

As We Gather

Christmas is fast approaching. Are you ready? This time of year, our to-do lists grow in length: decorations, food, gifts, shopping, parties, and more. As we check each item off the list, we convince ourselves that we are more prepared to celebrate Christmas. Today, however, we encounter John the Baptizer in the Gospel. John calls us to prepare for our Savior's coming in a different way, a more significant way. John calls us to repent. Repentance is more than just something to check off our to-do list. It's a change of heart that the Holy Spirit brings about. Look to the Lord this Advent for the repentance and forgiveness He gives as we prepare for His Son's coming. That's how to be truly ready for Christmas.

Holy Communion

Holy Communion is being celebrated today. It is the belief of the Lutheran Church, based on Jesus' own words, that in this Sacrament His body and blood are really present and that forgiveness of sins and the assurance of salvation are offered to all who come confessing their sins and believing in Him. Communion is therefore offered to those who share this confession of faith. Children who are not yet confirmed are invited to come forward with their parents to receive a blessing. Guests who may have questions about Communion at Mt. Calvary are encouraged to talk to Pastor Brighton.

PRELUDE**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GREETING****OPENING HYMN:***"Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People"***Hymn #347****THE INVOCATION**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

THE CONFESSION OF SINS AND ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

"Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and His arm rules for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him." Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess our sins before God and one another.

(Please kneel)

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: PREPARATION

As the Savior's coming drew nearer and nearer, the people were to make preparation. Such a preparation included a repentant heart for sin, earnest longing for forgiveness, and a willingness to remove all obstructions which might keep them from receiving their Lord. We also are to make preparation with humble and repentant hearts, trusting in the salvation given us through Christ's death and resurrection – as we demonstrate a desire to live God-pleasing lives.

"Go through the gates; prepare the way . . . Behold, your salvation comes; behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him." (Isaiah 62:10-11)

THE HYMN:

"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

**Life up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits.
The King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here.
Life and salvation He doth bring; therefore rejoice and gladly sing.
To God the Father raise your joyful songs of praise.**

**A righteous Helper comes to thee; His chariot is humility,
His kingly crown is holiness, His scepter, pity in distress.
The end of all our woe He brings; therefore the earth is glad and sings,
To Christ the Savior raise Your grateful hymns of praise.**

(As the hymn stanzas are sung, Pedro, Cathy and Aaron Camejo will light the candles on the Advent wreath at the 8:00 am service. Nick, Holly, Adalyn and Brielle Hartley will light the candles at the 10:45 am service.)

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Let us pray. O Lord, the daily pressures and demands of this world are great; grant that we would daily repent of our sin and look to Christ, the Lamb of God, for forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

(Please be seated.)

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 40:1-11 (*"Comfort, comfort My people."*)

¹ Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵ And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶ A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹ Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" ¹⁰ Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹ He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE EPISTLE READING: 2 Peter 3:8-14 (*"The day of the Lord will come like a thief."*)

⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE ALLELUIA VERSE:

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the

words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

THE HOLY GOSPEL IS ANNOUNCED:

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the first chapter.



☐ Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-6 *(John begins baptizing and preaching, calling people to repentance and forgiveness of sins.)*

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

³ And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. ⁵ Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, ⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



☐ Praise to You, O Christ.

THE CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:

Pastor Brighton

THE HYMN OF THE DAY:

"Prepare the Royal Highway"

Hymn #343

THE MESSAGE:

"Prepare the Way"

Pastor David Brighton

THE NICENE CREED:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS: After each petition, the Worship Leader will say, "*Lord in Your mercy,*" and the congregation will respond, "***Hear our prayer.***"

THE GATHERING OF THE TITHES AND OFFERINGS

++ The Stewardship Thought ++

Advent means "coming" or "arrival." In this season of expectation we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Savior who came to us at Bethlehem.

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight." (Mark 1:3)

OFFERTORY HYMN: ***"Come, O Long Expected Jesus"***

**Come, O long expected Jesus
Born to set Your people free.
From our fears and sins release us
By Your death on Calvary.
Israel's strength and consolation
Hope to all the earth impart.
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.**

**Born Your people to deliver
Born a child and yet a king.
Born to reign in us forever
Now Your gracious kingdom bring.
By Your own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Your all sufficient merit
Raise us to Your glorious throne.**

THE ORDER OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
 Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

