

**GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**120 West Gano Chance Road**  
**Centralia, Missouri 65240**  
**Fourth Sunday in Advent**  
**December 22, 2024**  
**Theme: Holiness in the Body of Jesus**

**AS WE GATHER**

We often hear it said, and even say it ourselves, that “things aren’t like they used to be.” We can see it around us in our world, our culture, and even among our own families and homes, whether for better but often for worse. People sometimes have the same impression of the Lord. But our Lord remains unchanged (see Malachi 3:6), and Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (see Hebrews 13:8). Since the beginning, our holy Lord has always desired and even demanded holiness. Holiness comes only by the one perfect bodily sacrifice. Our Lord Jesus Christ has made us holy through Himself alone. Because of and through Him, we do not have to be like we used to be; rather, we live in that grace and love as He first loved us.

**WELCOME**

**Pastor James Lanning**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**OPENING HYMN – “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”**

**LSB 393**

**INVOCATION**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

*John 1:5, 9; 3:16; Psalm 36:5–9*

Pastor: We light the fourth Advent candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

**People: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

Pastor: The fourth Advent candle has been known as the angel candle and the candle of love. As our Advent season soon ends, we await the angelic message of the good news of a Savior. We have come to know the love of the one true God this season and always as we have prepared to celebrate His birth. We know God’s promises come to fruition in Jesus, who later made known His Father’s love in His being born into this world; in His life, ministry, teaching, preaching, healing; and ultimately in His dying and rising. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”

**People: The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.**

Pastor: Guided by the light of love, we respond with the psalmist: “Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the clouds.

**People: Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast You save, O LORD.**

Pastor: How precious is Your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

**People: They feast on the abundance of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your delights.**

Pastor: For with You is the fountain of life;

**People: in Your light do we see light.”**

*Four Advent candles are lit.*

### **THE GREAT O ANTIPHONS** *for December 22*

Pastor: O King of the nations, the ruler they long for, the cornerstone uniting all people:

**People: Come and save us all, whom You formed out of clay.**

### **PSALM RESPONSE**

*Psalm 80:1–7*

Pastor: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock!

**People: You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.**

Pastor: Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,

**People: stir up Your might and come to save us!**

Pastor: Restore us, O God;

**People: let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

Pastor: O LORD God of hosts, how long will You be angry with Your people’s prayers?

**People: You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in full measure.**

Pastor: You make us an object of contention for our neighbors, and our enemies laugh among themselves.

**People: Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

### **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** *Hebrews 10:22; Psalm 32:5; 80:7; 124:8*

Pastor: 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. Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**People: who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

**People: and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Pastor: Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean.

**People: Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

Pastor: We have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed.

**People: Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

Pastor: Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**People: Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

**O most merciful God, who has given Your only begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to be born in our flesh, to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins.

**People: Restore us, O God of hosts; let Your face shine, that we may be saved!**

Pastor: As a called and ordained servant of the Word and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and the Holy Spirit. To those who believe on His name He gives the power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. Those that believe and are baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, to us all.

**People: Amen.**

## INTROIT

*1 Samuel 2:1b, 2, 5b-7; antiphon: Luke 1:46b-47*

My soul magnifies the Lord,  
**and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

My mouth derides my enemies,  
**because I rejoice in Your salvation.**

There is none holy like the LORD;  
**there is none besides You; there is no rock like our God.**

The barren has borne seven,  
**but she who has many children is forlorn.**

The LORD kills and brings to life;  
**He brings down to Sheol and raises up.**

The LORD makes poor and makes rich;  
**He brings low and He exalts.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

My soul magnifies the Lord,  
**and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

## KYRIE

**P. 204**

## SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Into the darkness, You bring light, and into our lives, You make known Your perfect and everlasting love.

**People: Make us ready for the celebration of our Savior's birth, that we receive Him as He comes to us as a humble infant, bringing to fruition the new covenant of Your love;**

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

## OLD TESTAMENT READING – Micah 5:2-5a

**Lector: Catherine Simmons**

(The coming King born in Bethlehem)

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup>And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. <sup>5</sup>And he shall be their peace.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL**     *Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.*

Pastor: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

**People: Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.**

Pastor: Behold, your king is coming to you;

**People: righteous and having salvation.**

Pastor: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

**People: From the house of the Lord we bless You.**

**EPISTLE READING – Hebrews 10:5-10**

**Lector: Catherine Simmons**

**(Jesus comes to do God's will)**

<sup>5</sup>Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

<sup>7</sup>Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'" <sup>8</sup>When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup>then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup>And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**VERSE**

