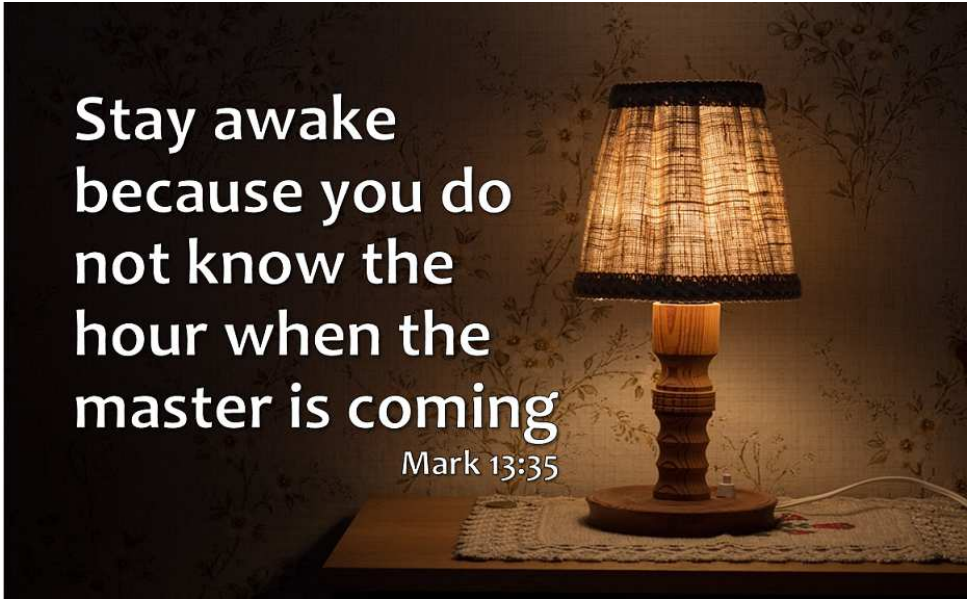


How will we know?

Each year we use the Advent-Epiphany resources from the Leader magazine from Menno Media. Each year the resources are written by a different geographical group. This year's committee is from Central Plains Mennonite Conference. They tell how they were inspired to choose the theme "How will we know?"

"When our planning committee gathered and began to read aloud and experience these Advent scriptures together, we did so as theologian Karl Barth suggested: we held the Bible in one hand and the proverbial newspaper in the other. We were attuned to what was happening in the world around us, and to how our world today both differs from and mirrors the social and political milieu of first-century Palestine. As we read, we had questions. Many questions. It quickly became important to us to acknowledge both our questions and the questions of the ancient Near Eastern people we were reading about in our scriptures. We observed together that too often, questions in the church are cast aside, and those who ask them are left feeling alone and lonely. But Advent is a time to lean into our questions. To wonder and wander and wait together for the Messiah, the Christ child, the Light.

We took our "big question" from the chorus of the Advent hymn "Poor of the Earth" (*Voices Together* 213), which asks, "How will I know?" We brought the text into the community and asked together, "How will we know?" This question inspired us, not to look for definitive answers or platitudes, but to lean into the ways that our faith invites us to sit together, to discern the times, to watch and wait, and to trust that we will know when we know, and that even when we have questions and even doubts, God is still with us; still then, God is working. Advent is a time when we wait together and search for clues of the work that God is doing in our midst. "



Stay awake
because you do
not know the
hour when the
master is coming

Mark 13:35

Waiting for God to come

WEST SWAMP MENNONITE CHURCH

First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023

10:30 A.M.

Preludes O Come, O Come, Emmanuel~ *arr. Lani Smith*
Lo, How a Rose E'er Blloming~ *arr. Ralph E. Marryott*
Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence ~ *arr. Mark Roberts*

We Gather around the Word

Opening Song O come, O come, Immanuel #172, v. 1

Welcome & Prayer
Call to Worship Screen

Songs of Praise O Savior, rend the heavens #175
Everlasting God
Have thine own way #504

We Hear God's Word

Scripture Isaiah 64:1-9

Drama How will we know...how long?
Worship Music We come *Duet*

Offering Pastoral Symphony~ *G.F. Handel*

Scripture Mark 13:24-37

Sermon Waiting for God to come *Pastor Michael*

We Respond to the Word

Song Come, thou long expected Jesus #178

Sharing & Prayer

Sending Song Come, walk with us

Benediction
Postlude Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus~ *arr. Franklin Ritter*

Today's flowers are in memory of **Willard Rosenberger**, given by Edna Rosenberger and family.

This Sunday

Worship Leader: Louise Butcher
Greeter: George & Bev Mellan
Organist: Joan Hallman
Musicians: Brenda Landt, Lynne Rush
Videographer: Mark Kemmerer
Visual Technicians: Marsha High, Emily Rush
Sound Technicians: Glenn High, Rod Rush, Tim Scheetz

Sunday School Classes for Fall Quarter

How to Read the Hebrew Bible: 8:45 am, Room 104 or join us through Zoom.

