

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

P. O. Box 267, 201 Veterans Dr., Columbus, TX 78934

PH# (979) 732-2423 Fax (979) 733-0489

E-mail: admin@splctx.org www.splctx.com **Pastor:** pastor.akethan@gmail.com

November 27, 2022 Contemporary 11:05 AM

First Sunday of Advent

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060	<u>Cell:</u> (830)-708-1200
Deacon of Word and Service			Sandye Fletcher
Youth & Family Specialist			Stephanie Polasek
Music Minister			Robert Eaton
Congregational Chair			Donna Maas
St. Paul Christian Learning Academy Director			Briana Bedford
Secretary			Elena Holub
Custodian			Tomasa Rosales
Parish Nurse Program Coordinator			DyAnn Lauzon

MISSION STATEMENT: Love God, Love Neighbor (*Luke 10:27*)

VISION STATEMENT: We will work to strengthen and grow closer in relationship to God and to one another.

- *As we enter into a sacred time and space, a friendly reminder to please set your cell phone to vibrate.*
- ***We want to welcome all of our guests today and thank you for worshiping with us. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding our services, programs, day care, or preschool programs at St. Paul, please visit our Welcome Center in the narthex immediately following our service, and an attendant will be more than happy to assist you. If this is your first time at St. Paul, we hope you will take a gift along with you. We also have a gift bag for children.***

* This symbol indicates that the congregation is invited to stand physically or in spirit.

INTRODUCTION

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.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGNING OF ATTENDANCE PADS

(Ushers will be handing out Attendance Pads during the announcements. Please be sure to sign your name and contact information.)

LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH

* **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P We believe that the Bible contains instruction for us as followers of Jesus Christ to do what he asked of us. He taught the first disciples to help others to confess their sins and to proclaim to them the promise of forgiveness afterwards. So let us take a few brief moments in silence to open our hearts and minds to Jesus, to confess the things that weigh heavy on our hearts and the things we need help with so we might be more in line with what Jesus commands.

(Silence for private confession.)

P If you are truly sorry and asking God for help, here is the promise he commanded the leaders in his church to proclaim, "You are forgiven." May this forgiveness free you and help you to live; to live in Jesus' name.

C Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Romans 13:11-14

P A reading from Romans, chapter 13, verses 11-14.

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.

The reading begins:

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.

GOSPEL SONG: BREATHE

**This is the air I breathe
This is the air I breathe
Your holy presence living in me**

**This is my daily bread
This is my daily bread
Your very word spoken to me**

And I ... I'm desperate for You

And I ... I'm lost without You

CCLI Song # 1874117 Words and Music by Marie Barnett. © 1995 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing (Admin. by Vineyard Music USA) CCLI License # 1729377

GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44

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.

A The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 24, verses 36-44.

[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.”

GOSPEL SONG: BREATHE

This is the air I breathe

This is the air I breathe

Your holy presence living in me

This is my daily bread

This is my daily bread

Your very word spoken to me

And I ... I'm desperate for You

And I ... I'm lost without You

CCLI Song # 1874117 Words and Music by Marie Barnett. © 1995 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing (Admin. by Vineyard Music USA) CCLI License # 1729377

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

*** SERMON SONG: SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD**

Spirit of the Living God, Spirit of the Living God

We only want to hear Your voice... we're hanging on ev'ry word.

Spirit of the Living God, Spirit of the Living God

We want to know You more and more... we're hanging on ev'ry word.

CHORUS:

'Cuz when You speak, and when You move, when You do what only You can do, It changes us! It changes what we see... and what we seek.

When You come in the room, when You do what only You can do

It changes us! It changes what we see... and what we seek.

Spirit of the Living God, Spirit of the Living God

We're leaning into all You are... everything else can wait.

Spirit of the Living God, Spirit of the Living God

Come now and breathe upon our hearts... come now and have Your way.

REPEAT CHORUS TO BRIDGE

BRIDGE:

When You move, You move all our fears. When You move, You move us to tears.

When You move, You move all our fears. When You move, You move us to tears.

When You fall, we fall on our knees. When You fall, we fall at Your feet.

And when You fall, we fall on our knees. And when You fall, we fall at Your feet.

LAST CHORUS:

'Cuz when You speak, and when You move, when You do what only You can do,

It changes us! It changes what we see... and what we seek.

