

AD TE LEVAVI  
FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
FEAST OF ST. ANDREW,  
APOSTLE (NOV. 30)

Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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Mrs. Kristen Lawson, Organist

**WELCOME IN THE NAME OF OUR BLESSED LORD!** We are pleased you are here, gathered around the Gospel in Preaching and the Sacraments! **GUESTS** – If we can assist you in any way with questions about our confession of faith, spiritual struggles, understanding our liturgical service, or any other need, please let us know. It is our prayer that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will strengthen and comfort you.

**CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT:** Bethany Lutheran Church confesses all the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired word of God without any errors. We also hold, without any reservation, to the teachings of the Evangelical-Lutheran Confessions contained in the 1580 Book of Concord. We confess these teachings to be the correct interpretation of Scripture and a true explanation of the one, holy, catholic (universal) and apostolic faith.

**PASTORAL CARE AND GUESTS AT THE LORD'S SUPPER:** Scripture and our Confessions teach that the Lord's Supper "is the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine" (Small Catechism). We are concerned about the spiritual welfare of all who commune at the Lord's Table. Our altar is ordinarily open to those who confess oneness with us in doctrine, are active members of sister churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and are not under church discipline in another congregation. *Other guests who desire to commune, please speak to the pastor about Holy Communion after the service.* In Christ, Pastor Lawson

NOVEMBER 30, 2025 † 11:00 A. M.

† In the Name of Jesus †

Prayer before Worship: Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank You, we bless and praise You forever, that You sent Your Son to rule over us poor sinners, who for our transgressions justly deserved to remain in the bondage of sin and Satan, and that in Him You gave us a meek and righteous King, who by His death became our Savior from sin and eternal death. We beseech You so to enlighten, govern and direct us by Your Holy Spirit, that we may ever remain faithful to this righteous King and Savior, and not, after the manner of the world, be offended by His humble form and despised Word, but, firmly believing in Him, obtain eternal salvation; through the same, Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Divine Service: Rite Two  
Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary: p. 60

The Office of Preparation

**Please Note:** *When the Prelude Music begins it is a laudable custom to keep talking to a minimum and prepare for God's Service with prayer.*

*It is a laudable custom to bow the head when the holy Name of Jesus is mentioned and at other places marked with a diamond (◆)*

*It is a laudable custom to cross oneself in remembrance of baptism at those places marked by a †.*

Blessing of the Advent Wreath

**P:** Beloved in the Lord, as we begin the season of Advent, let this wreath remind us that Jesus Christ came to conquer the darkness of sin and to lead us into the light of His glorious kingdom. As the prophet Isaiah says, *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined* (Isaiah 9:2).

**P:** The Lord be with you.

**C:** **And with your spirit.**

**P:** Let us pray: O Lord Jesus Christ, the true light who comes into the world to enlighten all people, bless us as we light the candles of this wreath in preparation for Your coming, and enkindle in our hearts the fire of Your love that we may receive You with joy and gladness and evermore remain steadfast in the true faith; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**P:** The Lord Almighty, the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless this wreath for use in His Church through this holy season Advent. **Amen.**

Processional Hymn: 110, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, sts. 1, 4-6*

**P:** 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.

**C:** O come, Thou Rod of Jesse's stem; From ev'ry foe deliver them  
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save, And give them victory o'er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Key of David, come, And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high, And close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

The Invocation: p. 60-61

*1 Kings 8:27-30; Matthew 18:20; 28:18-20*

**P:** In the Name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.



**C:** A - - men.

The Confession of Sin & Holy Absolution (form I): pp. 60-62

*1 John 1:8-9 and John 20:19-23; Matthew 16:19; 18:18*

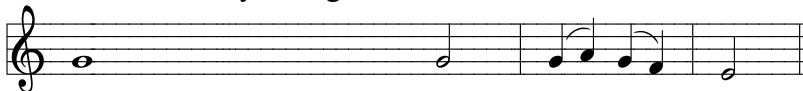
**P:** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God, our Father, beseech Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**P:** Our help is in the name of the Lord.



