

SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
4856 WAYNE ROAD
CHAMBERSBURG, PA 17202
(717) 267-2266

EMAIL: info@solomonslutheran.org
WEB SITE: www.solomonslutheran.org
FACEBOOK SEARCH: Solomon's Lutheran Facebook



"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
NOVEMBER 27, 2022

November 27, 2022
First Sunday of Advent

The new church year begins with a wake-up call: Christ is coming soon! In today's readings both Paul and Jesus challenge us to wake from sleep, for we know neither the day nor hour of the Lord's coming. Isaiah proclaims the day when God will gather all people on the holy mountain and there will be no more war or suffering. Though we vigilantly watch for the promised day of salvation, we wait for what we already have: Christ comes among us this day as the word and meal that strengthens our faith in the promises of God.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

ADVENT WREATH PRAYER: *Paul, Helen, Myra*

The Gospel of John speaks of Christ as the true light coming into the world. In commemoration of that coming, we light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas and reflect on the coming of Christ. It is significant that the church has always used that language—the coming of Christ—because it speaks to a deep truth. Christ is coming. Christ is always coming, always entering a troubled world, a wounded heart. And so, we light the first candle, *the candle of hope*, and dare to express our longing for peace, for healing, and the well-being of all creation.

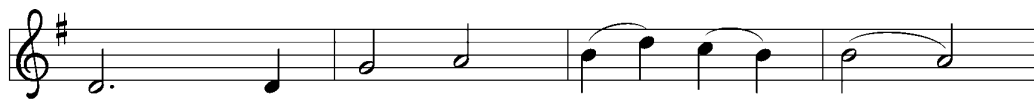
Loving God, as we enter this Advent season, we open all the dark places in our lives and memories to the healing light of Christ. Show us the creative power of hope. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen

GATHERING SONG *Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending* (all verses)

Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending



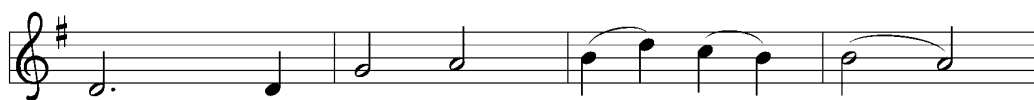
1 Lo! he comes with clouds de - scend - ing,
2 Now re - demp - tion, long - ex - pect - ed,
3 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore thee,



once for our sal - va - tion slain;
comes in sol - emn splen - dor near;
high on thine e - ter - nal throne;



thou - sand thou - sand saints at - tend - ing
all the saints this world re - ject - ed
Sav - ior, take the pow'r and glo - ry,



join to sing the glad re - frain:
thrill the trum - pet sound to hear:
claim the king - dom as thine own.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -



lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.
lu - ia! See the day of God ap - pear!
lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and thou a - lone!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: HELMSLEY, Thomas Olivers, 1725–1799

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.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957
Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen
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PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM *Say He Will Come*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

A reading from Isaiah.

The visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshipping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

¹The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

²In days to come
the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.

³Many peoples shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴He shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

⁵O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the LORD!

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 122

(sung responsively between choir and congregation, beginning with the choir)



Psalm tone reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.
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¹I was glad when they ¹said to me,
"Let us go to the house ¹of the LORD."
²**Now our ¹feet are standing
within your gates, ¹O Jerusalem.**
³Jerusalem is built ¹as a city
that is at unity ¹with itself;
⁴**to which the tribes go up, the tribes ¹of the LORD,
the assembly of Israel, to praise the name ¹of the LORD.**
⁵For there are the ¹thrones of judgment,
the thrones of the ¹house of David.

⁶**Pray for the peace¹ of Jerusalem:**

“May they prosper¹ who love you.

⁷Peace be with¹ in your walls
and quietness with¹ in your towers.

⁸**For the sake of my kindred¹ and companions,
I pray for¹ your prosperity.**

⁹Because of the house of the¹ LORD our God,
I will seek to¹ do you good.”

SECOND READING: Romans 13:11-14

A reading from Romans.

Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ's coming in the future.

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Refrain – All



There is a long-ing in our hearts, O Lord, for you to re -
veal your - self to us. There is a long-ing in our
hearts for love we on - ly find in you, our God.

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GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus describes his second coming as a sudden, turbulent event that will bring about deep change to our normal, day-to-day lives. Therefore, he urges people to stay awake, be aware, and wait expectantly, because the Son of Man will come unannounced.

[Jesus said to the disciples,] ³⁶“About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.

⁴¹Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left.

⁴²Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.

