

December Calendar 2023

<u>Events</u>		<u>Anniversary & Birthdays</u>	
Sunday	3-Dec	(E) 9am Bible Class & Sunday School (E) 10am Worship Service	3-Dec (B) Andrea Meadows
Mon.	4-Dec	(E) 7pm Ladies' Aid Meeting	
Tues.	5-Dec		5-Dec (B) Bella Austin
Wed.	6-Dec	(E) 4pm Bulletin Deadline (E) 7pm Advent Service	
Thur.	7-Dec		7-Dec (A) Brian & Amanda Walk 2004 (B) Shanna Wiseman
Sunday	10-Dec	(E) 9am Bible Class & Sunday School (E) 10am Worship Service	
Mon.	11-Dec		11-Dec (B) Judy Wasmuth
Wed.	13-Dec	(E) 4pm Bulletin Deadline	
Sat.	16-Dec		16-Dec (B) Gary Schmid
Sunday	17-Dec	(E) 9am Bible Class & Sunday School (E) 10am Worship Service	
Wed.	20-Dec	(E) 4pm Bulletin Deadline	
Sat.	23-Dec		23-Dec (B) Karen Cearlock
Sunday	24-Dec	(E) Christmas Eve (E) 9am Bible Class & Sunday School (E) 10am Worship Service (E) 6pm Children's Service (E) 11pm Candlelight Service	24-Dec (B) Eric Dothager
Mon	25-Dec	(E) Christmas (E) 9am Christmas Service	25-Dec (B) Greg Schaal
Wed.	27-Dec	(E) 4pm Bulletin Deadline	27-Dec (B) Aubrey Dothager
Thur.	28-Dec		28-Dec (A) Charles & Judy Wasmuth 1968
Sunday	31-Dec	(E) New Year's Eve (E) 9am Bible Class & Sunday School (E) 10am Worship Service	

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December 2023

Dearly Beloved of Christ,

We've just come through the end of another Church Year. The last three Sundays dealt with the Kingdom of Heaven and the coming of Christ in judgment at the end of time. So, as we enter December, what are we really getting ready for? Is it Christmas or the end of the world?

Certainly the world's Christmas is mostly about shopping, decorating, baking, and parties. It's a celebration of winter and earthly matters. But the Church celebrates something else - the coming of Jesus Christ. Thus, this article is about the Church season of Advent. The word "advent" comes from Latin and it means "coming." But what is coming? Who is coming? For what purpose? So, what are we getting ready for – Christmas or the end of the world. The answer is, "Both!"

Advent is about the coming of Jesus. Jesus comes both at Christmas and at the end of the world. Oftentimes, we think about Advent as being "pre-Christmas," similar to the pre-game show before the Super Bowl. It's part of the same event, even if it's not technically included in Christmas itself. But the Scripture readings for the Advent season aren't really about Christmas. Instead, the readings focus on Jesus riding a donkey into Jerusalem, getting ready for Good Friday. Other Sundays, the readings focus on John the Baptist in his camel skin clothes and with his wild hair, calling people to repentance because Jesus is coming. The final week of Advent centers around Mary and Joseph's preparations for Jesus to be born. During Advent, we don't see the shepherds or the stable or the wise men. Instead, we see Jesus preparing for the cross for the sin that John the Baptist calls us to repent from. During Advent, the Bible readings don't focus on Christmas but on the coming of Jesus.

Jesus' coming is, in a certain sense, the end of the world. For your sin, for the effects of your sin like sickness and death, hurt and pain; it is indeed the end of the world. Jesus ends this world of sin with His cross. That process began at His conception and continued with His birth, but that process is bigger than just Christmas. Indeed, He comes in the flesh to teach you about His cross. His cross wins your forgiveness and makes you holy. The reward of Christ's holiness for you is completed when He returns in glory.

This Advent, prepare both for Christmas and the end of the world. Jesus calls you to repentance and faith to celebrate Christmas and His return. That sounds simple. On the other hand, we live in a world that loves Christmas and doesn't talk about Advent or even Jesus much. In the stores and on the radio, you hear Christmas music but most of it has nothing to do with the real Christmas or Jesus. In Church, we sing Advent hymns, talking about Jesus coming

with His grace at the end of the world. In so doing, we prepare to celebrate the anniversary of Jesus' birth. Enjoy the carols and songs of Christmas – they celebrate Christ the Lord! But also celebrate the hymns of Advent that point to Christ, the coming King!

By the way, this will be the shortest Advent season possible since Christmas is on a Monday. The morning of Christmas Eve (Dec. 24) will be the Fourth Sunday in Advent. That evening, the children will present their program at 6:00 and we'll have a candlelight service at 11:00. On Christmas morning, we celebrate with a Divine Service at 9:00.

God bless you always as you prepare for Christ's coming at Christmas, in Word and Sacrament, and at the end of the world.

