

OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

904 Bluff Street Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

A traditional, liturgical, Biblical congregation in the heart of Cedar Falls ministering to sinners with the forgiving presence of Christ.

Rev. Michael R. Knox, Pastor
(319) 231-9761

Rev. Dr. Brian Saunders, Pastor
(319) 389-5526

Matthew Baker, Vicar
(605) 342-0259

Church Office: 266-2509

Email: orlc@cfu.net Website: theforgivenessplace.org

The 2nd Sunday In Advent December 10, 2023

TO OUR VISITORS We rejoice that you have joined us this morning to hear the Word of God, receive His gifts of life and salvation, and to respond to His faithfulness with "Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" *Ephesians 5:19*

- ✘ Please take the time to fill out the Communion Registration/Visitors' Cards which are in the small card holders on the pew.
- ✘ Please read the announcement below regarding Communion.
- ✘ Guests who will not be communing may place the Visitor's card in the Offering plate.
- ✘ Guests who intend to commune are asked to announce this intention to the Elder and give the card to the Usher as they come forward to receive communion.

OUR REDEEMER PRACTICES CLOSED COMMUNION



The Sacrament of the Altar is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine for us Christians to eat and drink, instituted by Christ Himself. As we receive this Sacrament, the oneness of fellowship at the Altar (I Corinthians 10:17) presupposes a oneness in doctrine with the Apostles (Acts 2:42). For this reason the congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have agreed to follow the Biblical and historical practice of Closed Communion. If you desire to receive the Lord's Supper and are not a communicant member of Our Redeemer or a sister congregation in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, we respectfully ask that you not commune this morning. Rather, we would invite you to speak with Pastor Knox,

Pastor Saunders, or Vicar Baker about Holy Communion and about becoming a communicant member of this congregation.

THOSE SERVING GOD'S PEOPLE THIS WEEK

Elder: Ryan Thornton **Ushers:** Greg Gerjerts, David Kmoch

Service Assistant: Logan Baker **Organist:** Roxann List

Tellers: Sarah Staker, Cheryl Nissen **Shut-Ins:** Jim Bunkofske



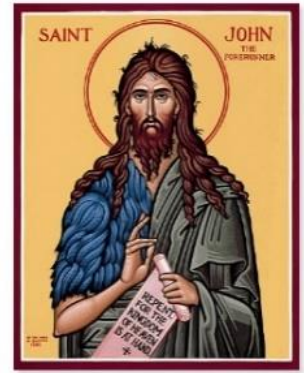
TODAY IS THE 2nd SUNDAY IN ADVENT This Sunday and next, your attention is drawn to the last of the Old Testament prophets, John the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. Known chiefly by the work he did, John is referred to as "the Baptizer." Mark records John's words, "*After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.*" (Mark 1:7-8). John could just as well have been known as "The Preacher," for it was his work as preacher which so stirred up the people as he "prepared the way of the Lord."

The Gospels reveal that "*John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist*" (Mark 1:6). The camel's hair and leather belt were not worn because John was eccentric in any way, or

because he was looking for some way to draw unnecessary attention to himself, but he chose his clothing because his clothing reflected who he was. Elijah, the great prophet of the Old Testament, also wore "*a garment of hair with a leather belt around his waist*" (2 Kings 1:8). Other Old Testament prophets likewise wore "*a prophet's garment of hair*" (Zech. 13:4). And so, when John comes to be a prophet, he comes looking the way a prophet ought to look, dressing the way a prophet ought to dress. This way, the people will understand who John claims to be - he is not just a madman raving in the desert. He is one who speaks on behalf of God.