⁴⁴Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

PASTOR BARB

HYMN OF THE DAY *Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying* (all verses)

Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying



1 Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing, the watch-men
2 Zi - on hears the watch-men sing - ing, and all her
3 Glo - ri - a! Let heav'n a - dore you! Let saints and



on the heights are cry - ing; a - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, at last.
heart with joy is spring-ing. She wakes, she ris - es from her gloom.
an - gels sing be - fore you, with harp and cym-bal's clear-est tone.



Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es, and at the
Her dear friend comes down, all glo - rious, the strong in
Gates of pearl, twelve por - tals gleam - ing, lead us to



thrill-ing cry re - joic - es: "Come forth, you maid-ens! Night is past.
grace, in truth vic - to - rious: her star is ris'n; her light is come.
bliss be - yond all dream - ing, with an - gel choirs a - round your throne.



The bride - groom comes! A - wake; your lamps with glad - ness take!"
Now come, O Bless - ed One, Lord Je - sus, God's own Son.
No eye has caught the light, no ear the thun-d'ring might



Al - le - lu - ia! Rise and pre - pare the feast to share;
Sing ho - san - na! Oh, hear the call! Come one, come all,
of such glo - ry. There we will go: what joy we'll know!



go, meet the bride - groom, who draws near.
and fol - low to the ban - quet hall.
There sweet de - light will ev - er flow.

Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608; tr. composite
Music: WACHET AUF, Philipp Nicolai
Text © 1999 Augsburg Fortress

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Please join me as we confirm our faith together in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH *(Please respond.)*

P: God, in your mercy, C: hear our prayer.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERTORY *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heav'nly food.

OFFERING PRAYER

Eternal God,
you make the desert bloom
and send springs of water to thirsty ground.
Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money,
and make us messengers of your mercy and love
for all in need of your healing and justice.
We ask this through Christ our Savior.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 our thanks and praise.


PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
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 to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



San - to, san - to, san - to, oh Dios del u - ni - ver - so:
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of might and mer - cy,



. . . lle-nos es-tán el cie - lo y la tie - rra de tu glo - ria.
your glo - ry fills all heav-en and earth. . . . You are ho - ly, God.



Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en nom - bre del Se - ñor. . . .
. . . . Bless - ed be the Sav - ior, the one who comes in your name.



Ho - san - na en el cie - lo. San - to_e-res, oh Dios.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. You are ho - ly, God.

Text: Traditional; English text, hymnal version
Music: ARGENTINE SANTO, Argentine traditional
English text © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

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THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.**

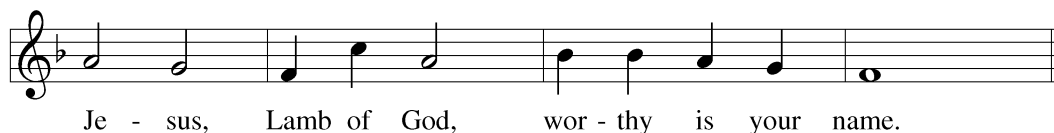
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God, who has come to save you.

COMMUNION

Continuous - Please continue down center aisle at the direction of the usher. After you receive the bread, you may take a cup of red wine or white grape juice from the tray. Please place your empty communion cup in the tray. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the pastor when you come forward.

COMMUNION SONG (sung twice)



Text: Dennis Jernigan, refrain of "You are my all in all"
Music: ALL IN ALL, Dennis Jernigan

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HYMN DURING COMMUNION *My Lord, What a Morning* (all verses)

My Lord, What a Morning

Refrain



My Lord, what a morn-ing; my Lord, what a morn - ing; oh,



my Lord, what a morn-ing, when the stars be - gin to fall.



- 1 You will hear the trum - pet sound,
- 2 You will hear the sin - ner cry, to wake the na-tions un-der - ground,
- 3 You will hear the Chris-tian shout,



look-ing to my God's right hand, when the stars be-gin to fall.

Refrain

Text: African American spiritual
Music: BURLEIGH, African American spiritual

COMMUNION BLESSING

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

POST COMMUNION



1 O Lord, now let your ser - vant de - part in heav'n - ly peace,
2 Then grant that I may fol - low your gleam, O glo - rious Light,



for I have seen the glo - ry of your re - deem - ing grace:
till earth - ly shad - ows scat - ter, and faith is changed to sight;



a light to lead the na - tions un - to your ho - ly hill,
till rap - tured saints shall gath - er up - on that shin - ing shore,



the glo - ry of your peo - ple, your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
where Christ, the bless - ed day - star, shall light them ev - er - more.