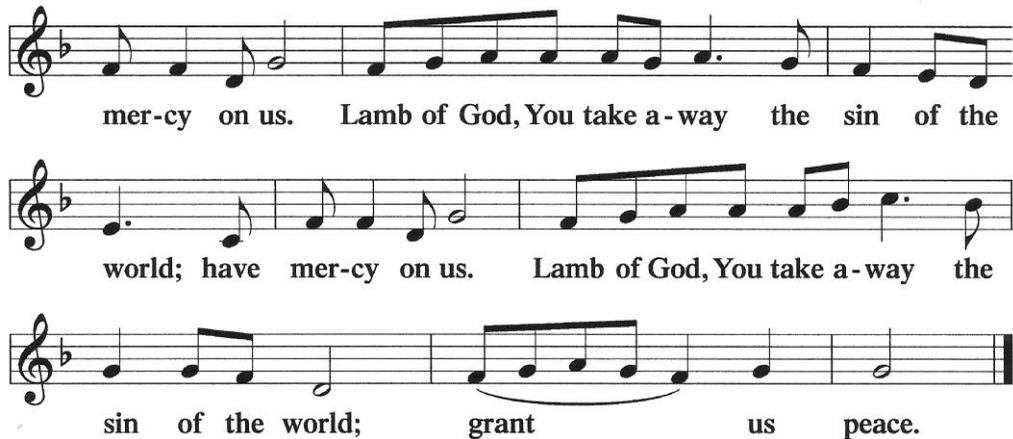
THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

 Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have



THE DISTRIBUTION *(The center cup in each tray is white grape juice for pregnant moms or those allergic to alcohol.)*

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS:

<i>"Once He Came in Blessing"</i>	Hymn #333
<i>"When All the World Was Cursed"</i>	Hymn #346
<i>(Hymn tune: "What Is the World to Me")</i>	
<i>"What Is this Bread"</i>	Hymn #629

THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that not only do You call us to repentance, but You also give us the gifts of repentance and forgiveness that we might live as Your redeemed people; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Amen.

THE CLOSING HYMN: *"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"* **Hymn #344**

A MOMENT FOR SILENT PRAYER

THE POSTLUDE

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Share Joy! That's the theme for our second and final Midweek Advent service this Wednesday, December 20th, at 7:00 pm. In this time when we share cookies and other treats with one another, we share joy with those around us that they might taste and see that the Lord is good to us through the birth of His Son! Don't forget our fellowship meal at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. This week we'll enjoy a whole variety of soups, salad and desserts, served by our Board of Trustees. See the menu insert in your worship folder!

This week's altar flowers are provided by Chet & Nancy Branscom, in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary.

Christmas Greetings from Former Vicars – We have received a few cards and letters from some of our former Vicars. They are posted on the bulletin board across from the church office.

Angel Giving Tree: The Angel Tree is up and looking for generous donors. This year we will be supporting Salvation Army Safe House, Rainbow House, Lodge Rehab/Nursing Home, WR Rehab/Nursing Facility, Family Promise and Lutheran Services of Georgia (LSG). We invite your family to take an Angel or two, pray for the recipient, and serve that person with gifts. Please have the gifts wrapped in tissue in a Christmas gift bag, attaching the angel tag to the outside of the bag. **Pay attention to the return date, very important.** If you have an Angel requesting a gift card; place the card in the pretty wrapped box in Vicar Brad's office. Place all other gifts in the conference room. Thanks and God's Blessings

Once again we will be collecting "Freebies" to give away at the Christmas Day dinner. There is a box under the table in the entryway to put items. These items could include calendars, notepads, pens, warm things like mittens or hats or whatever you think would be appropriate.

Greeters are needed for the following services: December 24-10:00 am, December 24-5:00 pm and December 31-8:00 am. If you would like to be a greeter for one of these services, please call Dot Bogardus 953-0681.

Helping Hands Dinner – Help Needed: We need some more servers and delivery drivers. We can also use a few more ham and turkey donations. Thanks to all who have already volunteered! Looking forward to serving with you! – Vicar Brad

Primetimers - Just a reminder the last day to pay for the dinner at the Southern Landings Restaurant is Sunday December 10th. Checks must be made out to EDNA HICKS. One dinner is \$22.50 and \$45 for two. Please bring a wrapped White Elephant Gift. One per couple.
Thank you! - Marie, Edna and Don

Projectionists Needed - Can you operate a computer? Can you locate and press the "down" arrow? Then you have the skills to serve as a projectionist during worship! We desperately need people to serve in this role, particularly at the 10:45 service. Call or text Brian Harper at 478-284-6031 if you're interested.

Senior Fellowship - Come join us for Senior Fellowship Thursday, November 16th, 11:00 am, in the Fellowship Hall. There will be a brief Bible study, a game or two, recognition of birthdays and anniversaries, a great time, and a delicious pot luck lunch. If, for some reason you cannot make a dish, bring yourself, there is always plenty of really delicious food.

Prayer Group - This coming Thursday, November 17th, 7:00 to 8:00, pm our prayer group will meet in the cry room. Anyone is welcome to join us as we pray for our church, our community, and our own concerns.



**The Flower Chart for 2018 is posted.
Now would be a good time to get the
weekend that you want reserved.**

PRAYER CONCERNS

The family of Betty Keller, Jean Dimeler's sister, who recently died.

