

Welcome to
Luther Memorial Church

Maranatha!

Come, Lord Jesus

...and quickly!



30 NOVEMBER 2025
THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT
10:30 am

LUTHER MEMORIAL CHURCH

LUTHER MEMORIAL ACADEMY

225 West Tenth Street • Erie, PA 16501 • 814-454-0106

THE REV. JAY C. MITCHELL, *Pastor*

BRYAN TIMM, F.A.I.O.

Cantor

RON KING

Pastoral Asst. ~ Holy Trinity

THE REV. KAREN LUNDWALL, THE REV. BRIAN MORAN

THE REV. KAREN PARSH, THE REV. GAIL ZACKRISON

Pastors in Residence

MICHELLE THOM

LMA Principal

JAN MACINNES

Care Ministry

BETH KELLER

SARAH PRYLINSKI

Youth and Family Ministry

WELCOME!

This is the day that the Lord has made. Together, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

~ Here are a few notes to help you participate in worship today: Almost everything you need is in this bulletin, including hymns. You are invited to participate with the words in **bold type**. You are invited to stand as you are able where indicated. Hymns are included in this bulletin, however if you need larger print, hymns may be found in the back of the red hymnal using the number indicated (#). Please join in singing all the music! Today especially we raise our voices in praise!

~ **You don't need to disconnect here!** You don't need to turn off your phone, but please place it in silent mode. Feel free to take pictures—of our building, of worship, but ask permission for any people-pictures. We ask that you not use flash during this worship service. Post your favorite quote from the sermon or verse from a hymn...just be sure to check in and let your friends know where you are!

~ We welcome all of God's children **no matter your age**. Wiggles, dancing, and singing welcome! Together we raise a joyful noise. If you would like a children's bulletin, a soft toy, or a book, they're near the ramp door (out the doors next to the pulpit on the long Welcome Table).

~ **Restrooms** may be found out either door at the front of the Sanctuary. There is an accessible ramp through the doors near the pulpit. At the top of the ramp(s), follow signs to the restrooms. A fully accessible restroom is available through the parlor.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE – "There's a Voice in the Wilderness"

R. Benson

Please rise in body or spirit.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection. The assembly may kneel or sit as is comfortable.

Long-expected God,

**we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.**

**We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.**

**We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.**

**Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.**

**Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.**

Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness.

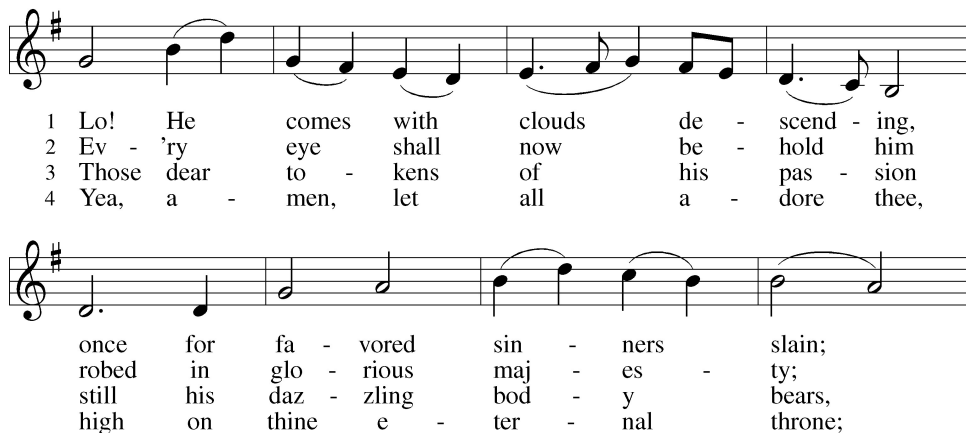
† You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

LBW 27



1 Lo! He comes with clouds de - scend - ing,
2 Ev - 'ry eye shall now be - hold him
3 Those dear to - kens of his pas - sion
4 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore thee,

once for fa - vored sin - ners slain;
robed in glo - rious maj - es - ty;
still his daz - zling bod - y bears,
high on thine e - ter - nal throne;

thou - sand thou - sand saints at - tend - ing
those who set at nought and sold him,
cause of end - less ex - ul - ta - tion
Sav - ior, take the pow'r and glo - ry,

swell the tri - umph of his train:
pierced and nailed him to the tree,
to his ran - somed wor - ship - ers.
claim the king - dom as thine own.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly wail - ing,
With what rap - ture, with what rap - ture,
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.
deep - ly wail - ing, shall their true Mes - si - ah see.
with what rap - ture gaze we on those glo - rious scars!
al - le - lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and thou a - lone!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.
Music: HELMSLEY, Thomas Olivers, 1725–1799