Pastor Landskroener

Here are the opportunities we'll have to gather as God's people in December:

Sunday, December 3, 10:00 am - First Sunday in Advent

Wednesday, December 6, 7:00 pm - Advent midweek Vespers

Sunday, December 10, 10:00 am - Second Sunday in Advent

Sunday, December 17, 10:00 am - Third Sunday in Advent

Sunday, December 24, 10:00 am - Fourth Sunday in Advent

Sunday, December 24, 6:00 pm - Christmas Eve Children's Program

Sunday, December 24, 11:00 pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Monday, December 25, 9:00 am - Christmas Day Divine Service

Sunday, December 31, 10:00 am - First Sunday after Christmas

Here are the readings for the upcoming Divine Services:

December 3 Advent 1

Is. 64:1-9

1 Cor. 1:3-9

Mark 11:1-10

December 24 Advent 4

2 Sam. 7:1-11, 16

Rom. 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

December 10 Advent 2

Is. 40:1-11

2 Peter 3:8-14

Mark 1:1-8

December 25 Christmas Day

Is. 52:7-10

Heb. 1:1-6 (7-12)

John 1:1-14 (15-18)

December 17 Advent 3

Is. 61:1-4, 8-11

1 Thess. 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 31 Christmas 1

Is. 61:10-62:3

Gal. 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

The Children's Christmas Eve program is Christmas Eve @ 6:00 pm. Program practice has begun. Parts are being assigned. Please bring your children to Sunday School to practice. All children ages 3-18 are encouraged to participate. Every child is needed.

SACRED MUSIC FOR THE ADVENT SEASON... "Savior of the Nations, Come," "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry," "Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending," "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding," "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." You can listen to sacred music for the Advent season 24/7 at lutheranpublicradio.org, TuneIn, Amazon Echo, Google Home, Apple HomePod and the Lutheran Public Radio mobile app.

Looking for a way to serve your neighbor? Camp CILCA is holding a *Joyful Hearts Retreat* (one day retreat for adults with disabilities) on December 8-9. Volunteers are needed to help campers participate in activities, get ready for bed, eat meals, and learn about the birth of our Savior. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Lauren at program@cilca.org or call 217-487-7497.

Please join the Christ Our Rock Lutheran High School choir as they present "Christmas Music from Around the World" on Sunday, December 10, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Hoyleton.

Sausage Supper St. Peter's Lutheran Men's Club will once again be holding their Sausage Supper with sausage, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, and all the fixings on February 18th, 2023, with serving beginning at 5:00 PM in the St. Peter's Lutheran School Gym. Carry Outs will be available. Pre-orders for sausage and ribs will once again be offered and encouraged ahead of time, with deadline to order being January 31st, 2024 – **a limited amount of sausage will be available on the day of the supper – order early!** To order, please call one of the following: John Lotz 618-553-5585, Tim Brauer 618-267-6229, David Schaal 618-292-3732, Reggie Grandt 618-553-6213, St. Peter's Lutheran Church 618-349-8321 (after 12 PM)

Save the date – Saturday, March 9, 2024 - Mark your calendars! Join the CID LLL District at their annual convention hosted at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Altamont, Illinois. All are welcome to attend. Our guest speaker is Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler, Speaker of the Lutheran Hour® focusing on Energizing Mission. Join us for a day of spiritual growth with inspirational presentations to encourage and equip you as partners in His mission. Be on the lookout for more convention details in the New Year.

Dollar for Missions: A Dollar for Missions gathers many small gifts – one dollar at a time! – to add up to a big impact for the spread of the saving Gospel of Christ. Our current project is to provide payments to churches for pastors visiting 4 new prisons or county jails in 2024. To watch a video about his next project, follow the link here: <https://youtu.be/JcC9nwejYK8>

Parish Hall reservations – If you would like to plan an event or meeting to use our Parish Hall for any reason, this also includes Church activities, you will need to contact Scott or Karen Torbeck. If not asked, we don't know. Use of the Parish Hall will be determined by the first reservation made.

Contact Pastor Landskroener 330-204-4180 for a Pastoral visit.

Prayer Request – When prayers are requested, we ask that we are informed of the relationship of the person with our congregation. There has been concerns about names on prayer list & who they are. We will add the relationship to the prayers. This will allow members to ask about the individual's progress in recovery. In an effort to manage the list more effectively, individuals will be placed on the list for a period of four weeks. If at the end of that time, those people still need additional prayers, they may be re-added to the list for another four-week term. This may be done as long as the individual continues to need the added strength of the church prayer for their special need.

Please Sign attendance books in the pew, so Pastor is better able to serve you.

Bible Word Search:

NAMES AND TITLES OF JESUS

U Q O K A I S N S M T K R P M
V L F Z J T Y O A E E O A O R
O M G Y V O N T N Z I C B X K
Y D N Y M O E N U V A N B O A
D L O V F H T C A S I R I X R
E R I G W A R S P D S H E W E
N T O G B M A L I D O V Z N D
F D J L H Q Y V K R T T R Z E
I G Q R R T A E G T H V E P E
P B Y I H D S E K E U C T X M
T S W K F T Y A J I O Q S L E
L I I O N A M F O N O S A H R
V N N Q Z Y K V A D E J M V R
G O J E S U S E M M A N U E L
S V B G G W T Z T P B Q J F E

CHRIST

KING of the Jews

LORD

RABBI

SON OF DAVID

EMMANUEL

LAMB of God

MASTER

REDEEMER

SON OF GOD

JESUS

LIGHT of the World

NAZARENE

SAVIOR

SON OF MAN

Ref: Wikipedia

Instructions: Find and circle the words shown in all capital letters.
Words may be forward, backward, vertical, or diagonal within the puzzle.

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