**C:** Who made heav'n and earth.

**P:** I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord;



**C:** And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

**P:** Let us bow before the Lord and confess our sins.

**C:** **O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them, and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

**P:** I ask each of you, in the presence of God who searches the heart: Do you confess that you have sinned, and do you repent of your sins?

**C:** **I do.**

**P:** Do you believe that Jesus Christ has redeemed you from all your sins, and do you desire forgiveness in His name?

**C:** **I do.**

**P:** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

May He comfort your heart by His holy Absolution,  
and strengthen you by His Sacraments,  
that your joy may be full.

Peace be with you!

**C:** **Amen.**

## The Liturgy of the Word

Introit: *Psalm 25:1-5, 13-14*



Antiphon (**Pastor**) Unto You, O Lord, I `lift up my soul:/ O my God, `I trust in You;  
Let me not be ashamed; Let not my enemies tri`umph over me:/ Let no one who waits on  
`You be ashamed.

Psalm (**All**) Show me `Your ways, O Lord:/ Teach `me Your *paths*.  
**For You are the God of `my salvation:/ On You I `wait all the day.**  
**Let integrity and upright`ness preserve me:/ For I `wait for You.**  
**Redeem `Israel, O God:/ Out of `all their troubles.**

Gloria Patri (**All**) Glory be to the Father `and to the Son:/ and to `the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the be`ginning, is now:/ and ever shall be, forever`more. *Amen.*

Antiphon (**All**) Unto You, O Lord, I `lift up my soul:/ O my God, `I trust in You;  
**Let me not be ashamed; Let not my enemies tri`umph over me:/ Let no one who waits on  
`You be ashamed.**

The Kyrie Eleison (form II): p. 63-64

*Mark 10:47; Luke 17:13*



C: Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.



Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Chri - ste e - le - i - son. Chris - te e - le - i - son.



Chris - te e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.



Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

*The Gloria in Excelsis is silent until Christmas Day*

The Salutation and Collect for the Day: p. 66

2 Timothy 4:22

**P:** The Lord be with you.



**C:** And with your spir - it.

**P:** Stir up, we beseech You, Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and be saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.



**C:** A - men.

Collect for the Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle (November 30)

**P:** Almighty God, by whose grace Your Apostle Saint Andrew obeyed the call of Your Son Jesus Christ: grant also to us grace to follow Him in heart and life; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.



**C:** A - men.

Collect for the Beginning of the New Church Year

**P:** Eternal Lord God, our Father, by Your grace You have this day permitted us to enter a new church year: we implore You to pour upon Your church Your Holy Spirit and the wisdom that comes down from above, that Your Word, as becomes it, may not be bound, but have free course and be preached to the joy and edifying of Christ's holy people, that in steadfast faith we may serve You and in the confession of Your name abide unto the end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.



**C:** A - men.





C: Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!

Holy Gospel: *St. Matthew 21:1-9*

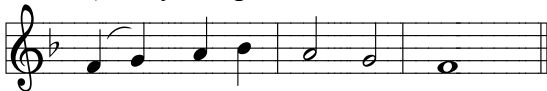
P: The Holy Gospel according to † St. Matthew, the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter:



C: Glo - ry be to You, O Lord.

P: *At that time* when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethpage at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.” All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: “Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.’” So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord!’ Hosanna in the highest!”

P: This is the † Holy Gospel.



C: Praise be to You, O Christ.

*At the words “And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary  
And was made man” all may bow out of reverence for Christ’s Incarnation.*

Nicene Creed: p. 69

C: **I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.**

*Romans 10:10; Deuteronomy 6:4  
Matthew 6:9; Exodus 6:3  
Genesis 1:1; John 1:1  
Colossians 1:16*