GREETING

Grace to you and peace from the God who makes newness from nothing, the Savior who brought warmth to tomb, the Spirit who innovates from the ashes. **And also with you.**

KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy.
For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mer - cy.
Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.
A - men, a - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

BLESSING OF THE LECTOR

The Spirit and the church cry out,
All who awaits Christ's appearing pray,
The whole creation pleads,

**Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.
Come, Lord Jesus.**

Let us pray: Come to us, Lord Jesus, as Cathy reads for us your holy Word. Keep us attentive to the truth of the scriptures; turn us away from myths, and turn us in faith to you, our strength and our redeemer. Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

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 Jacob's God, who will teach us the ways of God, that we may walk in the paths of the Lord." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. ⁴God 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!

Hear the One for whom we wait.

Come, Word of God.

PSALM: PSALM 122 TUNE: TRURO

Jerusalem: with what great joy I heard them say, "Let us go there!"
And now at last we take our stand within your gates to offer prayer.

Jerusalem: a city built to be a place of unity;
the tribes go up, the tribes of God, to praise God's Name eternally.

Jerusalem: within your walls the thrones of justice serve God's will;
the ancient tribes of David's house stand and unite God's people still.

Jerusalem: pray for its peace: "May all who love you find success;
peace be to all within your walls, and in your towers be righteousness.

Jerusalem: for comrades' sake my prayers for you will never cease;
because God's house is standing there, I pray forever for your peace."

SECOND READING: ROMANS 13:11-14

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already 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 throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us walk decently as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in illicit sex 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.

Hear the One for whom we wait.

Come, Word of God.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

(Our first candle will be lighted by Kate Martin, Pat Mitchell and Lois Washill.)

Having heard readings from the God who is still speaking, and as we await the coming of The Word in our midst in this season, we light our candles of waiting. The assembly rises in body or spirit as we greet the Gospel.

In deep blue darkness, lighting a single candle creates only uncertainty.

Light dances around uncertain shapes, and the dark refuses to yield its secrets. This first candle on our Advent wreath represents our first flickering glimpse of the goodness God has hidden in divine darkness.

In time we will apprehend every blessing hinted from ancient prophecies and prepared under the cover of deep darkness. But not yet, not fully.

God of the Starlight and Moon

1. God of the star - light and moon, mys - ter - y God of the
2. Beau - ty be - yond what we know, shap - ing a world that we
3. Out of the blue you ar - rive, weav - ing our lives with your

mid - night blue skies. Love draw - ing near,
can - not quite see. Form of a child,
con - stant sur - prise. Flick - er - ing flame,

dream - ing new fu - tures: fire of our hearts, a - rise.
reach - ing to greet us: time in e - ter - ni - ty.
spark - ling with prom - ise: God of the star - lit skies.

Text and music: Linnéa K. Clark

OUT OF THE BLUE

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GOSPEL: Matthew 24:36-44

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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 Human One. ³⁸For as in the 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 Human One. ⁴⁰Then two men 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, the owner would have stayed awake and would not have let the house be broken into. ⁴⁴Therefore you also must be ready, for the Human One is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated at the invitation of the pastor.

SERMON

Pastor Jay

After a brief silence for reflection, as the music sounds, please stand to proclaim the Word of God in song.

HYMN OF THE DAY

ACS 901

Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is grow - ing thin.
2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon - light now be - gin to drift a - way.
3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis - dom's seed,



Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten to the stir - ring, faint with-in:
Dia - mond bril-liance through the dark - ness shines the hope of com-ing day.
come to bless with fire and fra-grance hours of yearn-ing, hurt, and need.

seed of prom-ise, deep-ly plant-ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem!
Christ, the morn-ing star of splen-dor, gleams with-in a world grown dim.
In the lone - ly, in the strang - er, in the out - cast, hid from view;

Like the soil be - neath the frost-line, hearts grow soft to wel-come him.
Heav-en's em - ber fans to full-ness; hearts grow warm to wel-come him.
Child who comes to grace the man-ger, teach our hearts to wel-come you.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953
Music: SUO GAN, Welsh melody; arr. hymnal version
Text © 2006 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved.
Arr. © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

THE NICENE-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED

Siblings in Christ, let us confess the faith of the Church:

**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 whom 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 truly 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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic 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.**

The assembly kneels or sits as is comfortable for the prayers.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

Guide Yehiel and Kristen, our bishops; Jean, our dean; Jay, our pastor; and all those who serve your Church. May the Church continue to point the way to your gracious reign even until you come again. We lift up our siblings in your Church in Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore. We also hold in prayer our siblings in our synodical prayer cycle: the congregations of Abiding Hope and First. With the Church, we pray:

Come, Lord Jesus.

