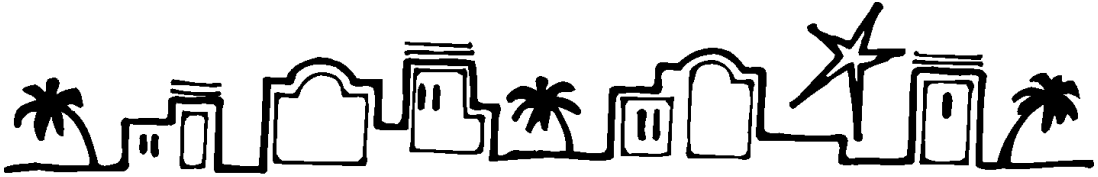




W H E N T H E
L O R D
C O M E S N E A R

He humbles His People



Second Sunday in Advent

December 4 and 5, 2021

Today's focus: *When the Lord Comes Near, He Humbles His People.* People tend to feel a lot of pressure this time of year. We want our houses to look good for out-of-town guests. We want to impress people with the thoughtfulness of our gifts. What a welcome relief, therefore, to hear what is required to meet the Lord: only repentance. You see, Jesus is not someone we need to impress with our good works. Indeed, repentance is the opposite of work. Repentance is the humble admission of our sin combined with the joyful trust that everything needed to bring us close to God has already been done by him.

Series Theme: "When the Lord Comes Near"

Advent is a Latin word that means "coming." The season of Advent is the four-week period before Christmas that the Church uses to connect the two "comings" of Christ. The first time the Lord came into our world it was as a tiny, helpless baby, born in a manger in Bethlehem. However, when Jesus comes again, it will be in all his power and glory with his angelic army behind him. He will be coming as judge at the end of time. Let us use these four weeks to see how the events of Jesus' first coming remove all our fears about his second coming. We can hold our heads high when the Lord comes near.

When the Lord Comes Near...

He Humbles Himself	November 27/28
<i>He Humbles His People</i>	<i>December 4/5</i>
He Humbles His Enemies	December 11/12
He Lifts Up the Humbled	December 18/19

Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church

525 63rd Street, Downers Grove

630-852-1519

www.gsdg.org

An Explanation of Our Communion Practice: Today we are celebrating the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, marked as "The Sacrament" in the worship folder. While some churches invite all who are present to receive the Sacrament ("open communion"), we follow the Biblical and historic Christian practice of "close communion." "Close communion" is adhered to by over 1 billion Christians throughout the world.

What does this mean? We invite all who are members of our congregation (Good Shepherd Lutheran) or visitors who belong to our WELS fellowship to receive the Lord's Supper with us. If you have no church membership or belong to a different fellowship, faith, or even a different Lutheran church body (e.g. ELCA, LCMS, etc.), we ask that you please refrain from communing with us for now.

In asking this, we in no way mean to judge your faith or imply that you are not a Christian or "not good enough for us"! Rather, it is because God's Word teaches us to regard Communion as an outward expression of unity in *all* areas of the faith (*see 1 Corinthians 10:17*). In other words, when we commune together, we are confessing publicly that we are all one in what we believe and profess (*all* the teachings of God's Word, not just a few basics).

For those who haven't had a chance to check out all that we teach and believe and declare their unity with us by joining our congregation, we look forward to informing you about what we believe and teach before you enjoy the Lord's Supper with us. We want you to feel comfortable with what we confess, and want you to enjoy the beauty of a deep unity in the faith.

There are other reasons for "close communion" as well:

- While God's Word promises that in the Lord's Supper we receive the beautiful gifts of Jesus' body and blood and forgiveness, it also warns that any communicant who does not recognize that the body and blood of Christ really are present in the Sacrament may bring spiritual harm on himself or herself (*see 1 Corinthians 11:27-29*). It wouldn't be loving for us to let that happen—as it might if we offered the Sacrament to all, even to those who may not understand what is involved.
- Scripture also requires that each communicant examine himself or herself spiritually (*1 Corinthians 11:28*) before receiving the Lord's body and blood together with the bread and wine. There are many who are not able to do that due to their youth, lack of instruction, or other reasons.

