**Penns Valley Charge U.M.C. Worship Service for Sunday, November 29, 2020**

**First Sunday in Advent**

Listen at 814-422-6238. Watch online at www.PennsValleyParish.info (\*not in recorded services)

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We are waiting…in the dark of the year we are waiting.

**P: We are waiting…for the potter to shape our lives.**

L: We are waiting…to see clearly what lies hidden in darkness.

**P: We are waiting, awake and alert…ready for God to come.**

L: In the darkness a candle is lit. The light comforts our waiting.

**P: The light reminds us of the one who is coming.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF HOPE

L: The Son of Man is coming, but about that day and hour no one knows,

**P: Neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.**

L: Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

**P: Therefore, be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour**. (Light 1 candle.) **We light the first candle of Advent to remind us to keep awake and be ready.**

OPENING PRAYER

**O God, come to us in our need. Like a shepherd, you care for us. Like a potter, you shape our lives. Faithful God, we are waiting for you. Come down to us. Come down to us as fire, and bun away the bonds that hold us back. Light our spirits with your eternal love. Shape us with your hands, that we may be vessels fit to receive your presence. We are waiting, Holy One, and place our trust in your love. AMEN.**

\* OPENING HYMN Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

BLESSING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS – DOXOLOGY

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE Reading of *The Sparkle Box*

JOYS AND CONCERNS - PASTORAL PRAYER (The Lord’s Prayer “trespass”)

SELECTED SCRIPTURE Mark 13:24-37

MESSAGE The End of the World As We Know It

\*HYMN Love Came Down at Christmas

COMMISSION & BLESSING

Next week Advent begins with the message *Where the Wild Things Are*

PASTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

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BIBLE STUDY: This Place is a Mess! Isaiah 64:1-9 and Mark 13:24-27

* How is Advent a time of spiritual preparation? What (and Who) are we preparing for? *[Advent is about preparing to encounter God in a fresh way. It’s about paying attention to what is and to new possibilities. One aspect of Advent is looking back to the coming of God in Jesus Christ to remind us of God’s faithfulness so that we might live differently today.]*
* How has all that has happened in 2020 shaken off a sense of complacency and normalcy? (Job loss or financial loss due to quarantine? Illness and fear due to the global pandemic? The anti-racism movement?) How is the season of Advent a reminder that God is with us in the chaos?
* Where do we see the writers of Isaiah and Mark affirm that even when things seem to be falling apart around us, God is faithful? *[Isaiah builds on the faithful, steadfast character of God that despite our faithlessness (Isaiah 64:6-7), God remains committed against injustice, and—when called upon—will forgive sin. Mark notes that even when all the cosmic forces are in chaos, we can keep awake because we trust God will come and be our deliverer.]*
* Advent points us to three “advents” or comings of God. The first advent of God is in Jesus Christ. The second advent of God is when God returns in power and glory. The third advent of God is God coming into our lives. How might this season of Advent be a time when you can prepare yourself to experience God’s presence more fully?

Closing Prayer

*God, who is closer to us than our breath, remind us during this season of your faithful presence. Wake us up to the messiness that exists in our lives and in our world. Help us to cling tightly to your promised presence with us and empower us to be aware of where you are at work in our world that we might join you in the mission of reconciling the world to yourself. Amen.*

Christmas Eve Services will be held December 24th at 3pm at Sprucetown UMC and 6pm at St. James UMC. You may watch a service online at [www.pennsvalleyparish.info](http://www.pennsvalleyparish.info) and you may call the local message number 422-6238. If you wish to have a thumbdrive copy, please provide the pastor with your thumbdrive and she will copy the service to it and give it back to you.