<b>And in one Lord Jesus Christ,</b>	<i>Romans 10:9</i>
<b>the only-begotten Son of God,</b>	<i>John 3:16; Matthew 16:16</i>
<b>Begotten of His Father before all worlds,</b>	<i>John 1:2</i>
<b>God of God, Light of Light,</b>	<i>John 17:22; John 8:12; John 1:1</i>
<b>Very God of Very God,</b>	<i>Colossians 2:9</i>
<b>Begotten, not made,</b>	<i>John 1:2</i>
<b>Being of one substance with the Father,</b>	<i>John 10:30</i>
<b>By Whom all things were made;</b>	<i>Hebrews 1:1; John 1:3</i>
<b>Who for us men and for our salvation</b>	<i>1 Timothy 2:4; Romans 3:23</i>
<b>came down from heaven</b>	<i>John 6:41; Luke 15:20</i>
♦ <i>and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary</i>	<i>Luke 1:34-35</i>
<i>and was made man;</i>	<i>John 1:14</i>
<b>and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.</b>	<i>Mark 15:25; John 19:16-18</i>
<b>He suffered and was buried;</b>	<i>John 19:1-3; Luke 23:53</i>
<b>and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures</b>	<i>1 Corinthians 15:4; Luke 24:6</i>
<b>and ascended into heaven,</b>	<i>Acts 1:9</i>
<b>and is seated at the right hand of the Father;</b>	<i>Acts 7:55</i>
<b>And He shall come again with glory</b>	<i>Matthew 26:64</i>
<b>to judge both the living and the dead;</b>	<i>Acts 10:42; Matthew 3:12</i>
<b>Whose kingdom shall have no end.</b>	<i>2 Peter 1:11</i>
<b>And I believe in the Holy Spirit,</b>	<i>John 14:26; Genesis 1:2; Acts 2:38</i>
<b>the Lord and Giver of Life,</b>	<i>Genesis 1:2; John 3:6</i>
<b>Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,</b>	<i>John 15:26</i>
<b>Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped</b>	
<b>and glorified,</b>	<i>Matthew 3:16-17; Luke 2:14</i>
<b>Who spoke by the Prophets.</b>	<i>Ezekiel 11:5; 2 Peter 1:20-21</i>
<b>And I believe one holy Christian and Apostolic Church.</b>	<i>1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:19-22</i>
<b>I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,</b>	<i>Ephesians 4:5; Acts 2:38</i>
<b>And I look for the Resurrection of the dead</b>	<i>1 Corinthians 15:35-49; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18</i>
<b>and the Life † of the world to come.</b>	<i>Mark 10:29-30; Matthew 10:40-42</i>
<b>Amen.</b>	<i>Psalms 106:48</i>

Chief Hymn: *90, Savior of the Nations, Come*

**C: Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make here Thy home!  
Marvel now, O heaven and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.**

**Not by human flesh and blood, By the Spirit of our God,  
Was the Word of God made flesh – Woman's Offspring, pure and fresh.**

**Wondrous birth! O wondrous Child Of the Virgin undefiled!  
Though by all the world disowned, Still to be in heaven enthroned.**

**From the Father forth He came And returneth to the same,  
Captive leading death and hell – High the song of triumph swell!**

**Thou, the Father's only Son, Hast o'er sin the victory won.  
Boundless shall Thy kingdom be; When shall we its glories see?**

**Brightly doth Thy manger shine, Glorious is its light divine.  
Let not sin o'ercloud this light; Ever be our faith thus bright.**

**Praise to God the Father sing, Praise to God the Son, our King,  
Praise to God the Spirit be Ever and eternally.**

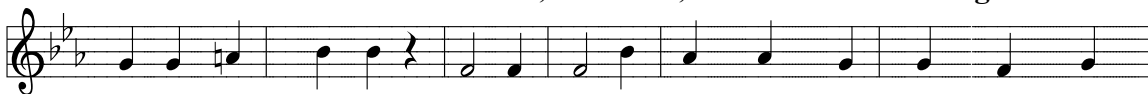
Sermon: Christ is in our midst. **He is and ever shall be.**

Offertory: pp. 70-71

*Psalm 51:10-12*



**C: Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right**



**spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from Your pres - ence, and**



**take not Your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of**



**Your sal - va - tion; and up - hold me with Your free spir - it. A - men.**

The Intercessions: *each petition concludes:* Lord, in Your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Hymn of Preparation: *94, O How Shall I Receive Thee*

**C: O how shall I receive Thee, How welcome Thee aright!  
All nations long to greet Thee, My hope, my heart's delight!  
O Jesus, Jesus, set Thee Thy lamp within my breast,  
And by its guidance let me Know what doth please Thee best.**