Text: Ernest E. Ryden, 1886–1981, alt., based on the Nunc dimittis
Music: KUORTANE, Finnish folk tune
Text © 1925 Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Faithful God,
in this meal you have remembered your mercy,
bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ.
As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled,
sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.
Guide us toward your promised future,
coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you
with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor
and ✠ give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING SONG *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!* (MERTON) (all verses)

Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!



1 Hark! a thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is near," we
2 Wak - ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth's bond - age
3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don
4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther



hear it say. "Cast a - way the works of dark - ness,
let us rise; Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling,
down from heav'n. Let us haste, with tears of sor - row,
wrapped in fear, he will shield us with his mer - cy
and the Son with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it



all you chil - dren of the day!"
shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
one and all, to be for - giv'n;
and with words of love draw near.
while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–1878
Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823–1889

SENDING IN SERVICE

Go in peace. Christ is near.
Thanks be to God.

EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE/SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

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SERVING TODAY

Pastor	Rev. Barb Barry
Cell Phone Number	717-357-3150
Email Address	Pastor@solomonslutheran.org
Church Office Email Address	office@solomonslutheran.org
Organist	Doug Mummert
Head Usher	Kathy Bowen
Acolyte	Wayne Dale
Lector.....	Bonney Coldsmith
Securing Offering	Bernie Harris & Sam Mull
Communion Set-Up.....	Bill & Lilly Chiado
Communion Clean-Up	Bill & Lilly Chiado
Communion Bread	Bill & Lilly Chiado
Communion Assist	Ron Coldsmith & Ilona Laney
Attendance last Sunday	47

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome Visitors! We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

For now, the offering plate will continue to be placed in the back of the church in front of the Baptismal Font. Thank you for your continuing support of the ministries of Solomon's as we join God in the work of sharing Christ's love.

Prayer requests for the following) *Jan Horst, Sr. Barbara Barry, Greg Steinour, Betty Amt, Tana Vance, Jim and Carole Darr, Barbara Beckner, Tracy Fredericks, Lanny Haugh, Heather Carman Shull, Jenny Barnes, Ray Rotz, Matthew, Lexi and Brooke Bowen, Sarge and Barb Weaver, Patricia Furry, Tina Smith, Nancy Marshall, Milissa Fogle, Marie Dovey, Beth Floyd, Jean Jackson, David Johnson, Joe and Karen Wolfinger, Jennie Matthews, Patricia Yetter, Carol Locke, Linda Wepking, Frances Kramer, Darrell Veilleux, Ukrainian Nation, Peace for the World.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Note:** At the beginning of each month, the Prayer Request List will start anew. If you would like to remain listed on the next month's list, or if you would like to have your name removed from the list before the end of the month, please call the office.

Office Hours for Pastor Barb are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 12 noon or call for an appointment.

The Lutheran Journal and the November edition of the Living Lutheran are available in the pamphlet rack in the narthex.

Where do you see God? Solomons will use Advent this year to help open our eyes to notice God active in our lives today. Each Sunday of Advent, we'll take time during the sermon to write our "God moments" on a piece of paper and place them in a box by the door when we leave. On Christmas Eve, we'll place the box under the Advent Wreath with a prayer of Thanksgiving for the many ways in which God is present. You can also call the church office to add your God moments to the box.

If you do not want 2023 envelopes, please contact Janice McEntire.

You are invited to Bible Study from 10 to 11 each Wednesday in the Conference Room of the Fellowship Center. This year we are praying through the Psalms. Each week is stand-alone so come when your schedule permits. Christian Ed is a life-long journey of discovering who God is and who are as followers of Jesus. Making time to learn God's Word is a mark of discipleship. Hope to see you there!

Antietam Battlefield Luminaries Saturday, December 3, 2022, at 10 AM. The 33rd annual Antietam Battlefield Illumination will take place on Saturday, December 3. This is a very fulfilling and emotional event which honors the 23,110 casualties which occurred during the battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862. Volunteers are greatly needed, to set up and light the luminaries. Solomon's is responsible for setting up and lighting approximately 720 luminaries. Volunteers should be at our field (by the lookout tower), no later 10 AM. A volunteer sign-up sheet is posted on the Sunday School bulletin board. For further information please contact Bonney Coldsmith or Wayne Norman.

Choir Practice - Thursdays at 7:00PM.

Maranatha Paper Drive: During the month of November, will be collecting paper products for Maranatha Food Pantry. Paper products cannot be purchased with Food Stamps. Items needed: toilet paper, napkins, paper towels, Kleenex, hand wipes, diapers, etc. Please place the items in the gray tote under the coat rack next to the mailboxes. If you have any questions, contact Rob Floyd.