John's message was one of repentance. Repentance, not as an end in itself, but always leading to and ending in faith in the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth. John's preaching exposed sin and revealed mankind's great need for forgiveness. Luke describes John's work with these words, "*He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.*" (Luke 3:3). By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Luke includes the promise God spoke through the prophet Isaiah, "*And all mankind will see God's salvation.*" (Luke 3:6)

John has been portrayed by many artists. In one early Christian painting, he is not named “The Baptist” or “The Preacher” but he is given another, equally appropriate, designation: “St. John the Forerunner.” Standing there wearing his coarse clothing of camel’s hair, he holds in his left hand a scroll upon which he has written his sermon. The scroll is partially unrolled to reveal the words, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”**” (Matthew 2:2) This picture also has John holding his right hand up in front of himself, his first two fingers raised while the others are folded under to touch his thumb. The artist has purposefully depicted John making the sign of the holy cross. The artist has carefully pictured the work, the one and only work, of John and of all pastors - to be a preacher of **“Christ crucified”** (1 Corinthians 1:23).



That kind of preaching still goes on today. Preachers like John prepare the way for the Lord who comes to His temple. The preaching of John this day prepares you to receive the Christ as He comes to you with His body and blood. As you receive these gifts the valleys are filled, the mountains and hills are made low, the crooked places become straight, and the rough places become level ways. Here with the forgiveness of sins you truly ‘see’ the salvation of God.

BECAUSE ADVENT IS A PENITENTIAL SEASON we observe a few liturgical changes.

- We omit the singing of the Gloria in Excelsis. (p. 187-189)
- We do not make use of flowers. The exception to this is on the 3rd Sunday in Advent , Gaudete Sunday, the Sunday you will also see the Rose colored paraments.

I. THE PREPARATION

Hymn of Invocation

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” LSB #344

The Men’s Choir will sing stanzas 1-4. Please rise to join them in singing stanza 5.

<p><i>Choir</i> 1 On Jor - dan’s bank the Bap - tist’s cry An - nounc - es <i>Choir</i> 2 Then cleansed be ev - ’ry life from sin; Make straight the <i>Choir</i> 3 We hail Thee as our Sav - ior, Lord, Our ref - uge <i>Choir</i> 4 Lay on the sick Thy heal - ing hand And make the Cong. Δ 5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to Thee Whose ad - vent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and hear - ken, way for God with - in, And let us all our and our great re - ward; With - out Thy grace we fall - en strong to stand; Show us the glo - ry sets Thy peo - ple free, Whom with the Fa - ther</p>
	<p>for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings! hearts pre - pare For Christ to come and en - ter there. waste a - way Like flow’rs that with - er and de - cay. of Thy face Till beau - ty springs in ev - ’ry place. we a - dore And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.</p>

Text and tune: Public domain

Stand/Remain Standing

Invocation

P/V: In the name of the Father and of the (✠) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]

C: Amen.

The Confession of Sin

P/V: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. *[Hebrews 10:22]*

P/V: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: who made heaven and earth.

Psalms 124:8

P/V: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C: and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Psalms 32:5

The Collect of the Day

P: Let us pray: Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Be seated

The Old Testament

Isaiah 40:1-11

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God

The Gradual Hymn

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” LSB #338



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed Je-sus, Born to set Thy peo-ple free;
2 Born Thy peo-ple to de - liv-er; Born a child and yet a king!



From our fears and sins re-lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Born to reign in us for-ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con-so - la-tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
By Thine own e - ter-nal Spir-it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev-'ry na-tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo-rious throne.

Text and tune: Public domain

The Epistle

II Peter 3:8-14

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

The Alleluia/Verse



A Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Cantor: Prepare the way of the Lord, make | his paths straight; *
all flesh shall see the salva - | tion of God.

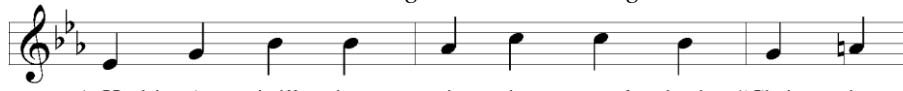
(Luke 3:4b, 6)



A Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

The Hymn of The Day

"Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding" #345



1 Hark! A thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is
2 Star - tled at the sol - emn warn - ing, Let the
3 See, the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, Comes with
4 So, when next He comes in glo - ry And the
△ 5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, do - min - ion To the



near," we hear it say. "Cast a - way the
earth - bound soul a - rise; Christ, its sun, all
par - don down from heav'n. Let us haste, with
world is wrapped in fear, He will shield us
Fa - ther and the Son With the ev - er -



works of dark - ness, All you chil - dren of the day!"
sloth dis - pel - ling, Shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
tears of sor - row, One and all, to be for - giv'n;
with His mer - cy, And with words of love draw near.
liv - ing Spir - it While e - ter - nal a - ges run!