West Swamp Mennonite Church

2501 Allentown Road, Quakertown, PA 18951

215-536-7468

E-Mail: westswamp1@verizon.net Website: www.westswamp.org

Pastor: Michael Howes

717-419-4228, howes.michael@gmail.com

Commissions & Deacons:

Ministry Team, Randy Rush

Community, Nancy Jacobs

Discipleship (DISCO), Katie Mood

Mission, Glenn High

Stewardship, vacant

Worship, Joan Hallman

Church Secretary: Lynne Rush

Treasurer: Pat Bevan

Mennonite Mission Network: Pray for the participants in Mennonite Mission Network's Tucson, Arizona, Mennonite Voluntary Service unit—Nely Cotuc, Hannah Nuest, Ally Weaver, Magdalena Wenger and Deborah Yoder—as they help extend the ministries of their host congregation, Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, through welcoming immigrants, promoting literacy and working to protect the environment



Continue to pray for those in our congregation who are experiencing illness and ongoing medical treatment.

Welcome to West Swamp Mennonite Church

December 3, 2023

Reflecting God in our living, loving & serving

Calendar

Dec. 3	Advent begins
Dec. 3, 9:30 am	Prayer Breakfast
Dec. 6, 6:30 pm	Chimin' In Practice
Dec. 6, 7:15 pm	Choir Practice
Dec. 8, 6:30 pm	Cookie Box packing
Dec. 9	Salvation Army Christmas Carnival
Dec. 13, 6:30 pm	Chimin' In Practice
Dec. 13, 7:15 pm	Choir Practice
Dec. 17, 2-5 pm	Caleb's Cocoa Café

MCC Calendars and gift guides are available on the Welcome Table. Get one before they're gone!

~ *What's Happening at West Swamp* ~

Thanks to all who helped with today's prayer breakfast, and a special thanks to Katie Mood, Prayer Breakfast Coordinator.

Quakertown Ministerium's **Annual Christmas Carnival** is **Saturday, Dec. 9**. As has been our tradition, we supply boxes of Christmas Cookies for families in need in our community. If you are able to bake extra cookies this holiday season, please bring them to the church kitchen by Friday, Dec. 8, labeled "Christmas Carnival." We'll be packing them Friday between 6:30 and 7 pm. More details are in the Dec/Jan newsletter.

Senior Luncheon is **Dec. 21, 12 pm**. All those 60 and up are invited to this time of festive food and fellowship. Sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

Reminder from the Cemetery Committee: If you are an active member of the church and would like to reserve a plot in the WSMC cemetery you have until Dec. 31 to reserve a plot at no cost. Beginning on Jan. 1, 2024 the cost to reserve a plot will be \$500 for active members. Each plot can contain 1 full casket, 1 casket with 1 cremation, or 1 cremation or 2 cremations. To choose a plot or if you have any questions please contact John Gwilliam at gwil@comcast.net or 215-260-1291 (cell call/text). If you have already chosen a plot it has been recorded and there is no need for further action.

~ *What's Happening in the Community* ~

All Mosaic congregations are invited to pray for two Mosaic congregations, Iglesia Menonita de Peña de Horeb and Philadelphia Praise Center, as **they both move toward the purchases of new meetinghouses in their Philadelphia neighborhood** in the next few months.

Join Camp Men-O-Lan at Zion Mennonite Church **Thursday, Dec. 7 at 6 pm** for an exciting evening of heavy hors d'oeuvres and camp update followed by a bluegrass concert by the Ironwood Drive Band. Adult registrations only please. This event has a free registration, we hope you come ready to bless Camp with your end of year donation! Learn more about the band at ironwooddriveband.com RSVP online at menolan.org or call 215-679-5144 x320.

2024 Summer Camp registration at Camp Men-O-Lan is open! If you register now through the end of 2023, you will pay 2023 pricing!! Find online registration at menolan.org under Summer Camp or call Beth at 215-679-5144 x321 for details and more information.

Save the Date for the **Family Christmas Program at Camp Men-O-Lan Saturday, Dec. 16**. Tours begin at 6 pm. This year's Journey Through Bethlehem will include time with Simeon, the Wise Men, Joseph, and Mary as we travel through the village. There will be hot chocolate to keep us warm as we walk. We will close our tour at the Auditorium and share the Gospel, reflecting on what it would be to give baby Jesus our all. We'll enjoy hot chocolate & cookies and sing carols. Watch for online registration at menolan.org or call 215-679-5144 x320.

Caleb's Cocoa Café, an annual fundraiser to benefit the Quakertown Code Blue Homeless Shelter, is **Sunday, Dec. 17**. Stop by 207 N. Ambler Street in Quakertown between 2 and 4:30 pm for hot cocoa and baked goods. Everything is \$1 (you can always donate more). You might want to time your visit for one of the on-the-hour live music spots. Dia Lowe (Jane Burkett's granddaughter) is one of the singers! Look for more info in the Dec/Jan newsletter.

Church Office Hours

Pastor Michael: Monday-Thursday, 9-4.

Lynne: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 8:30-1:30.