

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

– CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION –
LAKEWOOD, COLORADO



*May he so strengthen
your hearts in holiness*

1 Thessalonians 3:13

**1ST SUNDAY IN ADVENT
DECEMBER 2, 2018**

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC)

www.clclutheran.org

Thomas Schuetze, pastor (303-428-5524)

Larry Reed, president – Mike Sprengeler, SS Superintendent

Ruth Greening, Suzannah Miller, Lisa Sprengeler, organists

ORDER OF WORSHIP: SERVICE OF WORD & SACRAMENT

(printed on liturgy insert inside front cover of maroon hymnal)

- ◆ Pre-service Devotion: Psalm 25 (pew bible, p.492)
- ◆ The Hymns: 334 (1-5), 331, 340, 334 (6)
- ◆ Scripture Lessons: Jeremiah 33:14-16, Luke 21:25-36
- ◆ Psalm of the Day: From Psalm 98
- ◆ Confession of Faith: The Nicene Creed *(last page of liturgy insert)*

Sermon Text – 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

LORD, PREPARE US FOR YOUR SECOND ADVENT

1. Supply what is lacking in our faith.
2. Bless us with an increase in our love.
3. Improve the testimony of our lives.

- ◆ Offering of Our Hearts and Gifts
- ◆ Prayer & the Lord's Prayer
- ◆ Communion Liturgy (liturgy insert, pp.17-21)
- ◆ Benediction & Closing Hymn (334, stanza 6)

† † †

A CORDIAL GREETING AND WARM WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS. We are pleased to have you worshipping with us today and invite you to come often. Please take a few moments to sign our guest book. If you have no church home in the community and are seeking a fellowship in which you might worship and serve your Lord, we invite you to speak with the Pastor who will be happy to call on you to share our confession and mission with you.

LITURGICAL NOTES FOR THE ADVENT SEASON

Advent means "coming." During the four weeks of the pre-Christmas Advent season we prepare for the three comings of Jesus:

- ◆ The first coming is the day when Jesus, as the Prince of Peace, was born as a baby and laid in a manger at Bethlehem. We look forward to Christmas, the birthday of our Savior.
- ◆ The second coming is within ourselves. Jesus has come to us in our Baptism. Each day He sends the Holy Spirit to feed our souls with the Word of God and to give us the power to live as God's children. We are happy that He comes to us each day to live in our hearts and lives.
- ◆ The third coming is in the future. Jesus will come again to give us the wonders of heaven. We look forward to His coming on the Last Day as King and Judge.



These three comings of Jesus set the theme for the Season of Advent, a time of longing for the coming of the King of kings. During Advent we look back to the manger. We look at ourselves in our daily living as God's children. We look forward to Christ's coming on the Last Day.

† † †

TODAY'S SCRIPTURES

First Lesson – Jeremiah 33:14-16

“The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.’”

Psalm for the Day – From Psalm 98

P Sing to the LORD a new song:

C For he has done marvelous things.

P The LORD has made his salvation known:

C And revealed his righteousness to the nations.

P He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to the house of Israel:

C All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

P Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth:

C Burst into jubilant song with music.

P Make music to the LORD with the harp:
C With the harp and the sound of singing.
P Shout for joy before the LORD, the King:
C For he comes to judge the earth.
P He will judge the world in righteousness:
C And the peoples with equity.

Second Lesson – Luke 21:25-36

“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. “I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. “Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

Sermon Text – 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today (12/2)	8:30 am	Choir Practice
	9:30 am	Worship Service with Holy Communion
	10:45 am	Sunday School (Birth of Christ Announced, NT 2)
	10:45 am	Christmas Decorating
Sat	10:00 am	Children's Christmas Eve Service Practice
Sun (12/9)	9:30 am	Worship Service
	10:45 am	Children's Christmas Eve Service Practice
	10:45 am	Christmas Potluck
		Christmas Baskets Assembly, following the potluck (see note below)

EXTENDED CALENDAR

- Children's Christmas Eve Service Practice: Dec.8,15,22 (10:00–11:30 am)
- Choir Practice: Sunday, Dec.16,23, 8:30 am
- Children's Christmas Eve Service: Monday, Dec.24, 6:30 pm
- Christmas Day Service: Tuesday, Dec.25, 9:30 am
- New Year's Eve Communion Service: Monday, Dec.31, 7 pm

SERVING US AT GOD'S HOUSE DURING DECEMBER

- Ushers: Don Claeys, Ed Chiappetti
- Elder: Mike Sprengeler
- Communion Assistant: Ed Chiappetti

THE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR TODAY have been donated by Mike & Lisa Sprengeler in thanksgiving to God for 25 years of marital blessings. Mike and Lisa will celebrate there 25th anniversary this Tuesday December 4.

IN OUR PRAYERS: The family of Jim Langdon who was called out of this life last Sunday, November 27. Jim was the son-in-law of Kathy Soucek. He had been battling cancer for some time. *"May your unfailing love be my comfort, Lord, according to your promise to your servant" (Psalm 119:76).*

CHRISTMAS DECORATING: After the service today. Please stay and help if you can.

POTLUCK: Next Sunday we will have our annual Christmas potluck meal after the service. Following the meal the Christmas baskets will be assembled. Any help you can give with the baskets project will be appreciated.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE PRACTICE: This Saturday, December 8, from 10:00-11:30 am. Our theme this year is "*The Family Tree of Jesus.*" In this service the children will tell about how God caused His Son to be born on earth from the family line dating back to Adam and Eve ... through Abraham ... David ... Joseph and Mary ... and how all Christians are now blessed, through faith in Jesus, to be part of His family tree and privileged possessors of the gift of eternal life.

