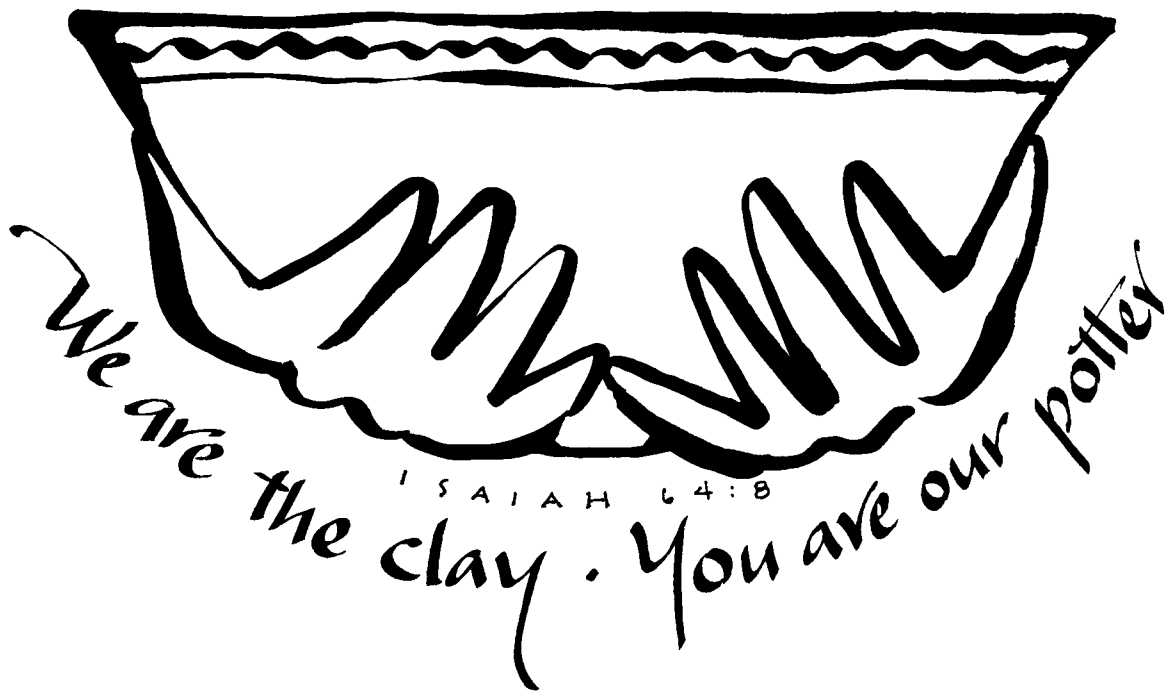


SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others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

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 3, 2023

December 3, 2023
First Sunday of Advent

Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
who opens the heavens
and draws near to us with salvation.

Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.
Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Everlasting God,
you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.
We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.

We are complicit in systems of exploitation.

We choose comfort over courage.

We are careless with creation's bounty.

Look upon us with mercy.

Turn our hearts again to you.

Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world.

Amen.

Hear these words of assurance:

God clothes you with garments of salvation
and covers you with robes of righteousness.

In the tender compassion of ✠ Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.

God's covenant is eternal,
and God's blessing rests upon us all.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Fling Wide the Door* (ELW 259)



1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry
2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's
3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true
4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen



comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the
gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his
king's com - mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the
wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -



Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion
scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows
hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful
on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly



to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and
to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and
Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -
Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We



praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.
wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.
a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.
praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943
Music: MACHT HOCH DIE TÜR, J. A. Freylinghausen, *Geistreiches Gesangbuch*, 1704
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

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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.

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (VERSE 1)



1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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First Sunday of Advent

Praise to you, O God, our salvation who is near.
You hold us in our waiting and keep us awake to the world.
You show up in our lives at unexpected times.
Bless us as we light this candle to keep vigil for your arrival.
We trust that even though we do not know the day or the hour,
you hurry to gather all people to your peace.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 64:1-9

A reading from Isaiah.