When You come in the room, when You do what only You can do,

It changes us! It changes what we see... and what we seek.

It changes everything!

Spirit of the Living God, Spirit of the Living God

We only want to hear Your voice... we're hanging on ev'ry word.

CCLI Song # 7035191 Words and Music by Jacob Sooter and Mia Fields © 2014 All Essential Music | Be Essential Songs HBC Worship Music | Upside Down Under CCLI License # 1729377

*** APOSTLES' CREED**

A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

C **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.

(The congregation may be seated during the prayers.)

PRAYERS

A As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

A God of peace, you judge the nations. Beat our weapons into tools for serving the neighbor. Strengthen the resolve of all who work for an end to war. We pray for lasting peace in the land of Jesus' birth.

A brief silence.

A God of refuge and strength, we pray for peace in Ukraine. Help to end this war and the destruction of lives and your creation. Change hearts, bring peace and show the world your existence.

A brief silence.

A Heavenly God, we pray for the family and friends of Coleman Nalls. Be with them and comfort them during this difficult time.

A brief silence.

A Merciful God, we pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including: baby from Peru; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you.

A brief silence.

A God of strength, we pray for all those battling cancer that they may know comfort and strength. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)* Larry Stolar; Bob Stiles; Vivian Fortenberry; Rick Davis; Edna Bergfeld; Mack Machacek; Hines Harrison; Darryl Stancik; Jerry Ordner; Michael Yancey; Bubba Bencal; Al Gene Canik; Jane Venghaus Taylor; George Wright; Elrose Kollatschny; Sarah Stancik; Sandy Mosley; Charlene Tesch; Cynthia Coufal; Jeffrey McDaniel; Karen Bailiff; Julian Divin; Nancy Biers; Angie Beggs; Pam Potter; Charlie Hammock; Brad Bryson; Lynette Frnka; Riana Jamison; Jenna Escamilla; Margaret Ortiz; Keith Korth; Jodi Sebesta; Cathy Siglow; Paul Casinger; Fran Gillett; Tiffany Murley; DeQuincy Lister; Angela Mazoch; Lily Presswood; Denise Lange; Doug Mason; Dr. Tom Hancher; Joe Berry; Gracie Brune; Margaret Rogers; Leonard Kahlden; Curtis Wallin; Megan Burch; Lisa Grazier; Phyllis Behrend; Jessica Mauchlen; Donna Tiner; Libby Divin; Diane Brooks; Bob Loy; Stanley King; Monty Gillett; Dawn Foster; Edward Halcolm; Amber Smith Kutach; Louis Camacho; Melvin Schobel; Janet

Greene; Sabrina Galindo; Debbie Grimes; Horst Traub; Margie Fisk; Preston Carter; Penny Miller; Carl Hahn; Megan Cain; Amanda Fuchs; Cyndi Wallace; Karen Broussard; Donna Young; Sharon Heimann; and Brenda Baker.

A God of life, we pray for all expectant mothers, and especially for: Jessica Johnson; Ashley Dungen; Magen Schindler Altieri; Katie Pagel Walcik; and Kelsey Kethan McNeely that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace.

A brief silence.

A Loving God, we pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound and especially for: Barry Shepard; Paul Minar, Sr.; Bobby Zajicek; Stan Lawson; John W. Brasher; Lydia Rojas; Adrian Fritsch; Don Morrison; Verna Coufal; Doug Hill; John Zwiengel; Robert Saunders; Coy Dell Schindler; Deanna Lee; Barbara McMath; Linda Munos Rodgers; Madeline Menke; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Delores Purcell; Jane Booker; Curtis Berger; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Ronnie Rogers; Joyce Dehmer; and Donna Dehmer that they receive your caring and compassion.

A brief silence.

