

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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The Advent Season

You probably remember the song, The 12 Days of Christmas. (Each of the 12 days is marked with another gift from my “true love” and all are recounted ending with the first gift: “a partridge in a pear tree.”) Well, in the liturgical calendar, the 12 days of Christmas begin on December 25 and end on January 5. Historically, that is the time allotted by the Christian Church to celebrate the birth of Christ. Just 12 days –not even 2 weeks- nestled between Advent (usually starting the first week of December) and Epiphany (starting January 6.) Now you would never know this based on simple observation. Judging by the presence of Christmas decorations and Christmas sales, you might think the celebration of Christmas begins immediately after Halloween or, at the very least, the week after Thanksgiving. Of course, people driving that perception are not hoping to get us to worship Christ the Newborn King a little sooner. No, their motivation behind rolling out the Christmas celebration earlier and earlier, is the hope that we will spend our money on whatever products they are selling! Such is life in our consumer-driven society: because people have found a way to monetize a popular Christian holiday, the result is that now even Christians think our celebration of His birth begins a month or two earlier.

But I want to set the record straight. Christmas is on December 25th. We will start celebrating it the night before, and until then we will be observing the season of Advent. Advent (from the Latin *Adventus* = “coming”) is a time for preparation. In its earliest iterations, it was another joyful celebration, though it wasn’t long before it came to take on a sort of penitential character like the season of Lent. Our observation of Advent is “sort of” penitential, that is, we omit the joyful singing of the *Gloria in Excelsis* (which recalls the song the angels sang on the night of His birth.) We also provide additional opportunities for worship, and some people choose to fast. The Sundays generally recall four themes: the prophetic coming that pointed to Christ’s birth; the incarnate coming of Christ in Bethlehem, the sacramental coming of Christ in Word and Sacraments; and the eschatological coming of Christ at the end of the world. [From *Gathered Guests*, by Rev. Dr. Tim Maschke] Our Wednesdays will be focused on something entirely different.

This year our Advent series is called, “Family Life,” and it is a series developed by former seminary professor, Rev. Dr. Reed Lessing. Here is his own description of the series: “Everyone needs godly wisdom when it comes to family relationships. That’s why, as we begin a new church year, we plan to learn from the families connected with our Lord’s birth. This includes Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, along with Zechariah, Elizabeth, and John. These families faced infertility, frustration, loss, misunderstandings, death, and so much more. Sermon plans are as follows: Midweek Advent 1 – Two Families (Luke 1:5–25). Midweek Advent 2 – Our Way (Luke 1:57–66), Midweek Advent 3 – A List! (Matthew 1:1–17). The midweek services will begin at 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM with a soup supper prior to the evening service.

Join us each Sunday and Wednesday to prepare for the celebration of Christmas as we observe the season of Advent.

PrS



A Letter from Our Deaconess Intern

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

As we move from the end of the Church Year to the beginning of the season of Advent, you may notice a slight change in the hymnody that we sing. We switch from solemn and sometimes frightening lyrics such as in *The Day is Surely Drawing Near* (LSB 508) to more hope-filled words in hymns such as in *The Advent of Our King* (LSB 331). Singing “O Zion’s daughter, rise to meet your lowly King, nor let your faithless heart despise the peace He comes to bring...” sounds much happier than “...The day is surely drawing near when Jesus...as judge whom God appointed....Then woe to those who scorned the Lord...at the judge’s stern command to Satan be delivered.” These two depictions of Christ – as a lowly King bringing peace and as God’s appointed Judge over all creation – may seem to be about two contradictory characters, yet they are speaking of one and the same Christ. He is the peaceful King that we long to meet and the Judge we treat with fearful respect. Each time we pray the Lord’s Prayer, we are asking for Christ to be both of these things. We are asking our Lord to fulfill His duties as Lord over all and to bring this peace to us.

The Final Advent of our King is something that unbelievers do not long for. It’s called the “end of the world” for a reason – as it will be the end of all things as we know them to be. For us in Christ’s Church, we know that this end is not a bad thing, yet we may sometimes struggle with not wanting this Final Advent to come during our lifetime. We sometimes “despise the peace He comes to bring” because His level of peace will take away things we look forward to doing and seeing here on earth. “Lord, please don’t come back until I graduate, ...until I get married, ...until I get to see my grandchildren, ...until the Cowboys have a good season,” etc..

However, we believers also know that the Word became flesh ~2,000 years ago for a reason. Not only so He could be born of a virgin, die, and rise that we might have everlasting life with Him, but also so that all of creation would be renewed and restored back to Him on the Last Day.