This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

- ¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
- ²as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
- ³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

⁴From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
⁵You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
⁶We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
⁷There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

(read responsively between men and women, beginning with the men)

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph ¹ like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- ¹ on the cherubim.
²**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, ¹ and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and ¹ come to help us.**
³Restore ¹ us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we ¹ shall be saved.
⁴**O LORD ¹ God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your ¹ people pray?**
⁵You have fed them with the ¹ bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of ¹ tears to drink.
⁶**You have made us the derision ¹ of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh ¹ us to scorn.**
⁷Restore us, O ¹ God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we ¹ shall be saved.

¹⁷Let your hand be upon the one at | your right hand,
the one you have made so strong | for yourself.

¹⁸And so will we never turn a- | way from you;
give us life, that we may call up- | on your name.

¹⁹Restore us, O LORD | God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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: Mark 13:24-37

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

[Jesus said:] ²⁴“In those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,

and the moon will not give its light,

²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven,

and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory.

²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come.

³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON “A Child’s Theology!”

HYMN OF THE DAY *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: Merciful God, C: receive 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

God our provider,
by your merciful hand
abundance springs up from the earth.
Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty.
Let them be a sign of your steadfast love
and faithfulness for all people,
through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

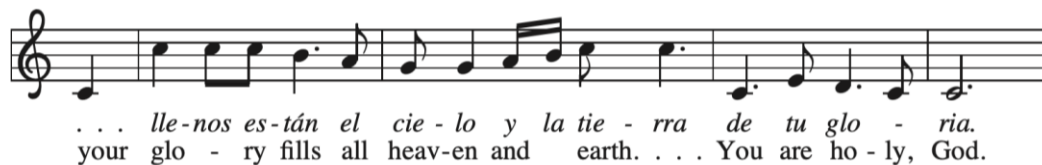
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

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



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.**

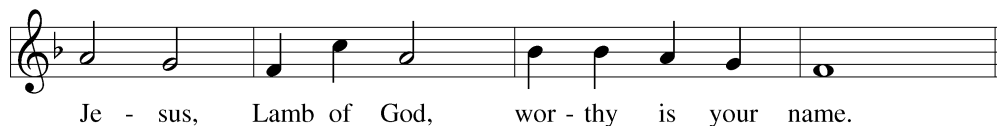
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together.
Come, take your place at the table.

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 basket. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the Pastor when you come forward. Notify the Head Usher if you would appreciate receiving Communion at your seat rather than walking up to the altar, the Pastor and Communion Assistant will be happy to bring Communion to you.

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 *Christ, Be Our Light* (ELW 715)



1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for
 2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for
 3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for
 4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.
 has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.
 to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.



Refrain
 Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the



dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your



church gath - ered to - day.

Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957
 Music: CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell
 Text and music © 1993 Bernadette Farrell. Published by OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.
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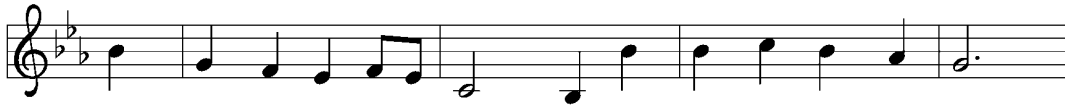
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COMMUNION BLESSING

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

Generous God,
in bread and cup you have revealed your glory
for all people to see together.
Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim
your good news of liberation and release,
brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.
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 *The King Shall Come* (ELW 260)



- 1 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light tri - um-phant breaks,
- 2 Not as of old a lit - tle child, to bear and fight and die,
- 3 Oh, bright - er than the ris - ing morn when Christ, vic - to - rious, rose
- 4 Oh, bright - er than that glo - rious morn shall dawn up - on our race
- 5 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light and beau - ty brings.



when beau - ty gilds the east - ern hills and life to joy a - wakes.
but crowned with glo - ry like the sun that lights the morn-ing sky.
and left the lone - some place of death, de - spite the rage of foes.
the day when Christ in splen - dor comes, and we shall see his face.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your peo - ple pray: come quick - ly, King of kings.

