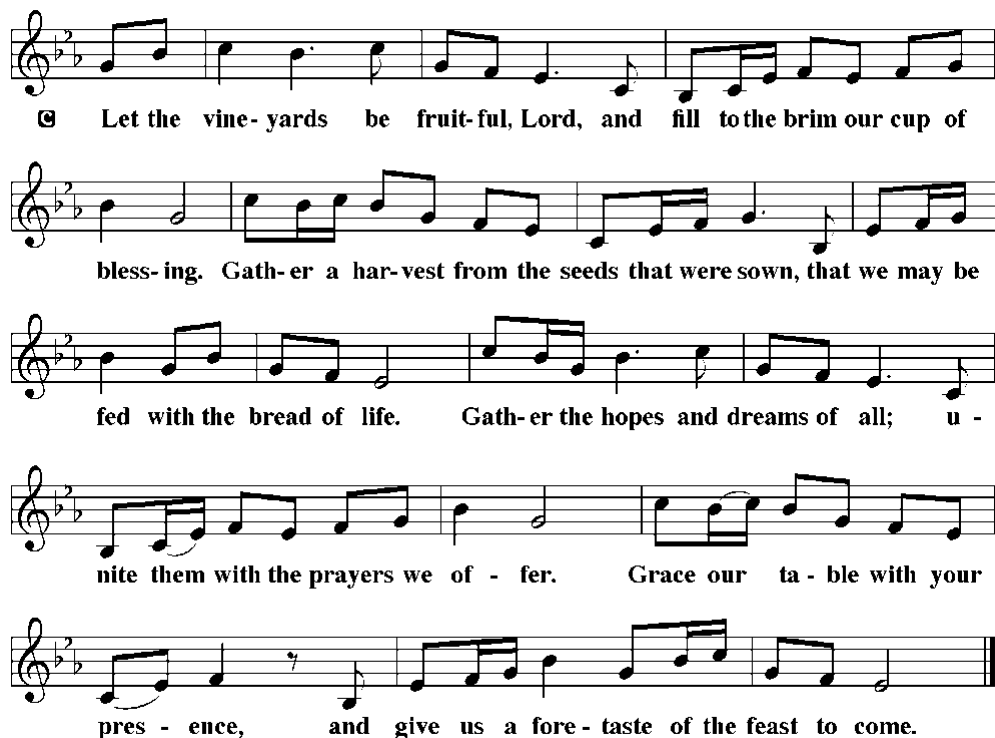
Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.
Amen.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

(Greet each other in the peace of the Lord.)

ANTHEM: “The King Shall Come” Text John Brownlie, Tune A. Davidson, Kentucky harmony,

OFFERING



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

God our provider,
by your merciful hand
abundance springs up from the earth.
Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty.
Let them be a sign of your steadfast love
and faithfulness for all people,
through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

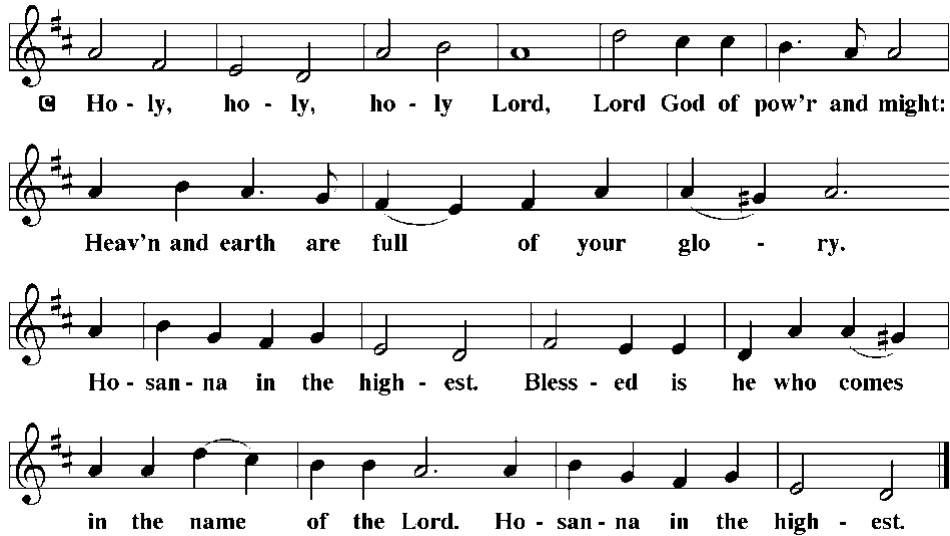
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.
Come, take your place at the table.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

Prayer after Communion

Generous God,
in bread and cup you have revealed your glory
for all people to see together.
Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim
your good news of liberation and release,
brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: "Rejoice, Rejoice Believers" (LBW 25)

Blessing

The God of peace bless you,
the love of Christ sustain you in
hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit +
remain upon you
now and forever.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.

DECEMBER



19th Reid Leach
26th Sarah Grove Jordan
26th Jaxon Diehl



December

3rd Lynda Diehl
10th Ellen McDonald
17th
24th – 11am Sherie W-Rohal
14th – 7pm Anne Putnam
31st Debbie Snyder

Advent and Christmas Schedule

Advent Services
December 6th at Zion
December 13th at Grace
December 20th at St. James

Sunday December 24th Christmas Eve
11:00 am service of the word no communion
7:00 pm Candlelight service with communion

December 10th decorate the sanctuary after church
December 31st take down Christmas decorations



We need your help the Backpack program now has 17 kids. Your support by purchasing any of the items listed below is much appreciated. Items can be placed in the box in the narthex.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Mac and cheese | Kroger meals |
| Chef Boyardee meals | Fruit cups |
| Boxes of cereal | Poptarts |
| Oatmeal | Ramen Noodles, any kind |
| Boxed juices | Yahoo chocolate milk |
| Apple sauce | Raisins |
| “Hugs” Drink Barrels | All single servings |

Monday, Dec. 4th—SACRA
 Christmas Benefit Concert
 at Memorial Baptist Church,
 224 Taylor St., Staunton.
 Doors open at 6:30pm

Prayer Concerns

Ongoing Need for Prayer

Norma Turak, Cecilia Shott, Jean Geiser, Betty Diehl, Gillian Taylor, Charlotte Shifflett (Danny’s aunt), Inez Johnson (Becky and Debbie’s aunt), and Susan Zirges (friend of Sherie & Paul).

Prayer Request for

Zeby (Ellen & Charles’ grandson), Charles, Ellen, and Claire.

Community Conversations

- December flowers will be given by Gene Giltner.
- Choir practice every Tuesday at 6pm at Betty Bartley’s home.
- Men’s Group meets every Friday at 9:00 am.
- Today a congregational meeting after worship to approve the 2024 budget.
- December 5th Open Circle at 1pm at Home Town Grill in Staunton. (Dutch Treat).
- December 6th Advent service at Zion, 7pm.
- December 10th soup luncheon after worship before we decorate the church for Christmas. Sign-up sheet in back of church.
- December 12th—Quilt Group meets at St. James, 1pm.
- December 12th Council meeting at St. James, 7pm.
- December 13th Advent service at Grace, 7pm.
- December 17th Christmas Open House at Pastor Gordon and Anne’s home from 2pm to 4pm.
- December 20th Advent service at St. James, 7pm.
- For prayer concerns, contact Pastor Gordon.
 - Council Person of the Month
 - December—Lynda Diehl

Pastor Gordon Putnam
 434-760-0263
Grputnam1949@gmail.com
 Pastor Carl Trost
 Hannah Pingel, Pianist
 Sam Diehl and Bambi Straw, Assisting Ministers

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