As the days grow shorter and the air grows cooler, in the beauty of bare branch and nesting animals remind us that life only lays dormant and not forever. May we be found good stewards until you return. Encourage those who work for clean water and abundant food for all your people. With creation, we pray:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Your sovereignty knows no end and all the earth is yours: grant wisdom to those who rule, govern, and lead throughout the world. Grant the peace as can only come from you to those places which ache in fear and strife: Gaza, Ukraine, the Caribbean, the United States. With the nations, we pray:

Come Lord Jesus.

We look to your coming with healing in your wings for all. In companions and care teams, may those whose names and needs we lift up know that your holy angels have charge over them until the Great Physician appears: _____. With the sick and suffering, we pray:

Come, Lord Jesus.

You draw all into your embrace and send us out with your love and hope. Bring an end to the stigma and fear of HIV/AIDS and open the minds of those who seek a cure. We remember friends and loved ones who were stricken by this epidemic. With hope, we pray:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Give hope to those who cannot look with joy to your coming and comfort to those for whom this time does not bring cheer. In us and with you may they find love. With those who wonder and doubt, we pray:

Come, Lord Jesus.

You have flung wide the door and welcomed in your beloved who now rest in you. We give you thanks for Andrew, Francis, John, Nicholas, and all our beloved dead. Until you come in glory, we pray:

Come, Lord Jesus.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Please share greetings and gestures of peace with those around you. Please be seated.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED



An offering is received for the ministry of the church. Our offering at Luther Memorial supports our ministry locally, as well as that of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. You may make your checks payable to Luther Memorial Church.

ANTHEM – "People Look East"

T. Mitchell

Please rise in body or spirit as the gifts are presented.

OFFERING HYMN



1 Oh, come, Lord Je - sus, be our guest, and
4 Oh, come, Lord Je - sus, be our guest, and
let your gifts to us be blest. Keep us for - ev - er
let your gifts to us be blest. Come deep with - in our
in your sight, and be our joy, our hearts' de - light.
hearts to dwell, that we may all your good-ness tell.

Text: traditional table prayer, adapt. Susan Briehl
Music: TALLIS' CANON, Thomas Tallis

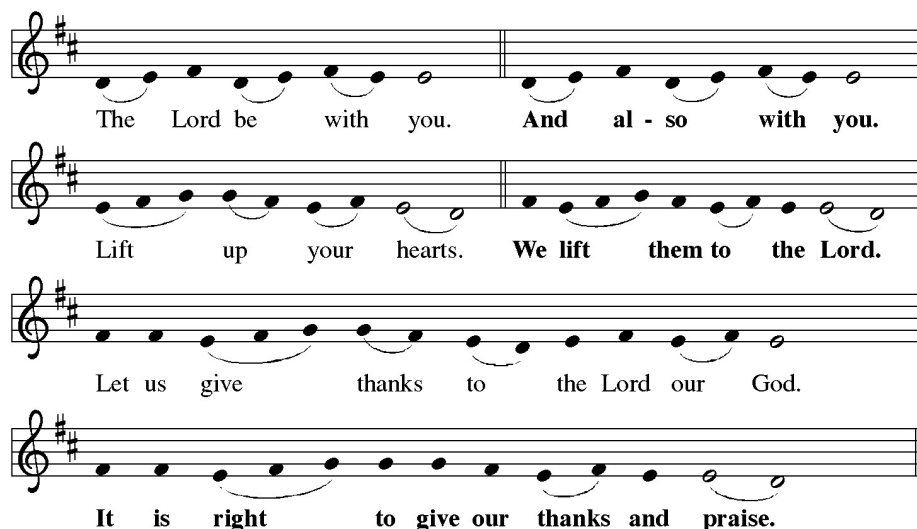
Text © 1996 Augsburg Fortress

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.

Amen.