Text: John Brownlie, 1859–1925

Music: CONSOLATION, A. Davison, *Kentucky Harmony*, 1816

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SENDING IN SERVICE

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE/SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

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SERVING TODAY

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Pianist	Heidi Shenberger
Head Usher	Janice McEntire
Acolyte	Janice McEntire
Lector.....	Rich McEntire
Securing Offering.....	Janice McEntire & Ron Coldsmith
Communion Set-Up.....	Peggi & Wayne Norman
Communion Clean-Up	Peggi & Wayne Norman
Communion Bread	Peggi Norman
Communion Assist.....	Marjorie Dale
Attendance last Sunday.....	48

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The altar flowers this morning are placed to the Glory of God in honor of our 45th Wedding Anniversary given by Wayne and Peggi Norman.

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!

Prayer requests for the following: *Tim Tweedy, Missy Moreui, Becky Ensinger, Ron Bunting, Rose Wishard, Bobby Seilhamer, Sam Mull, Lilly Chiado, Bernie Harris, Phyllis Brehm, Catherine Plummer, Bonnie Hudson, Marty Wenger, Virginia Detwiler, Callie Mummert, Matthew, Lexi and Brooke Bowen, Jim & Carole Darr, Beth Floyd, Sarge and Barb Weaver, Tina Smith, Patricia Yetter, Nancy Marshall, Darrell Veilleux, Linda Wepking, Bill and Jane Brindle, Esther Gift, Jean Jackson, Marjorie McMullin, Joe Mock, Ina Shreiner, Genny Grant, Frances Kramer, Linda Russ, Carol Locke, Betty Amt, Ukrainian Nation, Peace for the World.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Please Be Aware:** *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.*

Weekly Calendar Reminders:

December 3 - Coffee Hour Fellowship after worship
7 - Choir Practice 7PM

If you are not taking your altar flowers home, please let Kathy Bowen know to whom or to where you would like them donated. Thanks.

If you are in need of pastoral care, please notify Pastor Mike Allwein at 717-357-3814.

Sunday Morning Bible Study - Pastor Mike 's Bible study is held every Sunday, beginning at 9:00am. We conclude at 9:50, in order to prepare for worship. We look at one of the Scripture texts for the following Sunday. Copies of the reading can be found on the table in the SS room in a tray marked "Bible Study." If you cannot join us every week, please join us when you are able! The Bible is our Book of Faith!

Book of Meditations - As we begin this season of Advent, Pastor Mike is offering each of you an Advent gift - a book of meditations with a personal touch! During the height of the COVID pandemic, Pastor Mike was writing a daily blog. When he retired from St. James Church last year, he compiled the blogs into a book. He is offering copies of this book, and if each family only takes one, there ought to be enough for everyone. This is not a book you sit down and read cover to cover in one sitting. Rather, each day is a meditation. Please take one from the table in the SS room after church.

Communion Cards – in order to maintain accurate records, we ask that each member fill out a communion card **only once per calendar year**, at a service when you partake of Holy Communion.

The 2024 Chart for Altar flowers will be available starting December 10, 2023. It will be in the office to the left when entering the front door of the sanctuary. The cost of the two vases will be \$50.00 per week. You will continue to provide Kimberly with the information for the bulletin prior to the week before the Sunday you choose. Include the cost of \$50.00 with the bulletin information.

Solomon's Christmas Tree and mailbox is in the Sunday School Room. Place a Christmas Card in the mailbox. Cards will be placed on the tree.

The January/February/March 2024 edition of Our Daily Bread and The Lutheran Journal is available in the pamphlet rack in the narthex.