Pastor Brighton, who is fighting bronchitis.

JoAnn Smith, who is hospitalized with pneumonia.

Champ Aldredge, who is fighting a bladder infection.

Chet Branscom, who has been diagnosed with acute leukemia.

Charles Smith, Joan's husband, who is hospitalized.

Dick Kesler, who is hospitalized with pneumonia.

Susan Wallace, for strength in her ongoing battle with anemia.

Keep In Your Prayers

Libby McCarty, Paul Brown, Tracie Frey, Anita McIntyre, Bill Gragg, Mike Hope, Merlin Schumann (Joan Steese's brother), Patti Griswold, Regina Ragan, Joe Hill (Cynthia Nelson's dad), Michelle Jones (Leo & Joann Ladzinske's daughter), Glen Mabee, Deloris Denzine and Karen Johnson.

(NOTE: Those listed under "Keep in your prayers" are removed from the list after eight weeks. If there is someone you would like to keep on the list for another eight weeks, please contact the church office.)

Those Battling Cancer

Joe Hill (Cynthia Nelson's dad), Jeanne Day (Bob's mom), Chet Branscom, Jace Cumbie (Amanda McVay's boyfriend's son), Diana Iverson (Bonnie Hudlin's sister-in-law), Barry Rice (Becky McVay's brother), Norma Young (Melinda Hopf's aunt), Kathy Grube, Mary Schwope (Michele Durbin's aunt), Jeannette Poniske (Fred Tamer's mom) and Bruce Oswald (Krystal Ferguson's father).

Those Serving our Country in Dangerous Areas

Christopher Dierking, Chris Mittuch, Darrin Landis, Jonathan Fetchik and Christian Corbitt, for safety and good health as they serve our country in dangerous areas.

SERVING US TODAY

PREACHER: Pastor David Brighton. **LITURGIST:** Pastor David Brighton/Vicar Brad Wellik. **ELDERS:** Darron Counselman (8 am) and Mark Burnette (10:45 am). **ACOLYTES:** Colton Wurdeman (8 am) and Carlee Toler (10:45 am). **USHERS:** Early – Brian Harper, David Rossman, Bob Yeager, Richard Uitto & Fred Tamer. Late – Mike Hopf, Bruce Bauman, Dave Harter, Ed Bodony, Earl Bogardus & Joshua Johnson. **ALTAR GUILD:** Heather Johnson, Barbara Locke, Pat Stetzler, Angleen Trasmer. **LAY READERS:** Doug Fingles (8 am) and Ruthie Radcliff (10:45 am). **SLIDE PREPARER:** Debi Cole. **PROJECTIONISTS:** Open (8 am) & Open (10:45 am).

SERVING US NEXT WEEK

ELDERS: Rob Crawford (Wed 7 pm), Rob Crawford (Sat 6 pm), Don Netzinger (Sun 10 am), Open (Sun 5 pm), Don Netzinger (Sun 7 pm) and Open (Sun 10 pm). **ACOLYTES:** Seth Nelson (Wed 7 pm), Zoe Babcock (Sun 10 am), Open (Sun 5 pm), Seth Nelson (Sun 7 pm) and Sara Van Lannen (Sun 10 pm). **ALTAR GUILD:** Lois Harter, Melinda Hopf, Ruth Miller, Suzanne O’Daniel, Maureen Young. **LAY READERS:** Rob Crawford (Wed 7 pm), Keith Dierking (Sat 6 pm), Dave Radcliff (Sun 10 am), Lexie Hadley (Sun 7 pm), and John Trichinotis (Sun 10 pm). **GREETERS:** Dot & Earl Bogardus (10 am), Jackie & Steve Kaestner (Sun 5 pm), Dick & Judy Hamilton (Sun 7 pm), and Pat Stetzler (Sun 10 pm).

NEXT WEEK’S READINGS

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 and Romans 16:25-27

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK

Saturday 6 pm – 43 Sunday 8 am – 106 Sunday 10:45 am – 134 Total – 283

THIS WEEK AT MOUNT CALVARY

Today	12 – 2 pm	Children’s Ministry Christmas Party
	6:30 pm	High School Christmas Party
Monday	6:20 pm	Evangelism Callers
Wednesday	6:00 pm	Dinner
	7:00 pm	Advent Worship
	7:45 pm	Choir After Worship
Thursday	10:00 am	Ladies Bible Study
	11:00 am	Senior Fellowship
	6:00 pm	PrimeTimer Christmas Party
	7:00 pm	Prayer Group
Friday	10am-2pm	High School Baking Cookies for Shut-Ins
Saturday	5:00 pm	Adult Bible Study
	5:00 pm	Praise Team Rehearsal
Next Sunday	10:00 am	Worship
	5:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship for Young Families
	7:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship – Candlelight
	10:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship – Candlelight with Holy Communion

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