

# December 2021 Worship Guide

CHERRYVALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 709 CHERRY HILL DR, STAUNTON VA - 540 885 0098

## LIGHT *Light*



I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

JOHN 8:12

# Advent Worship

## Worship November 28 - First Sunday in Advent

### Scriptures to read and meditate on

Jer 33:14-16, Ps 25:1-10, 1 Thes 3:9-13, Lk 21:25-36

### Lighting the Advent Candle

#### Time to Go Home

Reader One: We feel like tired and scared shark hunters, alone on a boat in the middle of sea. We don't know if we have the strength to face what is before us, hunting us, hurting us. We huddle around a table in this hold of a leaky vessel, and we sing what comes to mind.

Reader Two: Show me the way to go home, I'm tired and I want to go to bed. I had a little drink about an hour ago and it's gone right to my head. Wherever I may roam on land or sea or foam, you can always hear me singing a song: show me the way to go home.

Reader One: Home. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of a branch that will be raised. Jesus spoke of a Son of Man that will descend. Both point to a hope – a hope that calls us home. Our true home, where we're welcomed and loved and included, where there is justice and equality and peace. It's time, this Advent season, time to go home.

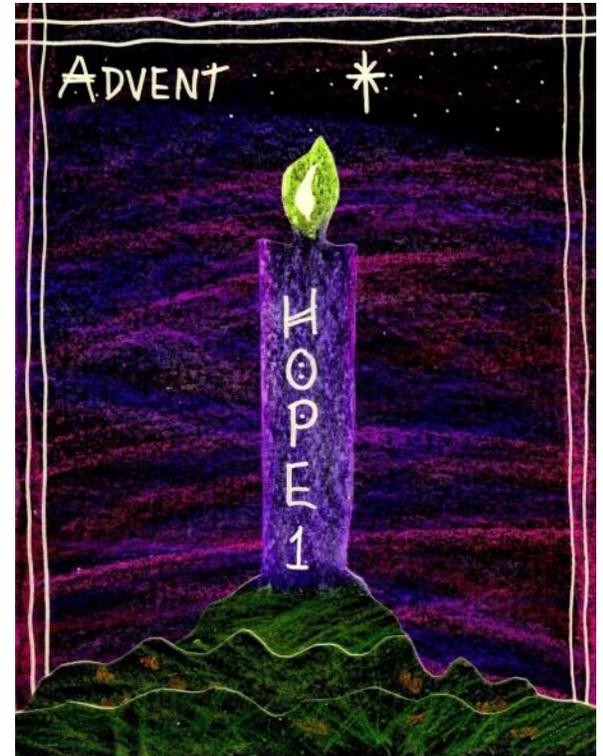
Reader Two: We light this candle, as a sign of our hope, our strong hope that there is a way to go home. To the home in Christ, and it starts with us, and it starts here, and it starts now. It's time to go home.

### Prayer of Confession

Righteous one, to you alone we lift our souls; in you alone, we place our trust; for you alone we wait all day long. For you are the God of our salvation, abounding in mercy and steadfast love. Forgive us for those times in our lives that we have not waited on you. Forgive us for the times that we have fallen asleep and given into the darkness of our lives. Help us remain alert and watchful for the coming of your promised one—the one who comes with power and glory, the one drawing near to bring our salvation and brings us eternally home. Amen.

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

Loving God, we thank you that when Heaven and Earth pass away, Your words will not pass away. We thank you that you have planted your word within our hearts so that we can be bearers of the Good News. Bless our gifts we offer now and use them to bring light into the darkness. Help us to give ourselves generously, for we do not know the day or the hour. We pray in the name of the one who will come, Christ our Lord. Amen.



# Advent Worship

## Worship December 5 - Second Sunday in Advent

### Scriptures to read and meditate on

Mal 3:1-4, Lk 1:68-79, Phil 1:3-11, Lk 3:1-6

### Lighting the Advent Candle

#### The Fear of Home

Reader One: For many of us, the call to head home is one of joy and of hope. We can't wait to reconnect with family, with history and tradition, with a wonderful time of freedom and loving support. We can't wait to go home.