*Matthew 1:23a*

Pastor: Alleluia. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

**People: and they shall call His name Immanuel. Alleluia.**

**HOLY GOSPEL**

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

**HOLY GOSPEL – Luke 1:39-56**

**(Mary visits Elizabeth)**

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, <sup>40</sup>and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, <sup>42</sup>and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! <sup>43</sup>And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup>For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." <sup>46</sup>And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup>for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup>And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; <sup>52</sup>he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. <sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup>as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever." <sup>56</sup>And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to You, O Christ.**

## APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. The third he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

SERMON HYMN – “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

LSB 384

MESSAGE – “Leaping for Joy”

Pastor James Lanning

OFFERING HYMN “It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

LSB 366

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the church, for the people of God, and for all people according to their needs. We await to celebrate our King, who has come, promised to be born among the small clan of Judah in Bethlehem, fulfiller of the old covenant promise, and bringer of life and grace in the new covenant in which we now live. We await our King, who promises to return, to restore and renew what was broken, and to bring life and light everlasting. Be with us as we soon close this Advent season of anticipation and preparation, rejoicing in the everlasting King who has come and will come again.

**HYMN** “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns” *LSB 348 v. 1*

Pastor: Almighty King, Your ways are not our ways nor are Your thoughts our thoughts. In days of doubts and despair that arise, in cases of confusion, and in times of trial and tribulation, remind us of Your kingdom in which we have been called and Your eternal kingdom to come. Be with those who struggle, [*including . . .*]. Help us to see Your mighty work even among our wayward world of sin and sorrow and the perfect plan of salvation imparted through the Savior we await.

**HYMN** “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns” *LSB 348 vs. 2-3*

Pastor: Ever-present King, we lift up those who have been placed in authority over us in our community, state, nation, and world. Guide and direct their decisions that they be pleasing to You and for the benefit of all, including the marginalized, the voiceless, and the outcast. Where there is violence and warfare, grant peace. Where there is distress, bring stability. Where there is terror, bring comfort. Where there are opportunities for us to bring compassion and concern through our voices and actions, compel us to do so faithfully.

**HYMN** “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns” *LSB 348 v. 4*

Pastor: King of grace, the one sacrifice needed on our behalf has been given in Jesus, who was born into this world to take upon Himself our sin, burdens, and shame. In the new covenant of grace You have established through Him, help us through Your Spirit to remain faithful to You in Your eternal kingdom.

**HYMN** “The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns” *LSB 348 v. 5*

Pastor: Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**LORD'S PRAYER** *Matthew 6:9-13*

**People:** 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.

**CLOSING SENTENCES** *John 1:5, 9*

Pastor: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

**People:** The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

**BENEDICTION** *Numbers 6:24-26*

Pastor: The blessing of almighty God—the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit—be with you.

**People:** Amen.

**CLOSING HYMN – “The First Noel”**

**printed**

1. The First Noel, the Angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winters' night that was so deep. Chorus

2. They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the East beyond them far  
And to the earth it gave great light  
And so it continued both day and night. Chorus

**Chorus: Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!**

3. And by the light of that same star  
Three Wise Men came from country far  
To seek for a King was their intent  
And to follow the star wherever it went. Chorus

4. This star drew nigh to the northwest  
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest  
And there it did both pause and stay  
Right o'er the place where Jesus lay. Chorus

5. Then entered in those Wise Men three  
Full reverently upon their knee  
And offered there in His presence  
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense. Chorus

6. Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord  
That hath made Heaven and earth of naught  
And with His blood mankind has bought. Chorus

## NEXT SUNDAY

Adult Bible Study: 9:00 a.m.

Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.

**BIRTHDAYS – Palmyra Dubbert – December 28**

**ANNIVERSARIES – Amanda & Andy Morgan – December 23; Ken & Cindi Manola – December 23**

## DECEMBER/JANUARY EVENTS

### 12.24 Christmas Eve Service 7 pm

- 1.7 Mission Planning – 7 pm
- 1.8 Adult Bible Study – 10 am
- 1.8 ZOOM Prayer Group – 8 pm
- 1.9 Heritage Hall - 2 pm
- 1.12 Church Council Meets following service
- 1.13 Women’s Guild – 1 pm
- 1.14 Ministerial Alliance at Cornerstone at noon

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| 1.15 Adult Bible Study 10 am                 |
| 1.15 Worship Committee – 4:40 pm             |
| 1.15 ZOOM Prayer Group – 8 pm                |
| 1.22 Adult Bible Study 10 am                 |
| 1.22 ZOOM Prayer Group – 8 pm                |
| 1.26 Quarterly Congregational Voters Meeting |
| 1.29 Adult Bible Study – 10 am               |
| 1.29 ZOOM Prayer Group – 8 pm                |