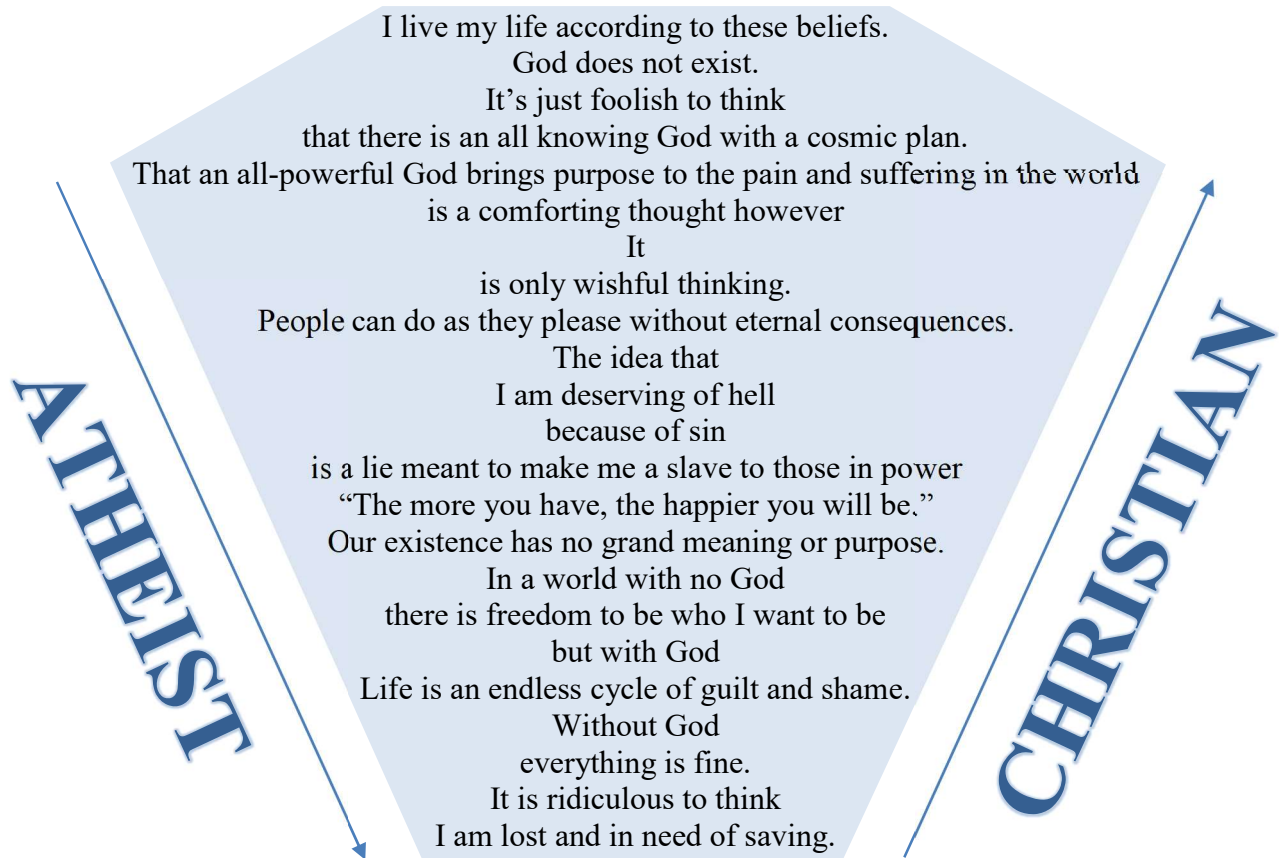
As we begin the Advent season and prepare to celebrate the birth of our lowly King, we can also continue to prepare for that Final Advent, where our Lord will come as Judge. As His children, we need not fear that Last Day – nor should we worry that we will somehow “miss out” on things of this world. If we are so lucky to have that day come in our lifetime, we can continue to boldly pray: “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...” and trust that as His children, He has come to give us His peace which surpasses all understanding.

In Christ’s love,
Julie Baumann
Deaconess Intern



Teen Times

The season of Advent is upon us and the celebration of Jesus' birth during Christmas will be here very soon! I know everyone gets excited this time of year when holiday decorations go up, Christmas music is playing on the radio and in stores while shopping, TV lineups are filled with Christmas movies and shows, and kids look forward to the surprises under the tree on Christmas morning. I often wonder though, do non-Christians and unbelievers really think that everyone who believes in Jesus as their Savior and celebrating his birth every December 25 is delusional and silly to put faith in a myth? That Christmas is only about getting more stuff surrounded by fun times? Our Christian faith and the hope of eternal life through Jesus as our Savior are constantly being challenged in today's culture. Christian teenagers are under tremendous societal pressure to keep to themselves, and not display or talk about their faith. To go along with the crowd, to not disagree with anyone else's beliefs, to keep quiet and above all else, do not tell someone they are wrong! Fortunately for some teens, they have the courage to stand up for what they believe and do not fear the persecution that comes with boldly professing Jesus as Lord and Savior. It may get a little easier during the Christmas season, but there will always be those people who are truly defiant of Christianity. There is a well-known palindrome poem that compares an atheist way of life to a Christian way of life. It reads:



As Christians, we read this using reverse thinking (read line by line, bottom to top).

We *are* lost and deserve hell because of our sin. But by the grace of God, a Savior came to dwell among us, a baby born in Bethlehem to very humble parents a long time ago for one purpose. We have that freedom to confess our faith, and to know that we are forgiven through Jesus' death on the cross and triumphant resurrection! As the well-known saying goes;

Jesus is the Reason for the Season.