Reader Two: There are those who fear going home, however, and there are times when going home brings back memories that are not so good, not so healing. We are reminded of when we didn't fit in, when we didn't measure up, when we weren't loved like we needed to be loved. Home can be a difficult place for some.

Reader One: The prophet Malachi tells us that even when we are in the hottest of fires, there is a presence who can make us better, who can refine and purify. John the Baptist tells us that the road home is always under construction, mountains leveled, and valleys filled in, to make smooth the path that leads us to our true destination, where we can live in peace and unity with all.

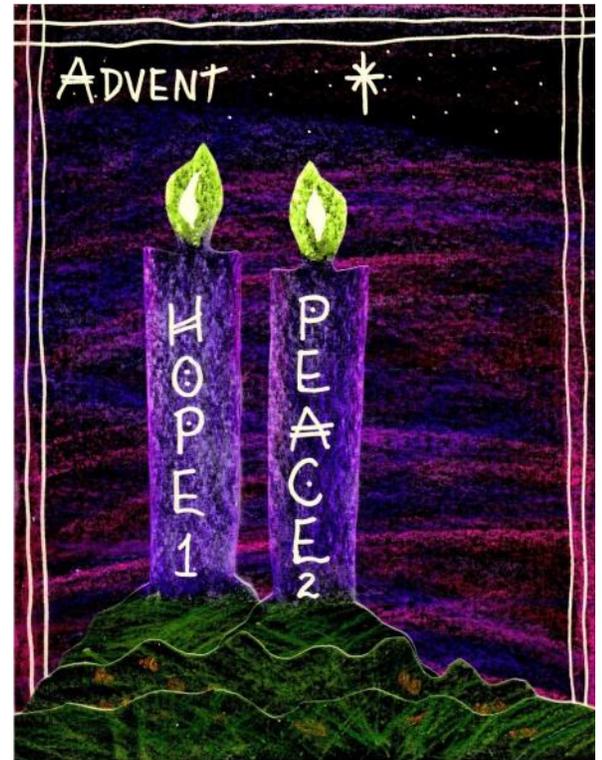
Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of hope and the candle of peace, as a sign of our assurance that though the road is hard, we believe it is worth the journey. It is time to go home.

### Prayer of Confession

God with us, in this season suspended between hope and fulfillment, let us never forget what you have done. May we be overwhelmed by your mercy, which flows in wave after wave. May we be honest about the darkness within us, and perceptive of the light around us. Forgive our passive walk with you. Wash and refine our hearts. May we make straight the path for the Lord, that together we may see God's glory revealed, as we bear the message hope and peace to the world.

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

Loving God, we thank you that when Heaven and Earth pass away, Your words will not pass away. We God of mercy and grace, we pray that the gifts we offer this morning might be used to bring some compassion to the chaos that is our world. We give these gifts in love, hoping they will heal some of the hurting; and as they do, make the crooked road straight for the coming of the Christ. May the hills that separate us from sisters and brothers be made flat and may the valleys of our isolation be raised up, so we will be ready to welcome the Christ as one. In that holy name, we pray. Amen.



# Advent Worship

## Worship December 12 - Third Sunday in Advent

### Scriptures to read and meditate on

Genesis 1: 1-15, John 1: 1-5, 14, Isaiah 61: 1-3, Luke 4: 16-21, Isaiah 40: 1-11, Matthew 3: 1-7, 11, Isaiah 9: 1,2, & 6, Matthew 4: 12-17, Isaiah 7: 10-14, Matthew 1: 20-23, Isaiah 42: 5-9, Luke 2: 25-32, Isaiah 35: 1-6. 8a, 10  
Matthew 4: 12-17

### Lighting the Advent Candle

#### The Joy of Home

Reader One: It's a reunion, every time we go home, every time we embrace those we love, no matter how long it has been. It feels like sunrise, like the clouds are parting and the rain has ended. It is joy, nothing less than pure joy to grab hold of those who are home for us, who make home for us. Whether we wake up to them every day, or travel many miles to see them again, it is joy to go home.