Christmas Party Luncheon – Sunday December 10, 2023, after Church. Everyone is invited. Sign-up sheet in the Sunday School room. Menu: Make your own Pizza, Veggie Tray, Chips, Cookies & Ice-Cream, Punch, Coffee, Hot Tea & Water. Join us for good food & fellowship.

Pastor Mike is providing copies of his sermon to assist any individual who may be having a difficult time hearing clearly the sermon. Copies can be found on the counter in the room on the left when you come in the church door at the back of the worship space. Please feel free to take one, either before worship, or pick one up on the way out to reflect on throughout the coming week.

The 2024 contribution envelopes are in your church mailbox.

Spiritrust Lutheran Chambersburg Auxiliary is inviting all to participate in the annual Angels of Love Christmas Tree. A contribution of \$10 per person will dedicate an angel for the tree in honor or memory of a friend, family or loved one. The tree will be located in the lobby at the Inn at Luther Ridge. Funds raised will help provide care to those who can't pay and other needs at Luther Ridge and in the community. Pamphlets are located at the mailboxes. Any questions or to turn in your contribution see Becky Pecha. We appreciate your contributions.

Power Pack Meals: The need for nutritious food for New Franklin Elementary School students in need starting in September. Please consider donating individual serving size fruit and vegetable cups, individual packages of mac-n-cheese, Chef Boyardee, 8 oz bottles of water, juice boxes, and yahoo chocolate drink. Monetary donations are accepted as well, please write "power pack meals" in the memo of your check.

DECEMBER 3, 2023
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Advent is a season of hope.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Mark 13:24-37	When the Son of Man appears
Monday	Isaiah 64:1-9	A communal prayer for help
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	God is faithful
Wednesday	1 Peter 1:13-16	A call to holy living
Thursday	Psalm 147:7-11	Praise for God's care
Friday	1 Thessalonians 1:2-10	The Thessalonians' faith
Saturday	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	Prayer for Israel's restoration
Sunday	Mark 1:1-8	The beginning of the good news

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Restore us. O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved. Psalm 80:19 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of awesome power, give us hearts filled with hope and gladness as we prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for food and drink that gives us strength for the day and hope for the future through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord's face shine on you with hope through Christ Jesus.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- As you look to the future, what are some of your hopes?
- God came to us in the form of baby Jesus. How did this bring us hope?

HYMN OF THE WEEK

Come Now, O Prince of Peace



DEVOTIONS

Read: Isaiah 64:1-9.

Advent is a season of hope, that is, waiting and longing for what is not yet present. It is more than a season; it is a way of life for God's people. This is dramatically seen in Isaiah 64. We want the sense of awe to witness the presence of God that descends from the heavens above. It is as grand as mountains quaking and nations trembling. The divide is vast that separates us from the righteousness and power of God because of our brokenness, our sin. Our hope is not in our goodness but in the everlasting love of God who remembers us like a parent caring for a child. In Jesus we see our hope in God realized. As our God descends in the form of a babe, we hope and believe God has not forgotten us or left us to our own self-destructive ways. We are left in awe at the love and goodness of God that we not only see in Bethlehem, but also at the end of time when we witness *"the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory"* (Mark 13:26). Hope with a sense of awe is healthy for daily life and for our faith in God in Christ.

Discuss: What do you hope for during this Advent season as we await Christ's coming?

Pray: **Almighty God, your glory is seen in all that you do; give us eyes to see the hope we are given through the coming of Jesus as a baby and as the Son of Man at the end of time. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you encourage someone to live with hope in the future?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Make an Advent wreath and decorate it with evergreens. Place four candles on the wreath. Place the wreath on a counter or table where you can gather each week during Advent to light the candles. The scripture readings during Advent point to Jesus. This week, we light one candle, the candle of hope. Think or talk about what hope you imagine when you read Psalm 80:3: *"Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved."*

Light the first candle of hope and say: ***"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."*** (John 1:5)