Text and tune: Public domain

The Sermon

Following the Sermon, please rise to sing the Offertory

Stand

The Offertory

Psalms 51:10-12



☐ Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -



new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -



way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it



from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -



tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

The Prayers

Various Petitions are prayed. Each petition will conclude with the response:

P: Lord, in Your mercy.

C: **Hear our prayer.**

The Congregation, gathered for worship in person, will now be receiving the Sacrament of the Altar. This most significant portion of the Divine Service, when our Lord Jesus Christ draws near to His people with His flesh and blood, will not be streamed. Members desiring to receive the Sacrament who are unable to be present in the Church will be visited by one of our pastors to bring them the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.

Those who have joined us online for the Service of the Word are now encouraged to pray 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.**

May the Lord bless and keep you.

Please call Pastor Knox (319/231-9761) if you would like to receive a Pastoral visit.

✠ OUR WEEK TOGETHER IN THE BODY OF CHRIST ✠

Sun. 12/10	9:00 a.m. Divine Service at Our Redeemer
	10:30 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class
Mon. 12/11	9:00 a.m. Vicar's Bible Study
Tue. 12/12	6:00 p.m. Vicar's Bible Study at Peace-Shell Rock
	7:00 p.m. Midweek Advent Service at Peace-Shell Rock
Wed. 12/13	10:00 a.m. Our Redeemer Book Club
	11:00 a.m. Midweek Bible Class (Weekly Readings)
	12:00 p.m. Midday Advent Service at Our Redeemer
	5:25 p.m. Adult Choir
	6:30 p.m. Midweek Advent Service at Our Redeemer
	7:30 p.m. Midweek Bible Class (Weekly Readings)
Sat. 12/16	6:00 p.m. Bible Class at Peace – Shell Rock
	7:00 p.m. Divine Service at Peace – Shell Rock
Sun. 12/17	9:00 a.m. Divine Service at Our Redeemer
	10:30 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Class
	4:00 p.m. Festival of Christmas Music (Cookies and Cocoa afterwards)

HYMNS/READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK

Wednesday, December 13 – Midweek Advent Service I

Liturgy: Evening Prayer - LSB page 260;

Reading: II Peter 3:8–14

Office Hymn: “When All the World Was Cursed” LSB #346

December 17, 2023 The 3rd Sunday in Advent

Readings: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Invocation: The Advent of Our King..... 331

Gradual: Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus 338

Hymn of the Day: O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide 355

Distribution: O Lord, How Shall I Meet You 334

Distribution: Jesus Came, The Heavens Adoring 353

CONGREGATIONAL FINANCES

In an effort to keep the members of Our Redeemer aware of our financial condition as a congregation, the following is provided by the Board of Stewardship and the Financial Secretary.

- Giving/income Year to Date \$211,676 (*through November*)
- Budget Year to Date: \$225,600
- Difference: -\$13,924

Donations are almost \$14,000 below our 2023 budget. As the year draws to a close, please consider increasing your offerings to help reduce the deficit.

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

THE SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS meets from 10:30 – 11:15 each Sunday. This class is currently studying Revelation.

SUNDAY SCHOOL meets from 10:30 – 11:15 each Sunday. Parents, the children are working on music and recitations for the Christmas Music Festival on December 17. Sunday School will not meet on December 24 or 31.

WEEKLY READINGS/HYMNS STUDY This class meets each Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. and at 6:30 p.m. During Advent the Class will meet following the Midweek Service, approximately 7:30 p.m. The class studies the weekly readings, hymns, and propers for the upcoming Sunday. It is a way to prepare for the coming week's Divine Service.