Reader Two: The prophet Zephaniah tells us to rejoice at the thought of going home. The prophet tells us to imagine being set free, being unburdened, being released to live, to fully live in the grace and wonder of life itself, surrounded by those who love us like no one else. And then to live like that was our truth even now, even here. It is joy to go home.

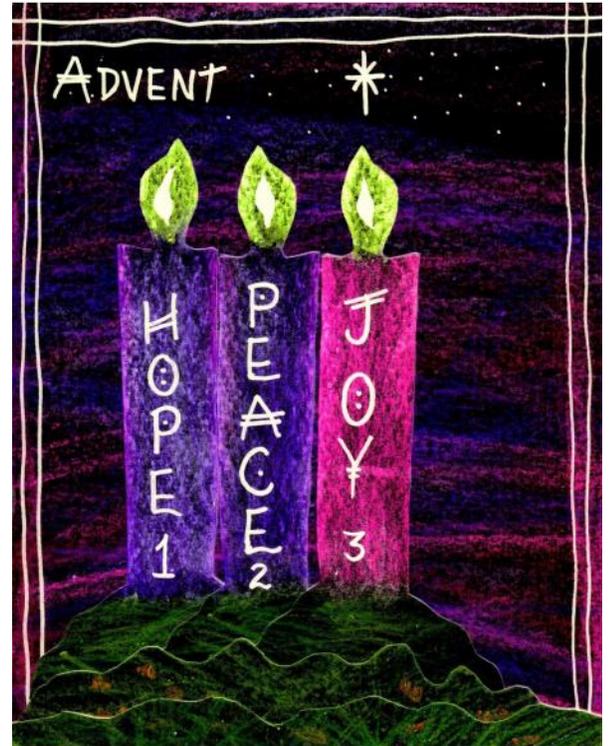
Reader One: John the Baptist reminds us, however, that it takes choices to live in this joy. It doesn't just happen; we choose to make life a joy by how we love others, by how we serve and give and care for others, by how we do the job we do and how we impact the world around us. We build joy as we build a home in this world and the next.

Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of hope, and of peace, and of joy, as a sign that we are on our way home, and we walk with a skip in our step because we can see the destination, and it is pure joy. It is time to go home.

### The Blessing of the Light

The Lord is my Light and my Salvation: Our God shall change the darkness to light.

Blessed are you, Lord God, creator of day and night: to you be praise and glory forever. As darkness falls you renew your promise to reveal among us the light of your presence. By the light of Christ, your living Word, dispel the darkness of our hearts that we may walk as children of light and sing your praise throughout the world. Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Blessed be God forever.



# Advent Worship

## **Bidding Prayer**

Loving Father, the light of your glorious sunshine has too often been hidden by the clouds of our sin. Your love we have turned to lust, your beauty to ugliness and what you had made possible we have rendered impossible. But in the disgrace we have made of your world your grace still shines. With all its fragile beauty your light remains a constant in our lives, for your love never fails, brightening our days, casting our shadows behind us and guiding us into the new life that you have prepared for us. Lord Jesus Christ, you are God's light in the world, and you have come among us to illumine our path and show us the true and living way into the Father's presence. Once again your flickering light has been placed in our hands to cradle and care for, as once your Virgin Mother cradled you. May the light of the world shining in our hearts be our care and delight as we share your radiance with others. In Christ's light may we be blessed and may we bless others even in the darkest corners of the world. O Holy Spirit of God, kindle your first of love in our hearts. That flame sees through us and reveals us as we are but may it also heal us so that renewed in love and joy and peace, we may shine as Christ's light in the world, and serve his people in the Father's name, for you -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit -- are our God forever and ever. Amen.

## **Closing Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world. You scatter the shadows before our path, and through your Holy Spirit you lead us into all truth. Use these gifts that we may shine your light in the world, become instruments of your peace, and symbols of your presence. For you are our God forever and ever. Amen.

## **Blessing**

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came amongst us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. Amen.

May he whose second coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. Amen.

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you forever. Amen.