CHRISTMAS BASKETS: The Mary & Martha ladies group is again planning to prepare Christmas baskets (next Sunday) for sharing with St. Paul members unable to attend our services regularly. Donations of food items are welcome (non-perishable only, please). Baskets are also needed. If you have some to share please bring to the church by next week. Cash donations for purchasing items for the baskets may be given to the ladies' treasurer, Crystal Ruegge. If you have questions, see Crystal.

DEVOTION BOOKLETS: New devotion booklets for the first quarter of the new church year are available, on the shelf under the tract rack. The booklets contain one-page devotions authored by several CLC pastors for each day from December 3 through March 2 (except Sundays). Take one for yourself! Share one with a friend!

2019 CLC MISSION HELPER TRIP: Applications for the upcoming CLC Mission Helper Trip to India will be accepted until January 7th. You can apply online at: www.mht.lutheranmissions.org. There is still lots of room for more volunteers. See poster on the bulletin board for more information. If you have questions feel free to contact Missionary Todd Ohlmann at thohlmann@gmail.com or (314) 517-0177.

SPONSORS URGENTLY NEEDED: "The Project Kinship Committee is seeking sponsors to support overseas orphans and seminary students. There are both students and orphans that will not have financial support starting in January if we do not find new sponsors. Please give this prayerful consideration. For more information, please see, email, or text (Project Kinship Committee member) Dan Roehl (danroehl@hotmail.com / 507-381-2042)."

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DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR HOME DEVOTIONS
DECEMBER 3-8

Mon Ezekiel's theme: *Then you shall know that I am the LORD.* The scary vision of **ch. 1** helped prepare Ezekiel for his personal interview with God in **ch. 2**. Having faced God, Ezekiel could face rebellious Israel if he swallowed God's Word, digested His directives, and gave them God's personal warning (**ch.3**). God had a lot of bad news (**chs. 4, 5, 6, 7**) for a crowd that had turned Jerusalem into a garbage dump of abominations (**ch.8**). They should not be allowed to live (**ch. 9**), for God could stand the stench no longer (**ch. 10**).

Tues Conversion of heart and life was the escape hatch (**11:14-20**), and to produce that result, God directed a Show-and-Tell lesson for the wretches (**ch. 12**). Some scary details are given in **ch. 13**, and nobody could escape by cuddling up to Noah, Daniel, or Job (**ch.14**). **Ch 16** gives me the shivers, for renouncing God seems to be every generation's "thing." Nevertheless, God sticks to His guns (**16:60-63**). **Ch. 18** pinches a few toes: God doesn't judge by your ancestors but by your personal conduct. That's fair-and-square, so repent! *Get yourself a new heart and spirit!* [God doesn't want to lose you.]

Wed Ch. 24:15-27 *Ezekiel was a sign to them*—that if it's callous to not cry when your dear wife dies, it's more callous to not cry when you lose God's love. God nudges His spokesmen in **ch. 33:7-11**: Warn a fellow believer to quit his sinful behavior, for God does not want a single soul to perish in impenitence. Vv. 12-20 clarify how a repentant sinner responds to God's love. We have a Good Shepherd who seeks, finds, gathers, feeds, and tends the sheep that belong to Him (**ch. 34:11-16**). [Note God's emphatic: "**I will**"]

Thurs In case you're wondering what God intended with the Exile and the Restoration, here's the scenario: When the Jews turned their homeland into a religious garbage dump, they proved unworthy to live there, and so God exiled them to foreign garbage dumps. Restoring them was God's special project intended to refit the Jews for a renewed, clean life (**36:16-33**).

Fri 37:1-14 When God would resurrect dead Israel and put it back on its feet, *Then they shall know that I am the LORD. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. They shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

Sat 39:21-29 It bears repeating, so Ezekiel repeated: God had good reason for sending Israel into captivity, and after they had learned their hard lesson, God restored them. *"THEN (not before) they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who sent them . . . and also brought them back to their own land. And I will not hide My face from them anymore, for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel."* [We stay tuned for further developments.]

THE ADVENT WREATH

The Advent wreath is rich in symbolism, and as such it aids our worship, reinforcing our hope in the ultimate coming of our Lord. The wreath is covered with evergreen. Just as this species of tree is always green, so our hope for eternity is always alive because it rests upon the living Christ. The wreath is also in the form of a circle, which has no beginning or end. What better way to picture that our life with God is everlasting?



The lighted candles are symbolic of the light of Christ and His Gospel, which alone can lift us out of our sin and spiritual darkness. The four candles remind us of the 4000 years of waiting for Christ by the Old Testament world. Each of the four candles has been assigned a special name with special significance.

- ◆ **The Prophecy Candle** is the 1st candle lit the first week in Advent. It is symbolic of the long years of waiting during which the prophets, inspired of God, kept alive the hope that the Son of God was coming to redeem His people from their sins.
- ◆ **The Bethlehem Candle** is the 2nd candle lit. It symbolizes the preparations being made for the coming of the Christchild. The prophecy in Micah 5:2 that foretold Jesus' birthplace at Bethlehem may seem to be a minor revelation, but it shows how God prepared even the least detail for the coming of Christ.
- ◆ **The Shepherds' Candle** is the 3rd candle lit and reminds us of our responsibility to share the Savior and His promises. The shepherds left behind their sheep in the field and hurried to see the Christchild. Then they went out and told others the Good News of the Savior born for the blessing of all.
- ◆ **The Angels' Candle** is lit the 4th week of Advent. It reminds us of the activity of the angels before and after Jesus' birth, bearing messages, serving, protecting, praising. they will be with Jesus at His final coming on Judgment Day, to gather the nations.

The light these candles give off seems small. So does the Gospel at times. But to those in lonely darkness it is the powerful light which shows the way to Heaven.