We believe that it is out of obedience to our Lord and his Word and out of loving concern for everyone present that we practice "close communion." We hope that you understand, and we trust that you will respect our practice. We look forward to any opportunity we may have in the future to share with you the Bible's teachings about Communion, our beliefs as a church, and to establish unity together and to commune together. We are grateful to have you worship with us, and long to grow in the Word together!

We Come into the Presence of God

Musical Introduction *(This is an opportunity to quiet your mind and heart and prepare for the joy of worshipping your God.)*

Confession and Absolution

Minister: God is with us today as we worship and look forward to the coming of Emmanuel, our Savior Jesus.

Congregation: He is the Light of the world, the Light no darkness can overcome.

M: As we come into the presence of God, we ask Him to look away from the darkness of our sins and illumine us with the saving light of His son, Jesus.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I was born in the darkness of sin. I have failed to obey You perfectly and have failed to love others as I should. For this I deserve to be left in darkness. But trusting in Emmanuel, my Savior Jesus, I pray that You forgive my sins and lead me to the light of Your salvation.

M: Indeed, God has been merciful to us. He sent His Son, as foretold by the prophets of old, to live perfectly for us, to die for our sins, and to rise from the dead to give us life and light. Because of God's perfect Son, we are seen as God's perfect children. Your sins are forgiven, you are a dearly loved child of God through Emmanuel, your Savior Jesus.

C: Arise, shine! For our light has come!

M: This is the light whose coming was proclaimed by John the Baptist. As the Forerunner of Christ declared:

C: Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

M: Come, let us worship Him!

Opening Hymn: #14, verses 1-2 "Arise, O Christian People"

1 A - rise, O Chris - tian peo - ple! Pre -
2 Pre - pare the way be - fore him; Pre -

pare your - selves to - day. Pre - pare to greet the
pare for him the best. Cast out what would of -

Sav - ior, Who takes your sins a - way. To
fend him, This great, this heav'n - ly guest. Make

us by grace a - lone The truth and
straight, make plain the way: The low - ly

light were giv - en; The prom - ised Lord from
val - leys rais - ing, The heights of pride a -

heav - en To all the world is shown.
bas - ing, His path all e - ven lay.

Text: Valentin Thilo, 1607–62, alt.; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–74, st. 1-3, alt.; *The Lutheran Hymnal*, St. Louis, 1941, st. 4, alt.

Tune: AUS MEINES HERZENS GRUNDE (76 76 67 76) *New Catechismus Gesangbüchlein*, Hamburg, 1598, alt.

We Listen

First Reading: Malachi 3:1-7b

¹“I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty.

²But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, ⁴and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years.

⁵“So I will come to put you on trial. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me,” says the LORD Almighty.

⁶“I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. ⁷Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty.



Lighting of Advent Candles¹

M: We light two Advent candles, remembering Jesus, who came in history. He came into a world of sin and death.

C: We remember Jesus, who came as the promised Messiah. John the Baptist prepared the way of the Lord.

M: We hear his call to repent.

C: We light two Advent candles as a sign of our repentance and desire for renewal.

M: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

C: Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

Two Advent candles are lit.



¹*The Advent Wreath is a combination of two very common symbols: light and the fir tree. From the early centuries of Christianity it has been the practice to represent Christ by a burning candle. The fir tree has a long history of religious use. No doubt the Advent Wreath was suggested by the Christmas tree. It seems that the Advent Wreath originated a few hundred years ago among the Lutherans of eastern Germany. A wreath of evergreens, made in various sizes, was either suspended from the ceiling or placed on a table. Four candles representing the four Sundays of Advent were fastened to the wreath. Eventually the use of the Advent Wreath became widespread and moved also from the home into the church. The general symbolism of the Advent Wreath lies in the growing light of the wreath, increasing each week as we approach the birthday of Jesus, the Light of the world.*

Second Reading: Philippians 1:3-11

³I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

⁷It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. ⁸God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

⁹And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and became fully human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Gospel Reading: Luke 3:1-6

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—²during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,

‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.