***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 thee, O Israel.***

# Advent Worship

## Worship December 19 - Fourth Sunday in Advent

### Scriptures to read and meditate on

Mic 5:2-5a, Lk 1:47-55, Heb 10:5-10, Lk 1:39-45

### Lighting the Advent Candle

#### The Blessing of Home

Reader One: Sometimes when we are trying something new, or when we are facing a difficult decision, or when we want to celebrate something, or when we just feel lost and alone and uncertain about life, the universe and everything, we need a blessing. We don't always think of it that way, or word it like that. We say we need advice, or support, or companions, or someone to come along beside and lift us up again so we can see more than the tops of our shoes. We seek a blessing.

Reader Two: For many of us, we go home; we ask mom; we talk to dad, or brothers and sisters, close friends, those we grew up with, those who know us best. We want them alongside; we want to be in their presence. Somehow, we know that being there, being home, will make all things better. Maybe it won't be fixed, or solved, or wished away, but at least we won't be alone. We seek a blessing.

Reader One: Mary, faced with an incomprehensible burden and gift, ran to Cousin Elizabeth's house, looking for someone who knew a little of what she was going through, looking for a place to hide until the reality of her condition could become something real. And she received a blessing. The prophet Micah spoke of a blessing coming to an unexpected place, an unassuming town. Yet by God's grace would become the means through which God would bless the whole world. Bethlehem, the little town of blessing. We seek a blessing.

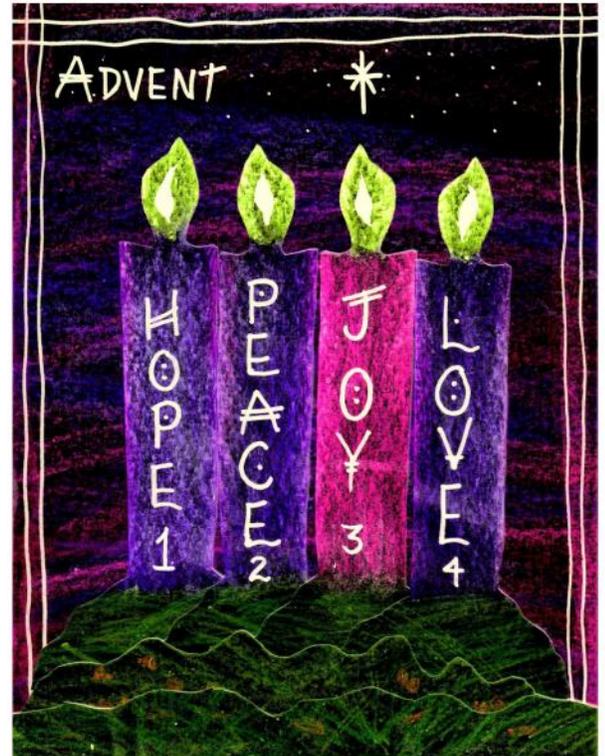
Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of hope, of peace, of joy and of today, love, as a sign that we know blessing and we know waiting for blessing to be felt and lived. We light these candles as a sign that we still seek a blessing. It's time to go home.

### Prayer of Confession

Coming Lord, while we ask for the most meaningful Advent season ever, we sadly confess having done so little with so much. Forgive us, Lord, for not bending the knee, for not reading your Word, for not searching our hearts, for not facing our sins. Forgive us according to your tender mercies, O God! Grant that when Christmas morning breaks for us this year, we may have a fresh sense of your presence and a renewed resolve to live to the praise of Christ's glory. Help us to see your love in the unknown and overlooked places of our lives.

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give you thanks, O God, for your perfect love that brings searches and brings life to even the unknown, overlooked places of our hearts and lives. We give you thanks that even in the little places of our lives can you bring great things. Take our small amount of offering and use it to bring the greatest message of hope, peace, joy, and love to all the world! Through Christ our Messiah and King we pray. Amen.



# Christmas Eve Worship

## Worship December 24

### **Scriptures to read and meditate on**

Isa 9:2-7, Ps 96, Titus 2:11-14, Lk 2:1-20,

### **Lighting the Advent Candle**

Welcome Home

Reader One: This night, this night is a night to remember. A night when home broke in on us. A night when we were not forgotten or alone or abandoned. This night. This night is the night when here and there became one, when past and future combined in a breathless present. This is a night when we are home, in ourselves, in this family, in the God who loved us enough to walk beside us.