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

**Larry Wilcox** – atrial fibrillation following surgical repair of hip fracture (he is 86 years old and was at work when he fell on ice and broke his hip); **Christina DeJesus (Jane St. John’s daughter)** – health issues; **Savannah and Taylor** – as Taylor goes back to work; Savannah will remain in St. Louis to be near Reagan who remains in NICU; **Reagan Louise** – in NICU recovering from surgery for repair of Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia; **Brenda Belt** (Henry Rainey’s sister) – Stage IV Cancer; **Grace** – health issues (friend of Hannah Lanning); **Steve Buckert** – cancer treatments; **Jenni Murray**–Margaret Parker’s daughter–injured in motorcycle accident; **Ron Borgman; Ryan James**–cousin of Betsy Cochran–health issues; **Dick St. John**–Brenda Moss’s father–health issues; **Sherry Morse**–health issues; **Kim & Terry Decker**–health issues; **Craig**–suffering with spinal stenosis–friend of Randy Simmons; **Verda Adkisson; Mark Blanton**–Betsy Cochran’s cousin–waiting for liver transplant; **Ed & Ernestine Ramsey; Bill & Judy Mahieu; Kyle Lutz**–recovering from kidney/pancreas transplant; **Bonnie Berthelsen; Mark Ramsey; Calvin Stemme**–treatment for cancer; **Julia Rainey; Jane St. John; Dennis & Jackie Nadler; Susan Harris; Wayne Nolan**–stepfather of Jeff Jaeger; **Michelle Smith**–daughter of Jane St John; **Arla Benskin**–daughter of Mary Brechler.

**Missionaries - Pastor Tim Schulte and wife Erin**

**Community Prayers: Father Mike Coleman; Evie Ross**–infant needs heart transplant; **Dylan Dick**–health issues; **David**–health issues; **Fran Schnarre**–health issues.

**ARMED FORCES: Christopher Thompson**, U. S. Navy – cousin of Hannah Lanning; **Brandon Lowery**, U.S. Navy–brother of Rachel Rojas; **Donevin Leonard**, U.S. Marine Corps–grandson of Russell & Jacki Stelzer; **Chris Chism**, U.S. Navy–son of Vickie & Eric Chism; grandson of Barbara Fischer; **Brittany Macklin**–great-niece of Ernestine Ramsey; **Zachary Warden**–grandson of Betty Warden; Community: **Ray Finlay**, U.S. Army

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **choir** invites you to join them tomorrow, **December 23 at 5:00 pm** to go caroling. There are 2 Centralia members and 4 Columbia members the choir will visit.

**FAVORITE HYMNS** – please list your favorite hymns on the yellow notepad on the table in the narthex. The worship committee will consider them when selecting hymns for services. Thank you.

Beginning **January 5**, **Pastor Lanning** will lead a new Bible study on Sunday morning - “Onward in Faith”. Please consider joining this study on stewardship. Study materials will be available.

The new Adult Bible Study will begin **January 8, 2025**. The study will be on the book of Esther and the resource is “**Chosen - A Study of Esther**” by Donna Snow. The book can be ordered from Amazon or CPH. Please consider joining other class members for this study.

**Thrivent Members** - Did you know you can order Thrivent **Cause Kits** to make water filters or solar lights for people who need them? There is no charge to the member - just order the kit, build the filters or lights, return to Thrivent and they will distribute. Thrivent members may get 1 kit per year. Check out [wtw.org/thrivent](http://wtw.org/thrivent) for more information on the water filters. This might be a good project for our Sunday School students.

### **Are you looking for an opportunity to serve Good Shepherd?**

The nominating committee currently has the following slate of candidates for the election to be held at the voters meeting in January:

Elder Russell Stelzer

President Aaron Seider

Trustee Matt Rojas

Recording Secretary Judy Maseman

Financial Secretary Jacki Stelzer

It is our sincere desire to have more than one candidate for each office so we can actually have an election. Please consider how you could help out by running for one of these offices as well. Thank you.

Curt Nadler

Alane Gronefeld

Russell Stelzer

### **Welcome and Prayer Request Cards**

Please place any prayer request cards in the offering plate when it comes around. The ushers will give them to the pastor. Please complete the welcome card and leave it at the end of your pew. Thank you.

### **Church Directory**

**Pastor James Lanning** (512) 968-4587,

**Email:** [pastorlanning@goodshepherdcentralia.org](mailto:pastorlanning@goodshepherdcentralia.org)

**Church office:** (573) 682-3941,

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**Church Updates:** [www.goodshepherd.churchupdates.org](http://www.goodshepherd.churchupdates.org)

**Website:** [www.goodshepherdcentralia.org](http://www.goodshepherdcentralia.org)

### **Elders:**

Curt Nadler (573) 682-4541

Jeff Jaeger (573) 682-0902

Gary Seider (573) 489-6629