⁵Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill made low.

The crooked roads shall become straight,
the rough ways smooth.

⁶And all people will see God’s salvation.”

Children’s Message

Hymn of the Day: #16, verses 1,2,4 “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An - nounc -
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin And fur -
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, And lift

es that the Lord is nigh; Come, then, and lis - ten,
nished for a guest with - in, And let us all our
us up to fall no more. Oh, make your face on

for he brings Good news a - bout the King of kings.
hearts pre - pare For Christ to come and en - ter there.
us to shine, And fill the world with love di - vine.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. John Chandler, 1806–76, st. 1-3, alt.; composite, st. 4-5.
Tune: PUER NOBIS NASCITUR (LM) Latin melody, 15th century, adapt.

Sermon

We Respond

Offering (*In an effort to maintain a safe social distance, please place your offerings in the provided plate when exiting the sanctuary.*)

If you are a guest in our church, please do not feel obligated to participate in the offering. We do not want you to think that God or our congregation is soliciting funds from you. You enrich us simply by being here.)

Prayer of the Church

Lord's Prayer

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.

The Sacrament *(Spoken responsively; no musical accompaniment.)*

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up unto the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is good and right so to do.

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

**C: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of heavenly hosts:
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **Amen.**

O Christ, Lamb of God

C: **O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us and grant us your peace. Amen.**

Distribution *(After the distribution, you are invited to dispose of the cups and return to your seats.)*

Song of Simeon

C: **Lord, now you let your servant depart in peace according to your Word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.**

Thanksgiving

M: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

C: **and his mercy endures forever.**

M: We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this holy supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Blessing

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

Closing Hymn: #14, verses 3-4 “Arise, O Christian People”

**The humble heart and lowly
God raises up on high;
Beneath his feet in terror
The haughty soul shall lie.
The heart sincere and right,
That heeds God’s invitation
And makes true preparation—
It is the Lord’s delight.**

**Prepare my heart, Lord Jesus;
Turn not from me aside,
And help me to receive you
This blessed Adventide.
From stall and manger low
Come now to dwell within me;
I’ll sing your praises gladly
And forth your glory show.**

It is the mission of



Good Shepherd

to

Seek the Lost
Feed the Flock and
Serve our Savior



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is part of a group of nearly 1,300 churches called the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or WELS. The WELS is a worldwide church with congregations serving in all fifty of the United States, as well as in Mexico and Canada. The WELS also serves over 26 foreign countries through world mission work. We are united in faith and teaching with the other churches of the WELS as well as the members of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference, consisting of 21 confessional Lutheran church bodies throughout the world.

Serving in Worship

Pastor: Jon Bergemann
Organist: Jan Henriksen
Cantors (Saturday): Carol Miller and
Debi Vose
Ushers: Andy Rush, Ed Boron,
and John Roland
Communion Debbie O'Malley and
Setup/Cleanup: Inge Wegner
AV Team: Bob Reichert, Joe Garetto,
Kristen Reynolds, and
Greg Busse

Contact Information

Pastor Jon Bergemann
Office: 630.852.1519
Email: pastor.bergemann@gsdg.org

Church Secretary Jennifer Reynolds
Church office: 630.852.1519
School office: 630.852.5081
Cell phone: 630.399.3648
Office Email: office@gsdg.org



GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN ACADEMY

To know, to grow, and to show.



Everyone is welcome to join us for BLAST (Believe, Learn and Seek Truth), our Sunday morning Children's Ministry. We begin each Sunday at 9:15a in the library at the end of the school hallway. Email BLAST@gsdg.org

Acknowledgements

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