**Thy Zion strews before Thee Green boughs and fairest palms,  
And I, too, will adore Thee With sweetest songs and psalms.  
My heart shall bloom forever For Thee with praises new,  
And from Thy name shall never Withhold the honor due.**

**What hast Thou left ungranted To give me glad relief?  
When soul and body panted In utmost depth of grief,  
In deepest degradation, Devoid of joy and peace,  
Then, Thou, my soul's Salvation, Didst come to bring release.**

**I lay in fetters groaning, Thou com'st to set me free;  
I stood, my shame bemoaning, Thou com'st to honor me;  
A glory Thou dost give me, A treasure safe on high,  
That will not fail or leave me As earthly riches fly.**

**Naught, naught, dear Lord, could move Thee To live Thy rightful place  
Save love, for which I love Thee; A love that could embrace  
A world where sorrow dwelleth, Which sin and suff'ring fill,  
More than the tongue e'er telleth; Yet Thou couldst love it still!**

**Rejoice, then, ye sad-hearted, Who sit in deepest gloom,  
Who mourn o'er joys departed, And tremble at your doom;  
Despair not, He is near you, Yea, standing at the door,  
Who best can help and cheer you, And bid you weep no more.**

**No care nor effort either Is needed day or night,  
How ye may draw Him hither In your own strength and might.  
He comes, He comes with gladness, Moved by His love alone,  
To calm your fear and sadness, To Him they well are known.**



way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the Messiah, the very Lamb of God, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes against in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus: p. 76

*Isaiah 6:3; Mark 11:9-10; Revelation 4:8, 5:13*



**C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;**



**Heav'n and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san - na, ho -**



**san - na, Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,**



**Bless - ed is He, Bless - ed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.**



**Ho - san - na, Ho - san - na, Ho - san - na in the high - est.**

The Lord's Prayer: pp. 77-78

*Matthew 6:9-13*

**P: Our Father ... †but deliver us from evil;**



**C: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the**



**glo - ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.**

The Words of Institution: pp. 78-79

Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

At the words "This is My Body ... This cup is the New Testament in My Blood" the faithful **may** make the sign of the cross.

As each sacred species is elevated, the faithful **may** bow as an act of reverent worship toward the Most Holy Body & Blood of Christ.

When the Pastor turns and elevates the Host and Cup, the faithful **may** bow.

The Pax Domini: p. 79

John 20:19

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.



## The Distribution of the Holy Communion to the Faithful

Prayers for “**Before Holy Communion**” and  
for “**After Holy Communion**” are found on page 40 in ELH.

*The Pastor distributes the sacred host with the words “This is the true Body of Christ, given for you.” It is a laudable custom for communicants to respond “Amen” before receiving the host on the tongue. The Pastor distributes the sacred blood of Christ with the words “This is the true Blood of Christ, shed for you.” It is a laudable custom for communicants to respond “Amen” before receiving the Blood of Christ.*

*After all have communed, whatever remains of Christ’s Body & Blood is consumed  
and the Pastor reverently cleanses the sacred vessels.*

Nunc Dimittis: pp. 81-82

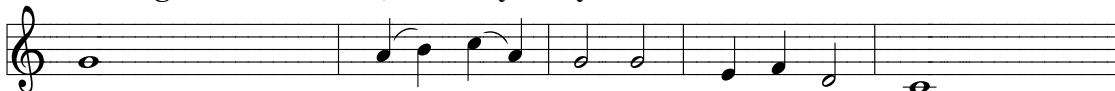
Luke 2:29-32



**C: Lord, now you let Your servant de - part in peace ac -**



**cord-ing to Your word, For my eyes have seen Your Salvation:**



**which You have pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,**



**a Light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the Glo - ry of Your**



**peo - ple Is - ra - el. ♦Glo - ry be to the Father and**



**to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; As it was in the beginning,**



is now, and ev - er shall be, for - ev - er - more. A - men.

The Collect of Thanksgiving: pp. 82-83

P: O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good.



C: And His mercy en - dures for - ev - er.

P: O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in lovingkindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

The Salutation: p. 84

P: The Lord be with you.



C: And with your spir - it.

The Benedicamus: p. 84

P: Let us bless the Lord.