Hurricane Relief: In response to Hurricane Ian, Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is partnering with the Florida-Bahamas, Southeastern, North Carolina and South Carolina synods, as well as Lutheran Services Carolinas, to provide both immediate and long-term support. LDR anticipates relief will include water, food supplies, tarps, cleaning materials and other needs for those who have lost or damaged homes. **Please hold the victims and relief workers daily in your prayers.** Pray that God will deliver comfort to those who mourn and strength to those working diligently to provide aid. **Prayerfully consider a generous donation to provide tangible support. Make your check out to Solomons Lutheran Church with the memo space clearly marked "Hurricane Relief." If you are using cash, clearly mark the envelope. Thank you for your care and support of God's people.**

Sunday School is in Session - Adult Sunday School classes begin at 9:00 a.m. in the Sunday School room. Children's Church will be held during morning worship and will meet downstairs at 10:20 a.m. Confirmation Class will be held at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room in the Fellowship Center.

Power Pack Meals: The Power Pack Meal program at New Franklin Elementary School is up and running. Currently 24 students are being sent home each Friday with food to last them through the weekend. The need for donations is great. Any individual size container of vegetables, fruit, breakfast items, meals (mac & cheese, Chef Boyardee, etc.), juice pouches, Yahoo chocolate drink, 8 oz. bottle water are welcome. Please place your donation in the gray Social Ministry tote in the Sunday School room. Monetary donations are welcome, make your check payable to Solomon's with Power Pack Meals in the memo line.

Sign-up Sheets for worship assistants for 2023 are on the side table in the Sunday School room. Communion: bread, set-up, clean-up, and assistant will be on a monthly basis. If you can't commit to the entire month, please see if you can share the month with someone else. Acolytes and Lectors are on a weekly basis. If you find you can't fulfill a chosen date, please call someone to take your place. Let Kimberly in the office know so the bulletin and newsletter info stays up to date. Thank you for your commitment to help provide opportunities for meaningful worship at Solomons. Kimberly will publish the schedule for each month in the newsletter.

Bulletin Announcement Forms are in both pamphlet racks. Please submit all bulletin announcements to the office by the Wednesday prior to the Sunday for inclusion in the bulletin.

Council Minutes, Monthly Financial Statement and Committee Minutes are available in the library for anyone to read.

NOVEMBER 27, 2022
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Jesus is coming to bring hope.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 24:36-44	The coming of the Son of Man
Monday	Isaiah 2:1-5	Peace that lasts forever
Tuesday	Romans 13:11-14	The day when Christ returns
Wednesday	Isaiah 55:10-13	God's people will celebrate
Thursday	Psalms 147:1-11	Sing and praise the Lord
Friday	Romans 12:9-13	Marks of the true Christian
Saturday	Psalms 122	A song of praise
Sunday	Matthew 3:1-12	Prepare the way of the L

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. Isaiah 2:3a (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Almighty God, in the power of your mystery and majesty, you do great things for us so that we may live with hope through Christ Jesus, the Son of Man. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, you who give food to the nations, we thank you for feeding us this day and for being with us now and always through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God of peace bring you hope now and always.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When something important is about to happen, how do you prepare for it?
- During the Advent season, how do you prepare for the coming of Jesus?

HYMN OF THE WEEK

All Earth Is Hopeful



DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 24:36-44.

With Advent we begin a new church year. Last year our Gospel readings came from Luke. This year they will be from the Gospel of Matthew. This passage leads us to raise many questions, to take life and faith seriously, and to wonder. Who is in and who is out? Remembering that some people were living with the intimidation of Roman occupation in Galilee and Judea, we wonder on what basis is one person taken and another left. What does it mean to stay awake and be prepared for the coming of the Son of Man? Are the pleasures and responsibilities of daily life leading us to complacency? Are we not seeing the signs of the times? What the Gospel tells us is to be attentive and live a life that walks in the ways of the Lord. Jesus has come and is still coming into our lives so that we may know the good news of God's love and faithfulness. God's reign in our lives brings peace, not power grabbing, hope, not despair, and joy, not fear (Isaiah 2:1-5).

Discuss: What does it mean to you to stay awake and be prepared for the Son of Man?

Pray: **Dear Jesus, give me a living faith to seek your presence in my life each day so that I may know, trust, and share your love for all people and be the loving presence you want me to be. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve others that they may experience hope?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Advent means "coming." During the four weeks of Advent, we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Jesus Christ. Make a circular Advent wreath for your home to remind you of God's unending love and eternal life through Jesus. Use evergreens to decorate the wreath as a symbol of life and growth. Place four candles around the wreath. Put a white candle in the center that will be lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day to represent Christ. For this first week of Advent, light one candle to focus on the hope we have in God through Jesus Christ.