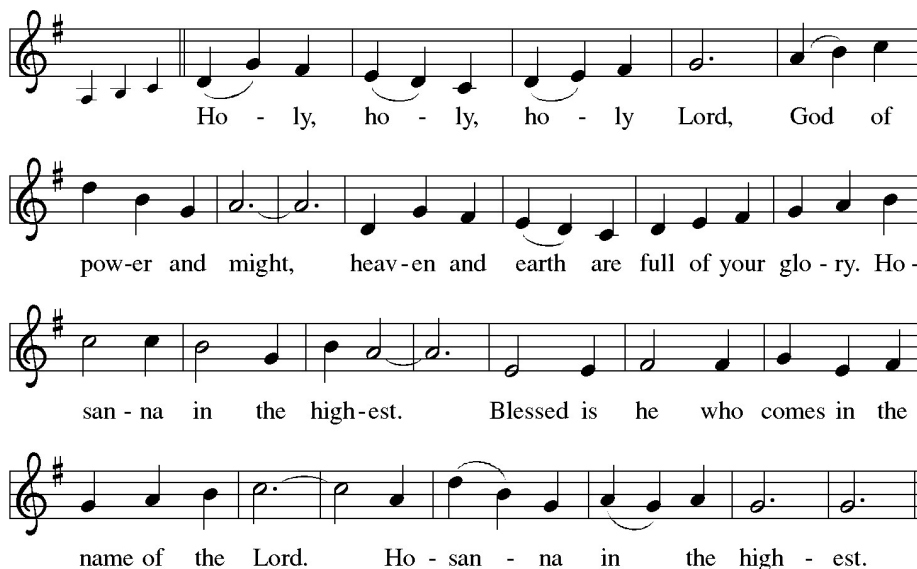
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING SURSUM CORDA



THE PROPER PREFACE

♪ *It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy...join their unending hymn:*

SANCTUS



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER *INSPIRED BY THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW*

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. From age to age your creation sings your praises. You feed even the birds of the air, and you clothe the fields with lilies. You gave your blessing to Abraham and his descendants, and you spoke with Moses, Elijah, and David. Blessed are you, Lord our God:

Blessed be God forever.

You fulfilled your covenant with us in Jesus. He is Emmanuel, your beloved Son, the star that guides us to wisdom, the treasure hidden in a field. He is the landowner who overpays the workers, the judge who separates good from evil. Blessed are you, Lord our God:

Blessed be God forever.

For us he lived, for us he died, for us he rose to eternal life. Then and now he invites us to your banquet.

*On the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread, and gave thanks,
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

*Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

We hear his call, we repent our ways, and we enter with joy into the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you, Lord our God: **Blessed be God forever.**

Send your Holy Spirit here on your gathered disciples. Make of this meal the body and blood of forgiveness.
Heal us and grant us your righteousness, that we may love you and serve our neighbors. Blessed are you, Lord
our God: **Blessed be God forever.**

Blessed are you, Lord our God, our Father in heaven, the Rock on which we build, the Dove alighting on us all.
We worship you and sing our praises, today and to the end of the age. **Amen.**

Lord, remember us in your sovereignty and teach us to pray:

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 THE TABLE

Here is the One for whom we wait, he is here Host and Guest, he feeds us with heavenly food, food of angels,
himself for you. Come, eat, drink, and be satisfied.

Amen. We come.

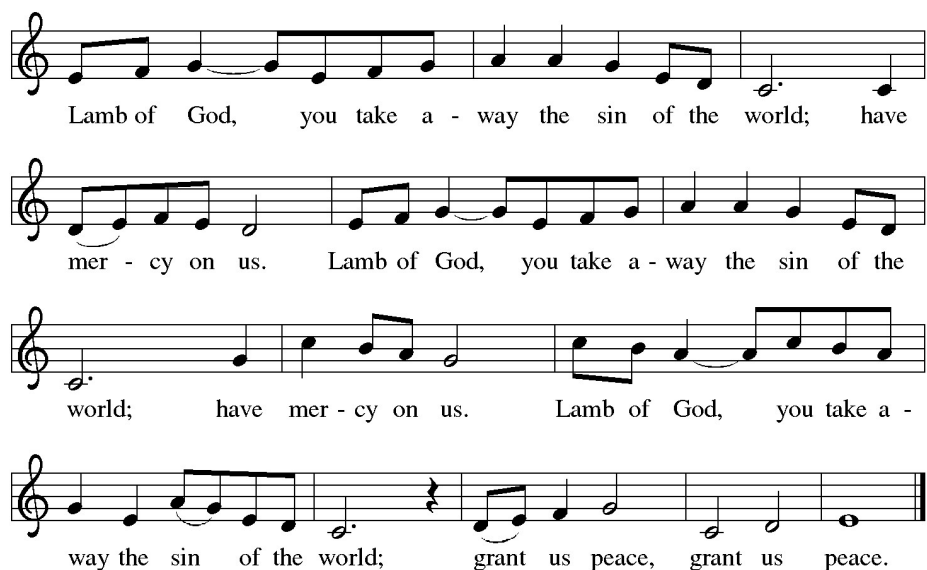
For those communing at home: take, eat, drink: the Body and Blood of Christ for you.