THE VICAR'S BIBLE STUDY This Fall Vicar Baker meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at 9:00 a.m. The class also meets at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday evenings of the same week at Peace in Shell Rock. In December the class will only meet on the 11th and 12th.

YOUTH BIBLE STUDY **YOUTH BIBLE STUDY** The Jr. High/Sr. High Youth meet for Bible Study with our Vicar on Sunday mornings from 10:30-11:15 and on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. On Sunday mornings the youth will be studying 1 Corinthians. During Advent the youth will not meet on Wednesdays.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2024 ALTAR FLOWERS – Donations for Altar Flowers for 2024 can now be given. To reserve a Sunday, please place your name on the Flower Chart in the Parish Hall and fill out a flower donation card which is under the chart. Alternatively, contact Sara Lair – (319) 830-4370 or sjlair@cfu.net. Cost is \$40.00 plus tax – Bancroft will bill you directly.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS GIFT As you leave the service this morning, you will receive a booklet developed by the Board of Communications & Outreach for Our Redeemer's recent participation in the Historic Churches Tour. It is our hope you will gain a new-found appreciation for the symbolism in our beautiful sanctuary. (One per family, please.)

UPDATED PHOTO DIRECTORY Sometime after the New Year we will be printing a new Congregational Photo Directory. If you would like to update your photo, Tammy will be taking photos for the next several weeks in the lower level of the Education Wing during refreshment time. Please check the draft directory which is in either the Narthex or in the Parish Hall. Make sure that your information is correct. If everything is ok, put a check mark or your initials in the margin. If information needs to be corrected, please note what changes need to be made.

THANK YOU to all members of Our Redeemer who contributed in one way or another to our Angel Tree. We were able to fulfill our 35 tags for the Salvation Army clients, and for our individual that is a client with Friends of the Family. The gifts were delivered to the Friends of the Family and the Salvation Army this week, and they will distribute to the recipients. We appreciate you working with the short time frame we were given, and for your generosity.

TEXT BLAST INFORMATION The Communications & Outreach Board thanks all who signed up for Church360's new text-blast service. By now you should have received, and replied to, the registration email sent to you last Monday through Church360. If anyone had any difficulties with the registration process, please contact Greg Gerjerts and he will be of assistance.

MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES will be held each Wednesday during Advent at Noon and 6:30 p.m. This year throughout Advent we will focus our attention on the words of the Epistle readings for the week. Advent Services will also be held at Peace Lutheran on Tuesday evenings of the same week at 7:00 p.m.



CHRISTMAS CONCERT AT VALLEY LUTHERAN Valley Lutheran School will have a K-12 Christmas Choir Concert on Tuesday, December 12 at 6:30 p.m. in the gym. The concert will feature their choral groups, a recorder song from 4th and 5th grade, and instrumental solos from students of different ages.



FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC Next Sunday, December 17th, at 4:00 p.m. the congregation is invited to celebrate the Christmas Gospel in Word and Song. The festival will include Advent and Christmas music sung or played by instrumentalists, vocalists, the Sunday School students, the Adult Choir, and the congregation. This is an expansion of what we might have thought of as the Children's Christmas program.

COOKIES AND COCOA Mark your calendars! On December 17th there will be "Cookies and Cocoa" after the Christmas Music Festival. There is a sign-up list to bring cookies, hot chocolate, plates, etc. downstairs in the Parish Hall. Contact Michaela Knox with any questions.

MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT for the next couple of weeks is coming from our Clavinova. (Electric Piano). Parts have been ordered to repair the church organ. Thanks for everyone's patience and understanding. The organ is more than 30 years old. Imagine trying to get parts for your 30-year-old TV or computer.

NEW PORTALS OF PRAYER AND LUTHERAN WITNESS are available in the Narthex.

THANK YOU - Dean and I wish to thank all of our friends at Our Redeemer for all the kindnesses bestowed on us following my surgery. We so appreciate the wonderful meals, cards, visits, and phone calls.

We treasure the many friends we have in our church family. And the visits from Pastor Knox. God blesses us daily with your kind acts of love.

Sincerely, Martha and Dean Garms