C: Thanks be to God.

*1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 103*

The Benediction: p. 84

Numbers 6:24-26

**P:** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.



**C:** A - men, a - men, a - men.

Exit Processional Hymn: 91, *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

**C:** Lift up your heads, yet mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits;  
The King of kings is drawing near, The Savior of the world is here.  
Life and salvation He doth bring; Wherefore rejoice and gladly sing:  
We praise Thee, Father now, Creator wise art Thou!

A Helper just He comes to thee, His chariot is humility,  
His kingly crown is holiness, His scepter pity in distress.  
The end of all our woe He brings; Wherefore the earth is glad and sings:  
We praise Thee, Savior, now, Mighty indeed art Thou!

O blest the land, the city blest, Where Christ the Ruler is confessed!  
O happy hearts and happy homes To whom this King in triumph comes!  
The cloudless Sun of joy He is, Who bringeth pure delight and bliss.  
We praise thee, Spirit, now, Our Comforter art Thou!

Fling wide the portals of your heart; Prepare a temple set apart  
From earthly use for heav'ns employ, Adorned with prayer and love and joy.  
For lo, your Savior and your King Salvation, life, and peace doth bring.  
To Thee, O God, be praise For word and deed and grace!

Redeemer, come, and open wide My heart to Thee; here, Lord abide!  
Let me Thy gracious presence feel, Thy peace and love to all reveal;  
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on Until our glorious goal is won.  
Eternal praise and fame We offer to Thy name.

Prayer After Worship: O Lord, we render unto You our heartfelt thanks that You have taught us what You would have us believe and do. Help us, O God, by Your Holy Spirit, for the sake of Jesus Christ, to keep Your Word in pure hearts, that we thereby may be strengthened in faith, perfected in holiness, and comforted in life and death. Amen.

# Our Life Together

**THE PASTOR IS AVAILABLE** for private Confession & Absolution, and for confidential pastoral counselling, or just to chat. Please feel free to stop in. (The Augsburg Confession teaches that “[private] Confession is not abolished among us. ... Our people are taught that they should highly prize the Absolution as being God’s voice and pronounced by God’s command. ... They are reminded what great consolation it brings to anxious consciences. ... They are taught that faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins.” Article 25)

**Bible Studies:** The Sunday morning study is working through Genesis. Today we plan to finish up our discussion of Circumcision in Genesis 17 and get into chapter 18. The Thursday study is exploring the construction of the Temple in 1 Kings. *Everyone is invited and encouraged to be a part of one or both of the Bible studies!*

**Cookie Exchange & Decorating:** Everyone is invited to stay after church next Sunday to enjoy coffee and treats from the ladies’ annual *Cookie Exchange* and to help decorate the church for the holy days.

**Advent Vespers** will be held at Bethany each *Thursday in December at 6:00pm* (Wednesdays at Concordia). The theme for the Vespers preaching this year is *God’s Advents*. *Advent* means “coming.” We will look at the four major *comings* of our God starting *In the Garden*, followed by *On Mount Sinai*, and then *On the Last Day*. His coming *In the Flesh* will be the theme for the Christmas Day preaching. Everyone is encouraged to take advantage of these extra opportunities for joint prayer and hearing of God’s Word offered as we prepare together to celebrate Holy Christmas.

**Advent Devotionals:** Hard copies of this year’s daily *Advent Devotional* from Steadfast Lutherans are available on the entryway table. It is entitled *Immanuel – God With Us: The Reason for Christ’s Coming*. The online version was emailed out on Friday and will be sent again this afternoon with the rest of today’s documents. One note: since St. Andrew’s day is transferred to tomorrow, it is recommended you read tomorrow’s devotion today and today’s devotion tomorrow.

**Hope Giving Tree:** This year again we will participate in the *Giving Tree* at Hope Medical Clinic. 2 tags are still available on the table in the entryway with a clinic need written on each one. When you take a tag please write your name and tag # on the sheet provided. Please bring your item with the tag back to the church *by next Sunday* because the donations need to

be turned in by Dec. 11. Thank you in advance for your generosity toward our pregnancy crises clinic!