Please be seated.

THE COMMUNION

*This is Christ's Table and the Risen Christ is, himself, present whenever we feast together. **You** are welcome to the feast! Please come forward from both sides by the center aisle. Take a small empty cup from the trays at the head of the center aisle. White grape juice is in pre-filled cups for those who cannot have alcoholized wine. Gluten-free wafers are available for those who need them; please let the pastor know. Receive the bread in your open palm, then hold your cup steady for the assisting minister to fill. As you return by the side aisles, please place your empty cup in the tray. All are invited to the meal. If you would like to participate but not to receive the bread and wine, please cross your arms in front of you for a blessing from the pastor.*

HYMNS DURING THE COMMUNION



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

ELW 241

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You



1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel - come you a - right?
2 I lay in fet - ters, groan - ing; you came to set me free.
3 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me.
4 Re - joice, then, you sad - heart - ed, who sit in deep - est gloom,
Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light!
I stood, my shame be - moan - ing; you came to hon - or me.
Your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro - cured my lib - er - ty.
who mourn your joys de - part - ed and trem - ble at your doom.
Oh, kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, your lamp with - in my breast
A glo - rious crown you give me, a trea - sure safe on high
Oh, love be - yond all tell - ing, that led you to em - brace
All hail the Lord's ap - pear - ing! O glo - rious Sun, now come,

to do in spir - it low - ly all that may please you best.
that will not fail or leave me as earth - ly rich - es fly.
in love, all love ex - cel - ling, our lost and fall - en race.
send forth your beams so cheer - ing and guide us safe - ly home.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607-1676; tr. composite
Music: WIE SOLL ICH DICH EMPFANGEN, Johann Crüger, 1598-1662

ELW 438

My Lord, What a Morning

Refrain

My Lord, what a morn-ing; my Lord, what a morn-ing; oh,

my Lord, what a morn-ing, when the stars be-gin to fall.

1 You will hear the trum-pet sound,
2 You will hear the sin - ner cry, to wake the na-tions un-der - ground,
3 You will hear the Chris-tian shout,

Refrain

look-ing to my God's right hand, when the stars be-gin to fall.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: BURLEIGH, African American spiritual

TABLE BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray: God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

BLESSING

...now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

ELW 259

Fling Wide the Door

1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry
2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's
3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true
4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen

comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the
gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his
king's com - mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the
wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -

Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion
scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows
hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful
on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly



to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and
to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and
Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -
Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We

praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.
wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.
a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.
praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590–1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943
Music: MACHT HOCH DIE TÜR, J. A. Freylinghausen, *Geistreiches Gesangbuch*, 1704; arr. hymnal version
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.
Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is coming soon!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE – "Hark the Glad Sound!"

J. Leavitt

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Luther Memorial Church and Academy are located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Haudenosaunee, Mississauga, and Erie people. These lands were ceded by the people of the Six Nations on October 22, 1784 in a treaty ratified by the United States Government in 1785 and never ratified by the people of the Six Nations. We gather in this place indebted to these peoples for their forced generosity. While some peoples were successful in resisting assimilation and genocide, and still live on dwindled homelands now, many were absorbed into other peoples, exiled, or annihilated by the United States government for their land. For those who remain and for the land on which we gather, we give thanks to the Creator and to those who have been custodians of this part of Turtle Island since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

— SERVING TODAY —

PRESIDING MINISTER – Pastor Jay Mitchell

ACOLYTE – Jessica Copfer

ASSISTING MINISTER – Pat Bellingham

COMMUNION ASSISTANT – Stan Rose

LECTOR – Cathy Meyn

USHERS – Sue Cappelletty, Linda Graffius, Betty Pletz

ALTAR GUILD – Sharon Burke

VIDEO STREAMING – Christy Adams



Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God and in honor of our 60th wedding anniversary which was on November 27 by Martha and Tom Klomp.

