

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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(A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

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Advent 1

December 3, 2023

Today we begin a new church year. It might surprise us that a new church year begins roughly a month before the calendar new year. Yet, the Christian church year always begins before Christmas, starting with the season of Advent.

Also, we light the first candle on our Advent wreath known as the Prophecy Candle. This candle reminds us that the light of God's prophecy kept burning brightly on the pages of the Old Testament in preparation for the birth of our Savior. The word Advent itself comes from a Latin word meaning "he comes." The Advent season has a two-fold focus: it prepares us for Jesus' first coming in His birth at Bethlehem, while at the same time there remains a focus on His second coming on Judgment Day at the end of the world's history (The latter is the case for today's readings).

Notice, too, that the colors of the church's vestments change. The appropriate colors of blue or purple symbolize repentance and royalty respectively. The colors remind us that it's necessary to be prepared to meet our royal King Jesus through repentance and faith in His forgiveness. Advent assures that Jesus came as our Savior to give us forgiveness and will one day bring about our final redemption as He takes us to heaven. The Scripture readings for this new church year will now follow the ILCW B series.

Order of Worship: ELH Page 60, **Divine Service "Rite Two,"** communion.

Hymns: See back page, 94 (1, 5-6, 8, 10), 313 (1-2), 88 (1)

THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

Old Testament: Isaiah 63:16b, 17; 64:1-8. Isaiah cries to the LORD to come to His wayward people and restore His place as their God and Redeemer.

Psalms of the Day: Psalm 24. The LORD Almighty enters into Zion, and those whose sins have been washed away join together in celebration of His coming (*Supplement*).

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9. Paul encourages us with the promise that God will keep us in His grace as we "wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed." Jesus will "be revealed" on the Last Day, when He returns in glory.

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. The one who testifies about these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! Alleluia. (Revelation 22:20, EHV)

Gospel: Mark 13:32-37. Jesus urges His followers to "be on guard" and to "be alert." No one knows when the Day of Judgment will take place.

Sermon: Mark 13:32-37

Theme - "Keep Watching For Your Lord's Return"

Points to ponder from the day's Scripture readings:

- Old Testament: What is the substance of Isaiah's cry to the LORD?
- Old Testament: Look up the word "redeemer" in a Bible dictionary and find references to that term in the Old Testament. How did Jesus fulfill this role?
- Epistle: Paul bids us to be faithful and always ready for the Savior's return, especially urging so since we don't know when the Lord Jesus will be revealed on the Last Day. What promise does Paul make to us in respect to God's grace?
- Gospel: What does Jesus urge His followers to do?
- Gospel: Compare this account as recorded by Mark to Matthew's (24:36-51) and Luke's (21:34-38) rendering. Although these are part of Jesus' end of the world discussions, what other details do these accounts include in the Savior's lesson?

Announcements:

+ **Guests and Visitors** – We are pleased to have you worship with us today. Please sign our guest book before you leave. Our church provides a free daily devotional booklet (*Meditations*). The *Lutheran Sentinel*, a news and informational publication of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, is also available. Please ask for a free copy.

+ **timeofgrace.org** – information on a variety of timely topics as presented by Wisconsin Synod pastors.

Holy Communion - We celebrate the Lord's Supper because Jesus instructed us to do so and God offers us forgiveness of sins, life and salvation through it (Matthew 26:28). We believe the Bible's teaching that receiving the Sacrament together is a way of expressing unity in our beliefs as one body (1 Corinthians 10:17). We therefore respectfully ask that guests who are not members of our Evangelical Lutheran Synod, or our sister synod, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, refrain from communing here until becoming familiar with our beliefs and express agreement. We in no way imply that you are not a Christian or are not "good enough" for us. God's Word teaches us to regard communion as an outward expression of unity in all areas of faith. In communion we publicly confess that we agree in all that we teach and confess on the basis of the Bible (Matthew 28:20, 1 Corinthians 1:10, Romans 16:17, 1 Corinthians 10:17). We pray that you understand and will respect this practice of Close Communion. We encourage you to seek more information about the confession that unites us and would love to meet with you if you have questions regarding Close Communion.

+ Please join us for Bible class at 8:00 a.m. and Sunday School at 8:00 a.m.

+ Please join us for **Midweek Advent service** on **December 13**. Supper starts at 5:00 p.m. with worship beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Isaiah 63:16b, 17; 64:1-8 - You, the LORD, are our Father. Our Redeemer from everlasting is your name. Why do you cause us to wander from your ways, LORD? Why do you harden our heart so that we do not fear you?

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Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes that are your heritage. Oh, that you would rip open the heavens and come down. Mountains then would

quake because of your presence. As fire ignites stubble and as fire makes water boil, make your name known to your adversaries. Then nations would quake in your presence. You did amazing things that we did not expect. You came down. Mountains quaked because of your presence. From ancient times no one has heard. No ear understood. No eye has seen any god except you, who goes into action for the one who waits for him. You meet anyone who joyfully practices righteousness, who remembers you by walking in your ways! But you were angry because we sinned. We have remained in our sins for a long time. Can we still be saved? All of us have become like something unclean, and all our righteous acts are like a filthy cloth. All of us have withered like a leaf, and our guilt carries us away like the wind. There is no one who calls on your name, who rouses himself to take hold of you. So you hid your face from us. You made us melt by the power of our guilt. But now, LORD, you are our father. We are the clay, and you are our potter. All of us are the work of your hand. (EHV™)

1 Corinthians 1:3-9 - Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! I always thank my God for you because of the grace of God given to you in Christ Jesus. You were enriched in him in every way, in all your speaking and all your knowledge, because the testimony about Christ was established in you. As a result you do not lack any gift as you eagerly wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also keep you strong until the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, who called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. (EHV™)

Mark 13:32-37 - “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Watch! Be alert and pray, because you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going away on a journey. When he left his home, he put his servants in charge and assigned what each one was to do. He also commanded the doorkeeper to keep watch. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know when the owner of the house is coming: whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or early in the morning. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: Keep watch!” (EHV™)

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

(Guitar introduction before singing)

1. Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!