A God of courage, we pray for all law enforcement officers, fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers, 9-1-1 dispatchers, and active duty military personnel that they are protected and kept safe. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)* Law enforcement officers: Todd Jacobs; Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Nancy Gorman; Johnny Kovar; Abigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Luke Kanz; Bruno Flores; Zane Weido; Josh Jones; as well as Donnie Templeton and Jason Templeton who are also fire fighters. For all fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers and 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially Brent Gorman, Sr.; Brent Gorman, Jr.; Reid Brasher; Dusty Dittmar; John Maertz; Ron Luedke; Pastor Alan Kethan; Kristi Weyand; Eric Weyand; Bradley Berger; Jon Berger; James Chollett; Edward Thraen, Jr.; Garrett Flores; Kyle Burris; Dylan Walcik; Randy Wendt; Travis Neuendorff; Brenda Henkes; and Jan Willette, as well as those active duty military members including Brian Anderson; Michael Graham; Bryan Kubena; Brad Bergfeld; Cody Jowers; Kyle Appelt; Montana Appelt; Douglas Neuendorff; Scott Cherniss; Kameron Page; Ryan Neisner; Anthony D'Angelo; Dalton Kapel; Kindra Dawson; William Phillips; and Kevin Gonzalez.

A God of mission, we pray for the church throughout the world. May we all proclaim the good news of your love effectively. We ask, especially, that you would bless the ministry of our sister congregations Cristo Rey and Iglesia Cristiana Camino de Santidad in Peru, all Missionaries, especially St. Paul's supported missionary, Dina Anton de Espinoza, and our companion synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Central African Republic.

A brief silence.

A God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray.

C Amen.

* **PEACE**

P As Jesus shared peace, let us also share His peace with one another. (*Share the "Peace of the Lord" with your neighbors.*)

(We will be collecting offerings before and after worship each week. This includes Power of One dollars.)

OFFERING and POWER OF ONE

"Power of One" is a ministry sponsored by your Stewardship Team. We are asking each and every one of our members to give \$1.00 above what your normal giving would be. We are asking each member to place this \$1.00 bill or change in the offering plate each week. The team is also inviting all children to participate to develop the habit of giving as part of their worship experience. Parents, a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, or dollar bill, any of these will do to help your children develop a habit of giving. These "Power of One" dollars will be used to support local ministries and ministries abroad. The purpose of this ministry is to demonstrate that something as small as one dollar can be used to make a difference in the lives of others.

* **OFFERING PRAYER**

P 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.

C Amen.

* **REMEMBERING JESUS' WORDS, PROMISES, AND COMMANDS**

* **LORD'S PRAYER**

P Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**C 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**

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

C Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Continuous with Individual Cups)

*{Distribution will be continuous. **All are welcome for communion.** Please come down the center aisle starting from the front. Follow directions of the ushers, coming up one side at a time. Pastor will hand you the bread. If you wish to have a gluten-free wafer, please tell Pastor "Gluten-free, please." Afterward, you will choose either wine or white grape juice from the individual cups in the tray – white grape juice in the center with wine surrounding. Place the empty cups in the baskets located off to the side. Although communion is continuous, you are welcome to kneel at the rail in prayer after receiving communion. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.}*

* **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P 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.

C Amen.

* **BLESSING**

P God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ☩ bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

* **CLOSING SONG: RISE UP (LAZARUS)**

In the dark and all alone, growing comfortable.

Are you too scared to move and walk out of this tomb?

Buried underneath the lies that you believed,

Safe and sound, stuck in the ground, too lost to be found.

You're just asleep, and it's time to leave. . . come on and

CHORUS:

Rise up! Take a breath, you're alive now! Can't you hear the

Voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus?

You're brand new. . . the pow'r of death couldn't hold you.

Can't you hear the voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus?

Rise up! Rise up! Rise up! Out from the grave like Lazarus!

[2nd Time to BRIDGE]

When He said your name, the thing that filled your veins

Was more than blood, it's the kind of love that washes sin away.

Now the door is open wide, and the stone's been rolled aside.

The old is gone, the light has come, so come on and CHORUS

BRIDGE:

He's calling us to walk out of the dark. He's given us new resurrected hearts.
He's calling us to walk out of the dark. He's given us new resurrected hearts.

LAST CHORUS:

Oh! Come on and rise up! Take a breath, you're alive now! Can't you hear the
Voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus?
You're brand new. . . the pow'r of death couldn't hold you.
Can't you hear the voice of Jesus calling us out from the grave like Lazarus?
Rise up! Rise up! Rise up! Out from the grave like Lazarus!
Rise up! Rise up! Rise up! Out from the grave like Lazarus!