Our love and sympathy is with the family and friends of Kathy Morey who died November 11, 2025.

Today's Events

Hanging of the Greens will be held this morning following each worship service. Please join us to decorate our beautiful church.

St. Lucia will be presented at Luther Memorial on Sunday, December 14 at 4:00pm in our main church with a reception following in fellowship hall. Rehearsals will be held this morning and Sunday, December 7. All rehearsals will be held from 11:45am – 1:00pm. Prior to the St. Lucia program on December 14 a brief rehearsal will be held at 11:45am. Please contact Lena Donnelly at 814-403-7825 with any questions.

A Stable Lamp is Lighted, an interactive Advent calendar, is at the welcome table. The calendar includes short scripture verses, coloring and creating your own manger scene; something for everyone to enjoy. Please take one and enjoy Advent.

Giving offerings to outreach ministries allows Luther Memorial to support vital work beyond our church walls, like serving those in need and spreading the gospel. It enables us to fulfill our mission of serving God and others by funding programs that improve lives, both physically and spiritually. This morning, please mark your offering envelope “Bethesda” if you would like to support Bethesda Lutheran Services. Thank you.

Offering envelopes for 2026 are located on the table by the ramp door. To save on postage we ask that you please pick up your envelopes. They are arranged alphabetically. Thank you.

Worship Matters!

Today we begin. The First Sunday in Advent is the beginning of so many things: The beginning of a new season. The beginning of the wait for the coming of the Christ Child on Christmas Day. The beginning of the watch and wait for the returning Messiah. The beginning of a new Church Year (this year focusing on the gospel of Matthew, Year A). Today we begin.

And while our season *this year* is four Sundays, we know that it can often be shorter with only three Sundays before Christmas Eve. In these years, the Fourth Sunday of Advent is everything before sundown and Christmas Eve begins as the sun sets. But...did you know that Advent once was longer than four Sundays?

Advent, as far as liturgical seasons go, is the youngest of all our seasons. Easter is the oldest, Lent—the time of preparation for Easter—is next. Christmas was a late addition to the church calendar. And when this second great feast of the Church was added, there was a time of preparation for it. Mirroring Lent, Advent originally ran from the Sunday after All Saints’ Day until Christmas Eve. Later, it would last from the feast of St. Martin of Tours (November 11) through Christmas Eve. In some parts of the church still today, the time from November 11 through the First Sunday in Advent is kept as “Martintide.”

The thing is, this makes a lot of sense. Advent is a season of watching and waiting. It is watching and waiting not just for the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day but also of watching and waiting for the return of Christ at the end of all things. Indeed, this is what we just celebrated with the Majesty of Christ just last week. The themes of the readings in November—particularly after All Saints’ Day—turn our focus from how to live as the Church in the world for now to how to live as believers awaiting the coming Savior. Including these Sundays in our observation of Advent makes sense, then, if we are both waiting for the coming *and the return* of Christ.

So, today we begin. Or do we continue? For the cry of this season is the longing of the hearts of every believer throughout time and place and not just in this season: “Come, Lord Jesus...and quickly!”

Worship

Interested in becoming a member of Luther Memorial Church? Please contact Pastor Jay or the church office for information or with questions.

LIVESTREAMERS ARE NEEDED! Recently, a few of our services have not been livestreamed and therefore not available to our homebound members. This is due to scheduling conflicts and volunteer availability. We need a robust rotation of livestreamers which involves tending the camera in the choir loft during our 10:30am worship service and our main worship services on feast days (such as Christmas Eve or Ash Wednesday). All ages are welcome to take on this vital leadership role in our communal worship. If you are interested in what this would entail and/or would like to sign up, please speak with Cantor Bryan or Pastor Jay.

Faith Formation for All Ages

Brown Bag Bible (B³) gathers on Thursdays at 12:00 noon in the Conference Room. You bring a lunch, Pastor Jay brings something to talk about. This year we are using *Crossroads: Reading the Bible in Divisive Times* by Josh Scott. Brown Bag Bible will resume Thursday, December 4.

Bible After Dark (BAD) meets on the FIRST TUESDAY of each month at 6:30pm at Calamari's Squid Row (1317 State St) for a time of conversation and fellowship. We will be using Josh Scott's book *Parables: Putting Jesus' Stories in Their Place*. If you would like to order your book from the church office, the cost is \$14. You may also order your own. If you've already ordered a book, they are in the office for pickup (and payment as needed). **YOU** are invited to join us! December's gathering will be on December 2.