**Looking Ahead to a Confirmation & First Communion:** Eastin Schmocker is nearing the conclusion of his formal catechesis in preparation for his Confirmation & First Communion. God-willing both will take place on Sunday, Decemer 21!

**January Annual Meeting:** It's that time of year again! A date needs to be set for our congregation's annual voters meeting in January. Three proposed dates are January 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, or 25<sup>th</sup>. Please let Nathan Larson or Pastor know which of those dates works for you. We will have a lunch that day, followed by the meeting.

**Christmas Caroling:** It would be great to put together a caroling party to go into a few of the local rest homes sometime in December. A Saturday or a Sunday would work best. Please let Pastor know if you interested and he will make arrangements.

### **Feasts, Commemorations, and Events**

**Monday:** *Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle (transferred from Nov. 30);*

Pastors' monthly study in St. Helens, OR.

**Tuesday:** Pastor at Concordia

**Wednesday:** Adult Catechesis at Concordia, 4:30pm; Concordia Advent Vespers, 6:00pm

**Thursday:** *Commemoration of St. John of Damascus, Teacher of the Church & Hymnwriter;* Bible Study at Bethany, 10:00am; Bethany Advent Vespers, 6:00pm

**Friday:** Pastor at Bethany

**Saturday:** *Comm. of St. Nicholas of Myra, Bishop;* Pastor's Day Off

**Next Sunday:** *Populus Zion: Second Sunday in Advent*

Concordia Holy Communion, 9:00am

Bethany Holy Communion, 11:00am

Cookie Exchange and Decorating at Bethany, 12:30pm

**First Sunday in Advent:** *The Lord our righteousness* (Jer. 23:6). What comforting truth for hearts troubled with sin's guilt that keeps resurfacing. Sometimes a past sin can be so haunting that we do not always feel forgiven, or we cannot forgive ourselves. The sin of abortion is a prime example. But our righteousness does not depend upon us or our feelings. Our righteousness is Christ!

**Prayer:** *O Lord our Righteousness, may my comfort and hope be anchored in You and not my feelings. Amen.*

***Life Thoughts in the Church Year/One Year Lectionary – Lutherans For Life***

## Why is the General Prayer [the Intercessions] positioned after the Sermon and before the Administration of the Sacrament?

The General Prayer [also called the Intercessions], is a gathering point for the Christian Church as it prepares to partake of the Blessed Sacrament. In ancient times, the names of people for whom prayers were intended were written on cards called *diptychs*, and while prayers were offered for the conversion of the heathen, only the names of Christians appeared on the *diptychs*. Although this custom does not survive, still the idea is rightly to be preserved that here the members of the church are praying for one another, and so bearing one another's burdens. This unifying prayer thus serves as a key preparation for attending together at the altar. In some traditions, the kiss of peace still remains from the ancient church as a further gesture of unity. In any case, there must be no divisions among Christians who commune together.

*Why? A Layman's Guide to the Liturgy, Rev. Dr. Burnell F. Eckardt*



**Hymns for Ad Te Levavi (First Sunday in Advent):** Today's CHIEF HYMN *Savior of the Nations, Come* (TLH 95) is one of the most significant hymns in the history of the Church. Its roots are in the Latin *Veni, Redemptor Gentium* by St. Ambrose (340-397), bishop of Milan. The history of Western Christian hymns begins with Ambrose. He wrote catholic hymnody in opposition to the Arian heresy (the belief that the Son was not equal to and eternal with the Father). Ambrose's simple, direct, and beautiful hymns set forth the true faith with dignity and evangelical fervor. Luther translated the hymn into German and prepared it for Advent, 1523.

Luther also edited the original plainsong chant for congregational singing. Today's HYMN OF PREPARATION *O How Shall I Receive Thee* (ELH 94) by Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) is one of our finest Advent hymns. It was written during the Thirty Years' War and is based on today's gospel lesson. Gerhardt witnessed both plagues and the devastation of war. He outlived his wife and four of his five children and was also removed from his parish for holding to Christian doctrine in the face of controversy. All of this gave Gerhardt the opportunity to confess in his writings and hymns the reality of Christian joy in the midst of suffering: Christ's death and resurrection as hope in a dying world.