CCLI Song #7146618 Words and Music by Ethan Hulse, Logan Cain, Nick Schwarz, and Taylor Cain
© All Essential Music (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) | Be Essential Songs (Admin. By Essential Music Publishing
LLC) | EGH Music Publishing (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) | Keep the Pulse on the Hulse (Admin. by Essential
Music Publishing LLC) | Logan Cain Music (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) | Madison Cain Music (Admin. by
Essential Music Publishing LLC) | Schwarz INC Publishing (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) | Taylor Cain Music
(Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) CCLI License #1729377

* **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Christ is near.

C Thanks be to God, and we will.

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006327.
New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the
Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress.
Used by permission.

USHERS: Mike & Gerri Hackfeld; Sandi & Kaldon Roensch

LAY READER: Mia Post

ACOLYTE: Berkley Anderson

STREAMING: Kay Wesson

POWER POINT: Peggy Geisler

SOUND: Robert & Sydney Eaton

ALTAR GUILD: Amanda Oppermann

WELCOME: Today is the first Sunday of Advent and a new church year. Welcome to this rich
season of worship.

ALTAR FLOWERS are placed by Lee Goebel in thanks for God's blessings, for his church family
and for 56 years of life as he celebrates his birthday November 28.

COLLECTION OF OFFERING: Offering for the worship services is collected before and after
worship. Offering bowls are placed in the back entrance and inside the side sanctuary door for
you to place your offering in. This includes "Power of One" dollars.

Amount needed for average weekly budgeted expenses: \$8,405.00

Attendance: Nov. 19 & 20, 2022 – 158

Contributions: Nov. 19 & 20 – \$5,625.61

Power of One: Nov. 19 & 20, 2022 – \$44.00

Building Fund: Nov. 19 & 20 – \$441.44

Thank you to those who contributed to last week's offerings. Loving God/Loving Neighbor.

ATTENTION: Names on the prayer list in the bulletin will be printed for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks,
the names will be removed from the bulletin unless the church office has been notified to keep
them.

► **Children's Activity Bags** are available once again for use by our young members and
guests! You can find them on the coat hooks in the coat area of the narthex. After
worship, **please place the used activity bags and their contents in the receptacle in the**
narthex. Thank you! ☺

♥ **Meals to Heal:** Our next Meals to Heal **cook session** will be **Monday, November 28, 2022 at**
4:00 PM in our St. Paul Lighthouse kitchen. We want to stock our freezer before the busy
holiday season. We will be making two main dish casseroles, bagging veggies, bagging cookies
and finally assembling meals to go in the freezer. Questions? Contact Terri Brasher at
979-732-1127.



If you are interested in placing **Poinsettias** in church for Christmas or donating money
for decorations, please fill out the enclosed form! **Turn in your completed form to the**
church office by Monday, December 5, 2022!! If you purchase your own
poinsettia, please bring it to the church Friday, December 16, 2022. We ask that
you do not bring it any earlier since there will not be any place to store the poinsettias because
of the Christmas program. Extra forms will be available in the church office and the narthex
(foyer) if you need one for yourself or someone you know.

++ **FAMILY ADVENT READINGS:** Families are encouraged to sign up for the **Family Advent**
Litany Reading and Candle Lighting that will take place at the beginning of services during
Advent. A family will come forward to read the Litany and light the candle for that particular
Sunday in Advent. If your family is interested, **please sign up on the sign-up sheet in the**
narthex. A different family is needed for each service. **The remaining dates and times are:**
Sat., Dec. 3 at 7:00 PM; Sun., Dec. 4 at 9:00 AM; Sun., Dec. 4 at 11:05 AM; Sat., Dec. 10 at 7:00
PM; Sun., Dec. 11 at 9:00 AM; Sun., Dec. 11 at 11:05 AM; Sat. Dec. 17 at 7:00 PM; Sun., Dec. 18
at 9:00 AM; and Sun. Dec. 18 at 11:05 AM. A copy of the reading will be sent to you.

Columbus Food Pantry: It is time for our church to help at the Columbus Food Pantry! The
dates are **December 15 & 16, 2022.** The Food Pantry is located at the First United Methodist
Church Family Life Center, 419 Washington Street. On **Thursday, December 15** the food delivery
truck will arrive and grocery bags will be prepared; **please arrive at 8:30 AM** to help. On **Friday,**
December 16 the food will be distributed 9:00 AM-1:00 PM. **Please arrive at 8:30 AM** to help

with the food distribution. Please mark your calendars to help with this important community service! If you have any questions, please call Kathy Fleming at 979-732-4930 or Tom Fleming at 979-732-4107.