Christmas Joy

Santa approved games, food and all sorts of fun are planned for our Family Christmas Extravaganza on Friday, December 5. Join us from 5:30-9:30 and get in that holiday spirit. RSVP to Beth Keller, Sarah Prylinski or the church office by today.

Christmas Cookie fellowship, compliments of our Congregational Life Committee, will be offered in the parlor following each service on Sunday, December 7. Let's toast to the Christmas season together and enjoy some festive-licious treats.

Light the Way: A Concert for Hope and Home will be offered Wednesday, December 10 at 7:00pm in our sanctuary with a reception following. This joyful evening of music and community will feature choral, instrumental, and other performances that celebrate the season of giving and compassion. Every note you hear—and every dollar you share—will support Inter-Church Ministries' mission to **lift neighbors in need** through meals, housing assistance, and other vital services for families across Erie County. Tickets are \$10 each. Please join us for a joyous gathering to support Inter-Church Ministries' work in our community.

Blue Christmas Service will be offered Wednesday, December 17 at 6:00pm in our main church. For many the holidays are a difficult time, and we invite you to join us for this special service to hear a message of hope and love. The service will be live streamed and will also be available on our website the following day.

Family Christmas Pageant will be presented on Sunday, December 21 at the 10:30am service. Please join us for this special service.

Opportunities for Fellowship

OWLS are looking forward to their annual Christmas Party. The festivities will be on Wednesday, December 17 at 11:00am. The main dish for lunch will be provided; please bring a side dish or dessert to share. RSVP to Jan MacInnes, 833-0476, or the church office by Wednesday, December 10.

OWLS Valentine Luncheon at the Ambassador Conference Center will be held Friday, February 13, 2026 at 12:00 noon. This is a very popular event with many attending. Reservations for this event are appreciated to Jan MacInnes, 814-833-0476, or the church office by December 28. This may seem early, but this event fills up quickly.

Come and join us for an escape from reality. Enjoy a relaxing morning with friends at the Magic Fingers Grace Group as you knit your cares away sprinkled with some laughter. Join us for knitting and crocheting the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 10:00am– 12:00 noon. We will gather Tuesday, December 9 and begin 2026 with knitting on Tuesday, January 13. Please contact Norma, in the church office, or Jan MacInnes if you are in need of more yarn or have any questions.

We're "Stocking the Streets"! Join with our youth as we come together to assist those in our community that are unsheltered. Donations of needed items will be collected through Sunday, December 21. Sarah Prylinski will then gather these items and distribute them to those in need that she assists on a daily basis. A complete list of items needed and a donation box is located at the Welcome Table. Thank you for helping others.

Items to Note

Greeting cards can be found in the information rack located near the parlor area. A large variety of cards that will fit every occasion are available. Youth are offering these cards for \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Proceeds will benefit our youth.

In case of a pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Jay either at the church (814-454-0106 x. 227) or, if not, on his personal phone (267-549-9858). If you are unable to reach him and need a response quickly, please contact our church office at 454-0106, ext. 221 during weekday business hours of 8:00am – 4:00pm to speak with Norma. Thank you.

— PRAYER LIST —

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:			
Our Members:			
Dorothy Youngman	Ed Hokaj	Rose-Marie Rose	Pat Gilbert
Diane Parsons	Judy Karney		
Friends and Family:			
Mary Beth & Nancy Kelly	Justin	Jeff	Jeff Monroe
Maureen C.	Gwen Smith	Andrew Wachter	Sullivan
Henderson family	Sandy M.	Shirley	Judy
Kevin Soles & family	Jenny	Carol Johnson	Valerie
Linda F.	Joel	Debbie Betit	Haven Schaefer
Katja & family	Carl Larese		
Grief:			
Pat Lupo family			
Our Military Service Men & Women:			
Matt Anderson	Michael Stickner	Andrew Watson	Alli Brown
Ben Dixon	Mark Collins	Christopher Rose	

The Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Eve Wednesday, December 24, 2025 Main Church

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 5:30 P.M. | FESTIVAL PRELUDE
CANTOR, BRYAN TIMM |
| 6:00 P.M. | CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE |
| 10:00 P.M. | FESTIVAL PRELUDE
CANTOR, BRYAN TIMM |
| 10:30 P.M. | CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE |



We invite you to come, worship, and celebrate the birth of our Lord.



The Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Day Thursday, December 25, 2025 Main Church

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 10:30 A.M. | PAJAMA WORSHIP! |
| | ONE SERVICE WILL BE HELD ON CHRISTMAS DAY IN OUR MAIN CHURCH. |
| 11:30 A.M. | FELLOWSHIP |

Readings and Commemoration This Week

December 1 – World AIDS Day – Psalm 124; Genesis 8:1-19; Romans 6:1-11

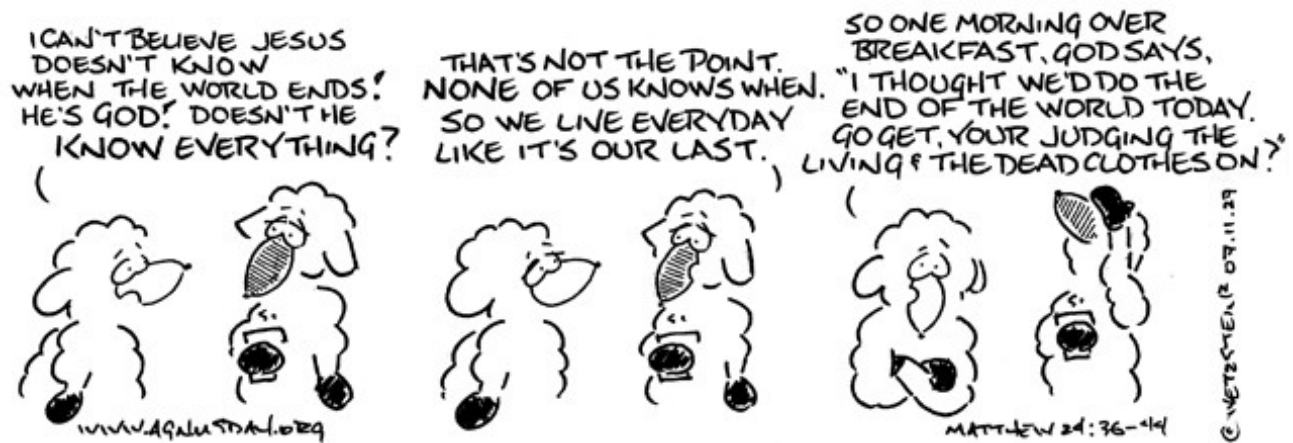
December 2 – Psalm 124; Genesis 9:1-17; Hebrews 11:32-40

December 3 – Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, 1552 – Psalm 124; Isaiah 54:1-10; Matthew 24:23-25 -- *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).*

December 4 – John of Damascus, theologian and hymnwriter, 749 – Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 4:2-6; Acts 1:12-17, 21-26 -- *A monk in an abbey near Jerusalem, John wrote many hymns as well as theological works. One of his works, The Fount of Wisdom, remained influential for centuries.*

December 5 – Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 30:19-26; Acts 13:16-25

December 6 – Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, 342 – Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 40:1-11; John 1:19-28 -- *Little is known about Nicholas, except that he was a bishop in present-day Turkey. According to legend, he was famous for his giving to the poor, and so has become a symbol of anonymous gift-giving.*



C A L E N D A R

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1

LMA Closed

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2

12:00pm

Deborah Circle

6:30pm

BAD (Bible After Dark; Calamari's)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

12:00pm

Brown Bag Bible

1:00pm

Grief Support Group

5:30pm

Handbell Rehearsal

6:30pm

Choir Rehearsal

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5

5:30pm

Family Christmas Extravaganza

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

10:00am

Quilting

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Worship with us at 8:15am in Faith Chapel or 10:30am in the main church.

Christmas Cookie coffee hour following each service.

St. Lucia rehearsal at 11:45am.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Assisting Minister	8:15am	Cathie Dugan
	10:30am	Linda Swanson
Communion Assistant (<i>1 needed</i>)	10:30am	Linda Graffius
Lector (<i>1 needed</i>)	10:30am	Jane Moran
Altar Guild	8:15am	Donna Sedelmyer
	10:30am	Jessica Copfer, Mary Daniels
Greeter	8:15am	Vicky Blasco
	10:30am	
Video Streaming	10:30am	Gina Snider
Counters	10:30am	Pat Bellingham, Skip MacInnes
Ushers (<i>4 needed</i>)	10:30am	Erie Hedlund, Karen Lundwall