Reader Two: We gather in the night to proclaim the light. We shrug off despair and embrace hope. We set aside conflict and choose peace. We push away despair by claiming joy. We overcome hate by rising into love. Because this night we know, even in the shadows of our doubts, we know that we are loved. That's what it means to be home.

Reader One: We light these candles, hoping to become the light, hoping to radiate light by how we live. We light these candles to create a space called home in this place, in our place, in inner places. We light these candles to declare that unto us a Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord. Welcomed home by angels singing and shepherds kneeling. Welcomed home by those like us who have worshiped for thousands of years. Welcomed home again tonight, right here, right now, in us.

Reader Two: It's time to be home.

### **Prayer of Confession**

Merciful God, we have failed to be obedient to your Word, we have not done your will, and we have broken your law. For the beauty and joy that this night brings in which we fail to live in our lives and share with others; for the hardness of our hearts for the stranger; for our broken relationship with you and others; for the light you have placed in us that we have extinguished; forgive us and renew your radiant light in us this night through our Savior Jesus Christ.

### **Prayer**

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Blessed are you, Prince of Peace. You rule the earth with truth and justice. Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world. Blessed are you, Wonderful Counselor. You enlighten the heart with steadfast love. Enliven your church that it might bear good tidings of great joy to all people. Blessed are you, Emmanuel. You promise to be with us even to the end of the age. Open our eyes to see your presence in all who are hungry, lonely, or homeless. Blessed are you, Son of Mary. You share our humanity. Have mercy on the sick, the dying, and all who suffer this day. Blessed are you, Son of God. You dwell among us as the Word made flesh. Reveal yourself to us in word and sacrament that we may bear your light to all the world. Amen.

# Merry Christmas

# December Worship

## Worship December 26 - First Sunday in Christmas

### **Scriptures to read and meditate on**

1 Sam 2:18-20, 26, Ps 148, Col 3:12-17, Lk 2:41-52

Grace and Peace to you in the name of our Newborn King and Savior, Jesus Christ. Let us stand to join together in singing our Call to Worship as we prepare to come and worship Christ the Newborn King." "And now, Good Christian Friends, let us rejoice together with our heart and soul and voice as we sing praise to our God for the Good News of our Savior's birth."

### **Prayer of Confession**

"In the bleak midwinter of our lives, Christ came. In the bleak coldness of our hearts, Christ takes up room. We turned our heart away from God, but Christ comes to restore and heal what once was broken. Let us prepare to give our hearts to God as we confess our sins."

"No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground. Christ has come to make his blessings flow, far as the curse is found. Joy to the World, let every heart prepare him room. In the name of Jesus Christ you are forgiven.

"Now that we have peace with God and know the wonders of His love let us share this peace with one another:"

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

"Joyful, all ye nations rise, Let us join the triumph of the skies and the angelic host giving God thanks as we stand and sing together our Prayer of Thanksgiving:"

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new-born King;  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with th'angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King!"

"As we prepare to leave this place, let us remember that this Good News of Christ is announced to the world. May we Go, and tell it on the mountain and everywhere that Jesus Christ is born."

**Sunday Service is now available on a DVD. If you would like a copy delivered to your home, please call the church office and we will take care of getting one to you.**

## Giving Opportunities during Advent and Christmas



### Gleaning for the Society of St. Andrew.

Gleaning is found in the Old Testament as a command from God for when people harvested their crops, they were commanded to not gather the crop from the edges of the field so that the hungry and poor could come and gather food and eat.

The Society of St Andrew gleans fields and gives the fresh food to the hungry. Along with the collecting of loose change, we have a daily Advent devotional booklet that will feed our souls as we journey in this season called Advent.

Gleaning boxes are available at the back of the sanctuary. Donations online or by check should be noted “gleaning”.

Return all gleaning box donations on Jan 9th for blessing during service.