► The St. Paul Quilters will **not** be meeting the remainder of this year. They will be taking a well-deserved holiday break! They will **resume quilting** the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month beginning **Tuesday, January 10, 2023**.

The **Noon Bible Study group** that meets on Tuesdays will be taking a fall/holiday break and **will not be meeting the remainder of this year**. Be sure to mark your calendar for *Tuesday, January 10, 2023* which is when they will *resume class*. Everyone is invited to attend. Have a blessed holiday season, and see you next year!



**** Church Council Nominations:** If you are interested in serving on the Church Council, please email a brief bio of yourself to Elena Holub at admin@splctx.org by **Wednesday, December 14, 2022**. Your bio should include, but not be limited to, how long you have been a member of St. Paul, ministry teams you have served on, the reason you want to serve and a brief background description. If you have any questions, please contact John Brasher, David Johnson, Sandi Roensch, DyAnn Lauzon or Curtiss Schonenberg. ******



The Mowing Team is looking for more people to help mow the interior church lawn. Typically it takes an hour and a half, or less, to mow and edge. Please call John Brasher at 979-253-1448 if you are interested or if you have any questions.



Habitat for Humanity: The Outreach Team is in search of a Team Leader to represent St. Paul Lutheran Church for Habitat for Humanity. The churches in our community coordinate and build a couple of houses a year for our neighbors in need. **We need someone to represent St. Paul and be the liaison between Habitat for Humanity and our congregation.** You do not have to build the house yourself, but help coordinate our efforts. Please let Kevin Page know (979-732-0845) if you are interested or have any questions. Thank you, and thank you, God, for our most generous church family!

♥ **Grief Support Group:** Are you experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one, loss of a job, loss of friend who has moved? The Grief Support Group is a place to share and discuss these issues with other individuals. The group meets the **third Thursday of each month from 5:30-6:30 PM in the church library**. For questions or more information, contact Peggy Geisler at 979-732-0350.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Mon., Nov. 28 – 9:30 AM – Staff Meeting
4:00 PM - Meals to Heal Cook Session (Lighthouse)
Tues., Nov. 29 – 6:00 PM – Lighted Christmas Parade (downtown Columbus)

Wed., Nov. 30 – 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel
5:00 PM – Meal
5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation, Adult Class & HS Youth
Thurs., Dec. 1 – Stephanie to Youth Ministry Network
10:30 AM – Pastor to The Oaks
6:00 PM – Youth & Education Team (library)
6:00 PM – Property Team (choir room)
Fri., Dec. 2 – 10:30 AM – Adult Bible Study (library)
Sat., Dec. 3 – 7:00 AM – Men In Mission (Lighthouse)
7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship
Next Sun., Dec. 4 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Wednesday, November 30, 2022 Andrew, Apostle

The first of the disciples to be called by Jesus, Andrew quickly began to bring others to the Savior, including Simon Peter. The Bible also shows him leading some Greeks to meet Jesus, and he brought forward the boy with five loaves and two fish, with which Jesus fed thousands.

Saturday, December 3, 2022 Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, died 1552

A native of the Basque region of Spain, Xavier became a missionary to India, Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Philippines. He also helped to found the Society of Jesus (Jesuits).

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006327.

OTHER READINGS: Isaiah 2:1-5

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 worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

The reading begins:

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!

PSALM: Psalm 122

¹I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD." ²Now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem. ³Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity with itself; ⁴to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, the assembly of Israel, to praise the name of the LORD. ⁵For there are the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. ⁶Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you. ⁷Peace be within your walls and quietness within your towers. ⁸For the sake of my kindred and companions, I pray for your prosperity. ⁹Because of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek to do you good."

SERVICE OVERVIEW: WAKE FROM YOUR SLEEP

In today's gospel, Jesus urges us to tune into an alternative to the material world, one he called the coming of the Son of Man. In Jesus' person, the dominion of God comes into the world, and the risen Christ continues to give us abundant signs of its presence. Jesus commands his followers not to drop out of the world, but to be on the lookout for him in it.