God's blessing during Advent,
 Scott Peters



prepare for worship in december

December 1: First Sunday in Advent

Texts: Jer. 33:14-16; 1 Thess. 3:9-13; Luke 19:28-40

HotD: "Savior of the Nations, Come," 332

December 4: Advent Service 1PM & 7PM

December 8: Second Sunday in Advent

Texts: Mal. 3:1-7b; Phil. 1:2-11; Luke 3:1-20

HotD: "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry," 344

December 11: Advent Service 1PM & 7PM

December 15: Third Sunday in Advent

Texts: Zeph. 3:14-20; Phil. 4:4-7; Luke 7:18-35

HotD: "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding," 345

December 18: Advent Service 1PM & 7PM

December 22: Fourth Sunday in Advent

Texts: Mic. 5:2-5a Heb. 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-56

HotD: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," 357

December 24: Christmas Eve, 6PM

Texts: Is. 7:10-14; 1 John 4:7-16; Matt. 1:18-25

December 25: Christmas Day, 10AM

Texts: Is. 52:7-10; Heb. 1:1-12; John 1:1-18

December 29: First Sunday after Christmas

Texts: Ex. 13:1-3a, 11-15; Col. 3:12-17; Luke 2:22-40

HotD: "Let All Together Praise Our God," 389

DECEMBER
Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 1 Tim & Alyson Wood (17)
- 4 Mollie Manning
- 4 Monique Phelan
- 6 Samuel Short
- 6 Bob & Kathy Helms (37)
- 10 Evelyn Tribble
- 11 Paula Lowery
- 13 Gail Wolf
- 14 Stu Ehrett
- 14 Augustine Herrmann
- 14 Jack Schrank
- 14 Mark & Susan Knowles (45)
- 15 Eleanor Duff
- 15 Sebastian Shaltanis
- 17 Marty & Angie Buckmeier (36)
- 18 Stephanie Tabor
- 20 Alex Duff
- 20 Dave Peters
- 21 Lizzy Short
- 22 Dennis & Linda Delzer (57)
- 23 Kevin & Cheryl Tyler (31)
- 26 Andrew Buckmeier
- 26 Ben Scarth
- 26 Mariel Tweedie
- 27 Phil Klein
- 27 Andrew & Rebecca Short (21)
- 28 David & Becky Armstrong (39)
- 30 Dennis Delzer
- 30 Tasie Kade
- 30 Doug & Janet Sanders (47)
- 30 Ken & Rhonda Tabor (41)



Calling all
hands!

December 14
9AM - 2PM

**CHURCH
WORKDAY**

Lunch
Included

Lord of Life Small Groups

EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth
BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com
- † Usually meets one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com
- † Usually meets on Saturday a month at 6:30 PM for Bible study

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Will meet Sat., December 14 at 6:30 PM for Bible study

COLLEGE GROUP

- † For students in college or recent grads
- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com
- † Usually meets after the late service for lunch and Bible study

Women's Tuesday Bible Study

starts a new study on

January 7, 2025

at noon.

Perseverance: Praying Through Life's Challenges (A Nehemiah Battle Plan)

by Donna (Pyle) Snow

Workbooks are \$15.50,
available from Charis
or order your own.

Bring your lunch
and study God's word with friends.

Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex
or let Charis Bennett know if you plan to
attend and if you need a workbook.

YES!



*Congratulations on
your engagement, Julie!!*

Lord of Life Lutheran Church
Summarized Statement of Activity
10 Months Ending October 31, 2024

	Y-T-D Operating Funds	Y-T-D Budget	Variance	Jan-Dec 2024 Budget
Contributions				
Regular Offerings	473,528	480,272	(\$6,745)	\$589,196
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Income	\$473,528	\$480,272	(\$6,745)	\$589,196
Expenses				
Benevolences	59,191	60,034	(\$843)	\$73,650
Elders	282,910	267,200	\$15,710	\$320,639
Education	250	800	(\$550)	\$1,000
Outreach	1,302	3,680	(\$2,378)	\$3,900
Office Expenses	9,752	9,950	(\$198)	\$12,090
Utilities	32,927	34,525	(\$1,599)	\$38,245
Property Maintenance	80,256	73,410	\$6,846	\$85,940
Stewardship	0	350	(\$350)	\$350
Family Ministries	3,343	4,465	(\$1,122)	\$5,290
Youth Board	4,725	6,100	(\$1,375)	\$6,600
Children's Ministry	2,750	5,350	(\$2,600)	\$6,500
Admin Council	1,575	4,150	(\$2,575)	\$5,200
Total Operating Expense	\$478,980	\$470,014	\$8,966	\$559,404
Surplus or (Deficit)	(\$5,452)	\$10,258	(\$15,710)	\$29,792
Other Information:				
Operating Fund Balance	\$165,200			
Restricted Funds Balance	\$150,282			
Certificate of Deposit	\$130,373			
Endowment CD's	\$168,733			