### Happy Birthday Jesus

During service on Dec 5, we will take up our annual collection for the Corinthian Club. All proceeds will be used to bless 15 families in our community.

If you cannot attend the service you can either give online, or mark your check “HBJ”

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Thank you Al McDorman and Laney Greer for the beautiful ‘Love’ sign that now decorates the front of Cherryvale.



# O Little Town Of Bethlehem Word Search

Just for fun, or use as a teaching aide with your younger family members.

G Z P T Z T U C H X Q Z R L D P S Z C G S P H J K F R K J Z  
O L R Z N S H S Q F Q R F R C D A U D O R L R G C Z X U K I  
D H O X O X J G C V A A E X B D E B K Q A C Q A K F I K H L  
T G G J H W M B I N M A O E F V X I T Q E C H R I S T Z L L  
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E V P U J T G O C L G P E A W K Q A D K D P Y Q J Z E G B K  
K B F P M N T N E L E N N L N O D I B Y N R L V B Y Q S I W  
I Y E F S E E S I A B N I C O X J J T W A G L B X U F J U E  
N X F L L T S V C R N Y S T T N A V O C S C X P Q N P U U K  
G W N T T S I E B J E X R A S B E T H L E H E M B P B D R B  
U U T H L G T L V U W D F Y T A A Q R V P I L J M G W Q X U  
X I O E W O N Y L H T E N I H S L Y X J O T F O B T X G Z Q  
L V E J A U M F B E U Q W O Q Z T R N I H Z R Q B Q K D E R  
C P W L F O Q L F A P O N J W Z H Q E O S T W H E B C D S S  
N X L P H U W W V K D E F I O G E L H V A K X A D Z C L I R  
P E E K S L E G N A D L U J P M E E F L E Q C I U O G M C A  
M G H O V B Z B N M F W F V E L L G S V L Q O E J K R X A T  
I F M F J G F C N I W T C M L U I N S Y A U D X V K N R G S  
J K O R T A P T P L J R F B L U E I Y O I A X I H H O T K T  
K U L B H T H O L Y B I R T H U T N Z V P M Q B T C H N M N  
H U M A C H R G G K R D G M F C R R V D I D P Z Y G P Z T E  
W G P X A E M X U Y L Q O U V S S O Y A B W C L I V F E T L  
H M M G H R T U S S R F H R V K I M L T R C H N W D F Z W I  
O B Z Y B E G F S W M T B W T Y E C G L Q B O H T R A E S S  
Z C A Y X D P E O K C H X D V E O S I I X T J U W Y U O Y A  
Y B I A B Q Y F L J D H M Y K R S N U F D R E X I F J M M P  
P E P M G E J L L Q X T U A P M A T O L X N K X L B L K V N  
T M E R H F L F D F J W S W R K Q Q J T S V A P F Z M R I P  
G M U O Z Z Q S E P H Q Z Z B Y F R C O N T W T Y P A M V N  
P E E D Y H T T M G E B I R G R F I D X O G W F I E I U I J

Find the **24 bold** words or phrases

## O Little Town Of Bethlehem

O **little town** of **Bethlehem**,  
how **still** we see **thee lie**;  
above **thy deep** and **dreamless sleep**  
the **silent stars** go by.

Yet in thy dark streets **shineth**  
the **everlasting light**;  
the **hopes and fears** of all the years  
are met in thee **tonight**.

For **Christ** is born of **Mary**,  
and **gathered** all above,  
while **mortals** sleep, the **angels keep**  
their watch of **wondering** love.

O **morning** stars together,  
**proclaim** the **holy birth**,  
and **praises** sing to **God the King**,  
and **peace to all** on **earth**!



*Wednesdays in Advent at Noon*

**December 1<sup>st</sup>, St. John's, with  
Jonathan Greer preaching.**

**December 8<sup>th</sup>, Central, with  
Ryan Oswald preaching.**

**December 15<sup>th</sup>, Cherryvale, with  
Chuck Cole preaching.**

**December 22<sup>nd</sup>, St. Paul's, with  
Wayne Doyle preaching.**

*Luncheon at 12:30 p.m.*

**Offering for The Valley Mission**