Christians await the second coming of Christ when we believe we will experience God's reign in its fullness. In the meantime, we live, in the words of some theologians, "already, but not yet." We look for glimpses of the dominion in the here and now. The season of Advent, and today's readings, are designed to help turn us on to the excitement and anticipation of God's reign in our lives and tune in to the infinite opportunities we have to participate in it. In other words, they want to wake us up!

St. Paul exhorts us in today's second reading to lead lives of faithful obedience until the final day. He also challenges us to participate in God's dominion in the here and now, calling us to wake from sleep, to "put on Christ." Eyes wide open and wrapped in Christ, we are called to a new day. Isaiah describes his own vision: gathered by God, learning and teaching God's ways, walking in God's paths, beating swords into plowshares and spears to pruning hooks. Wide-awake, active, and ready for encounters with Jesus, may we find God's dominion when and where we least expect it!

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

It is the first week of Advent, the beginning of a liturgical year. This year we will study the gospel of Matthew. Welcome to worship! The coming of Christ means the hope of justice, peace, and honorable living. Join us as we hope and pray for such a world as this.

Happy church new year! It is Advent. Today, remember that time is not linear. It is a circle, a spiral. We move forward, and somehow we also return again and again to where we have been before. See the nonlinear, messy timelines of our lives gathered into God's time. Before we leap to the manger, consider what kind of ending this new beginning will be for you. How does it feel to again rest back into the embrace of infinity at this turning of the year?

The world around us has already fully arrived at Christmas. How do we slow ourselves down into the space where we wait? How can we help another person arrive to and appreciate that space? Remember, Advent means we are getting our hearts ready. Would people make a beautiful

turkey dinner for friends and then eat it before they arrive? Would a bride, so anxious to show her friends her wedding dress, wear it to the office? It can be a challenge to wait!

In the gospel, Jesus compares the Son of Man to a thief who is coming at an unexpected time. Maybe we should make Advent lists - kind of like Christmas lists, but instead of things we want, write down what we want Christ to take away from us. While reflecting, we can certainly end up in places of pain because looking into the past may result in the weight of regret, shame, and trauma. But remember... we wait for Jesus, not in fear, but hoping he will come and steal everything holding us captive.

Wake from your sleep! Step away from the grinding, work-worn world and immerse yourself in a Christ-filled, contemplative space. We begin our Advent worship naming the journey of getting ready and showing how we wait while the world rushes ahead.

KID STUDY:

This weekend's worship time is very special, because it's the first week of Advent. We have started the countdown to Christmas! There are many things that we do to get ready for Christmas. We will be very busy putting up our Christmas trees, lights, and decorations. We will be busy shopping, going to parties, and visiting family. We will be cooking and baking and cleaning and singing and playing and eating and going and doing and... *WAIT!* It's not Christmas yet! Advent is the season before Christmas when we slow down. It's hard to be patient. We are so excited, but we have to wait for the Christ child to be born. While we prepare for Christmas, we must also be prepared for when Christ returns. We all know when Christmas is coming, but when will Jesus be back? We don't know. Until that time, we have to prepare by being busy with the things he told us to do - be His hands and feet! Serve your neighbors! We must never forget to love God and love one another no matter what time of the year it is.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

In a religious autobiography entitled Confessions, St. Augustine tells of hearing the singsong chant of a child intoning repeatedly, "Pick it up and read it." Going back to Paul's letters Augustine opened randomly to what we now designate as Romans 13:13: "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ," and this Romans passage is designated as our second Bible reading on this Advent Sunday. As the days continue to darken earlier during this season, we are summoned to the light at the end of the Advent tunnel. That light is Christ: chiefly as he is to come in glory at the end, but also, prefigured, as that coming is, by his earthly coming as the Christ of Christmas. But for now, look for the coming one at an hour you do not expect him. - Gerard S. Sloyan [Gerard S. Sloyan, in Homilies for the Christian People, ed. Gail Ramshaw (New York: Pueblo, 1989), 1-2.]

+++++

Next Week's Theme (Dec. 3 & 4): Activity of John the Baptist

Next Week's Scriptures (Dec. 3 & 4):

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

"From David's line, a ruler bringing justice and peace."

Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

"May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace." (Ps. 72:7)

Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13

"Live in harmony, welcoming one another."

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

"A voice cries: Prepare the way of the Lord."