

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS

At

Mt. Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church

November, 2024

Grace to you, and peace, from Him Who was, Who is, and Who is to come, even Christ the Lord! Amen.

Advent is here again – which means we are called once again to step back from the culture’s mad dash to Christmas, take a deep breath, and learn to wait....

One of the central themes to the Advent season isn’t about waiting for Christmas, but rather is about waiting for Jesus to return in glory. We know the Day is closer now than when we first believed, but we can get impatient. We look at the mess of the world – or the mess of our lives – and wonder: “Lord, could You hurry up?” Yet, we know that His patience in waiting for the Day is so that as many as can will come to faith and find new life. So, as He waits, we wait. And the conceit of the season is that we can learn how to wait – and how to prepare! – by remembering how Israel once waited for Jesus’ birth and the beginning of His public ministry.

So, again I invite you into the shelter of the season that offers you hope and consolation over against all the shrill voices of the culture at large.

So, here’s the plan for the season... We will offer our traditional mid-week prayer services, centered on the theme: “The Messiah the Prophets Longed For.” We will look back to the promises that God gave to His people through the prophets concerning the “Coming One.” But this is not a mere exercise in history – for one of the things we know about ourselves is that “longing” or desire can shape our lives in profound ways – both when we long for what we are properly promised, and when we give into the old nature’s longing for that which it is not good for us to have. This is even more so as we come to look at our Savior Jesus. The world tells us that there are all sorts of things we should desire in Him – but Advent can be a time when we can disciple those desires with the real promises God gives us. And as we see what the prophets were given to long for, we can learn to desire those things in Christ as well, and find our hope sharpened and focused as we anticipate the joy of the Great Day with the joy of the Christmas season. So, come, let us prepare to adore Him, let us receive the promises, and let us rejoice because in Christ, every promise of God is “yes and amen!”

As always, the rest of our regularly scheduled services will continue as well. Note the plan for the Women’s Christmas Brunch on Saturday, December 14th, at 9:30am,

The Sunday School Children sing at close of 9:00 a.m. service, followed by "Birthday for Jesus" during Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.]

With the conclusion of Advent, we will enter the Christmas season proper - celebrating Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, the First Sunday after Christmas, and the Epiphany of our Lord. Due to 'Bekah's upcoming surgery, I don't yet know our family plans after Christmas. Right now the schedule assumes I'll be here. I'll keep everyone posted if plans change.

So, I urge you - come and participate in these special seasons of worship as is appropriate for you and your household, and let us all prepare to adore Him, let us learn to wait and live with His promises, and let us rejoice in His birth and celebrate what that means for us and the world - for in Christ, every promise of God is "yes and amen!" May God richly bless you through Christ, "Immanuel," the Babe of Bethlehem.

Yours in His Name,

Rev. Barry A. Long, Pastor

Advent: "O Come, O Come, Immanuel....."

Sunday, December 1 - 1st Sunday of Advent

Sung Divine Worship, 9:00 a.m.

Spoken Divine Worship, 11:45 a.m.

Wednesday, December 4 - 1st Wednesday of Advent

"The Messiah the Prophets Longed For: A New King"

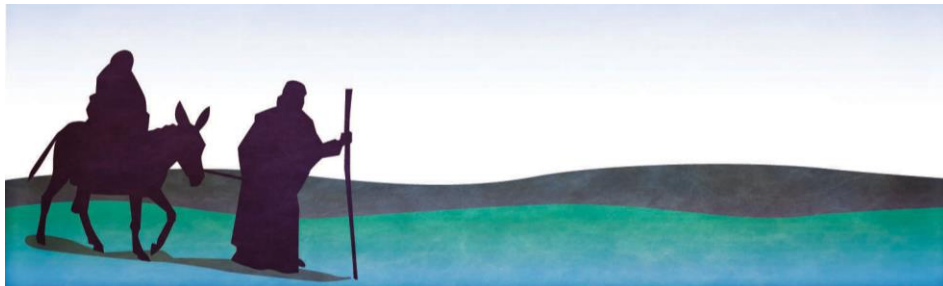
Mid-day Prayer, 11:15 a.m.

Sandwich and Salad lunch to follow (check with Abbie - 309-224-9432)

Vespers, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 5 - 1st Thursday of Advent

Spoken Divine Worship, 6:00pm



Sunday, December 8 - 2nd Sunday of Advent

Sung Matins, 9:00 a.m.

Spoken Divine Worship, 11:45 a.m.

Voters' Meeting, 10:30 a.m. (in-person or via Zoom)

Church Decorating following the 11:45 service

Wednesday, December 11 - 2nd Wednesday of Advent

"The Messiah the Prophets longed For: The Suffering Servant"

Mid-day Prayer, 11:15 a.m.

Soup and Salad lunch to follow (check with Abbie - 309-224-9432)

Vespers, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 12 - 2nd Thursday of Advent

Spoken Divine Worship, 6:00pm

Choirs rehearse beginning at 6:45 p.m. (following service)*

Sunday, December 15 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

Sung Divine Worship, 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School Children sing at close of 9:00 a.m. service, followed by

"Birthday for Jesus" during Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.

Spoken Divine Worship, 11:45 a.m.

Wednesday, December 18 - 3rd Wednesday of Advent

"The Messiah the Prophets Longed For: The Restorer of Creation"

Mid-day Prayer, 11:15 a.m.

Soup and Sandwich lunch to follow (check with Abbie - 309-224-9432)

Vespers, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 19 - 3rd Thursday of Advent

Spoken Divine Worship, 6:00pm

Choirs rehearse beginning at 6:45 p.m. (following service)*

Sunday, December 22 - 4th Sunday of Advent

Sung Matins, 9:00 a.m.

Spoken Divine Worship, 11:45 a.m.

*Tentative - as Mr. Tagge is able



Christmas: "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, peace...."

Tuesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

Spoken Communion Service at 3:00 p.m.

Family Candlelight Service with Holy Communion, at 7:00 p.m.

*Pre-service music will begin at 6:30 p.m.**

Wednesday, December 25 - Christmas Day

Chorale Divine Service, 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 29 - *First Sunday after Christmas*

Sung Divine Worship, 9:00 a.m.

Spoken Divine Worship, 11:45 a.m.

Tuesday, December 31 - New Year's Eve/Name of Jesus

Spoken Divine Worship, 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 5 - *Second Sunday after Christmas*

Sung Divine Worship, 9:00 a.m.

Spoken Divine Worship, 11:45 a.m.

Monday, January 6: The Epiphany of our Lord

Spoken Divine Worship, 11:15 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

May God richly bless our keeping of the season by making us to grow ever more sure in the knowledge of our Savior, and ever more open to sharing His works of grace!

***Tentative** - as Mr. Tagge is able

